

2008 Vintage Report

Climatic conditions 2007-2008

Fall - Winter 2007: very dry and cold

For instance in Apalta: Fall-Winter 2008: 346 mm, about 300 mm less than the 6 years' average. Fall temperatures were 2°C colder than usual. We had the coldest winter in 6 years.

Because of these conditions the bud break occurred with one week to ten days of delay for all the varieties and so happened around September 15th.

The spring was drier and temperatures were more extremes for both minima and maxima than usual. We received only 4 mm of rain between September and November, instead of the usual 60 mm.

In October we had a good development of the plant and the vines were able to compensate a part of the initial delay.

Flowering conditions were good and we had the setting on the usual date. The clusters had a normal development and we got pea-sized berries at the end of December.

The summer was hotter (4 days with T°C > 35°C) and drier with higher amplitude of temperatures than normal. We had the hottest January since 2004.

The véraison occurred late, around January 20th, but was very quick.

February was also hot (5 days with T°C > 35°C) but minima were lower than normal and on mean temperature has been the hottest month of February since we record data.

Thanks to these temperatures the maturation accelerated and even with a late véraison, the maturity started early for both white and red varieties.

During the maturation period, the average T°C was on the same level than the historic average, but we can notice wider amplitude, which is great for anthocyanins synthesis.

With our good vineyard management (3 to 4 green harvest, low yields) and the exceptional weather conditions, we started the harvest of the Sauvignon Blanc in Requinoa on February 25th and our first Merlot in Apalta on March 15th.

The weather conditions during the harvest were very good except a little rain (12,3mm) on March 7th and another one of 15mm on April 11th, without any effect on the quality after such a dry season.

As the phenolic maturity was perfect it was not necessary waiting too long and we were able to finish the harvest before the end of April and the first important rain.

On the other hand as the late season weather was cloudy and cool, it was not very interesting waiting, and it's always better picking, when you reach the right maturity, before a rain rather than after.

The 2008 vintage: comments of the winemaker

The vintage is quite good. For the whites, the acidity is better than usual and as we decided to pick all the Sauvignon Blanc and the Semillon in two weeks (from February 25th to March 7th at Requinoa Las Kuras vineyards, Cachapoal valley) we were able to take advantage of the good fruit quality and to not reach high levels of alcohol.

The Chardonnays were picked by hand in Atalayas vineyards (Casablanca valley) in April (March 31st to April 15th) with very good weather conditions. They exhibit some nerve and a balanced mouth.

Concerning the reds, we could say that it will be a great year. We decided to make a special effort with our Syrah. We are very hopeful with the selection we made in Requinoa on April 10th, and that was 100% hand-destemmed.

Las Kuras Vineyard is the first one of our vineyards to be fully certified 100% organically grown.

We received our best grapes at the Clos Apalta Winery, where they have been 100% hand-destemmed. We started on March 15th with our first. We finished with our best Carmenère on April 25th just before the rain. Sometimes we have to be lucky or wise.

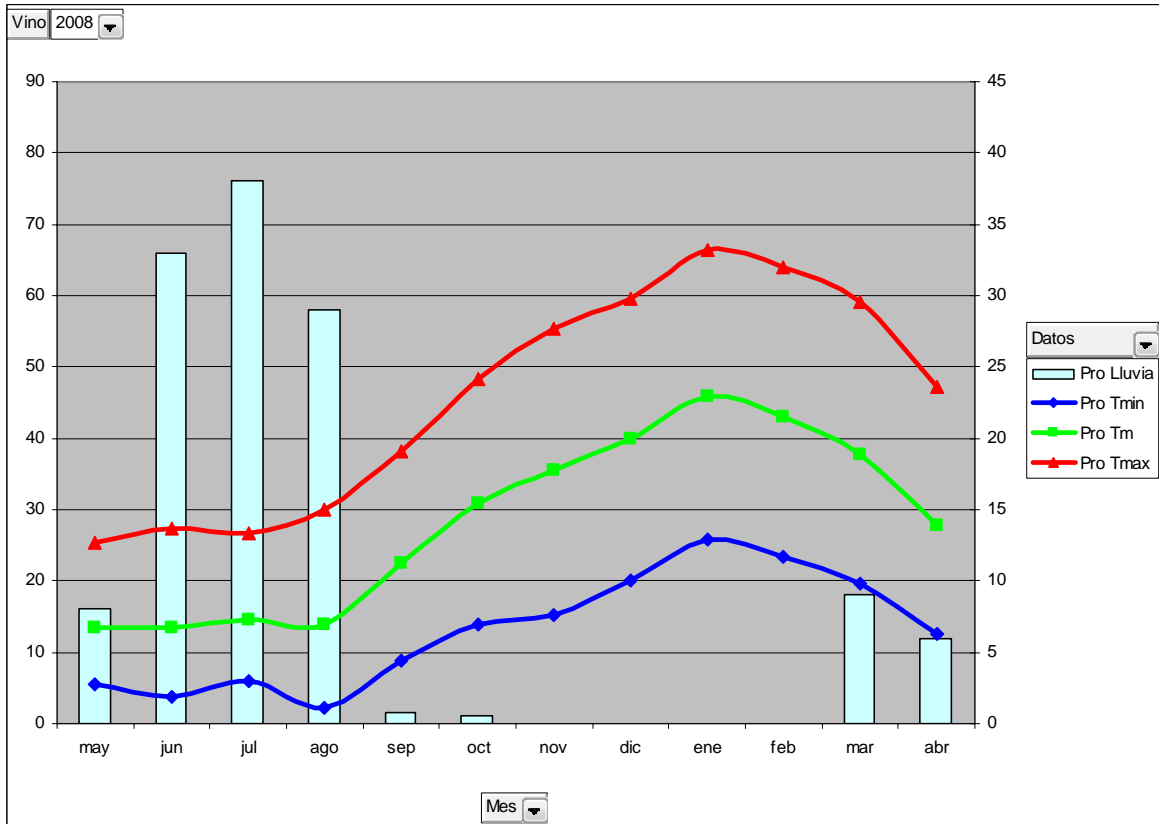
The 2008 vintage: innovations

- Continuing towards a better selection, we implemented 2 systems to improve the berries selection:
 1. Vibrating sorting table: These tables carry the berries by vibrations; by the way they will pass over a screen that will let out small particules, green berries, and raisins. This was very effective and complemented well the man hands which remove larger defects.
 2. Triple table scheme: For several years we had implemented a double selection, but this year we went further by installing 2 parallel tables after the destemmer. All these tables were vibrating, and so we had a quality of sorting never reached before by machines.

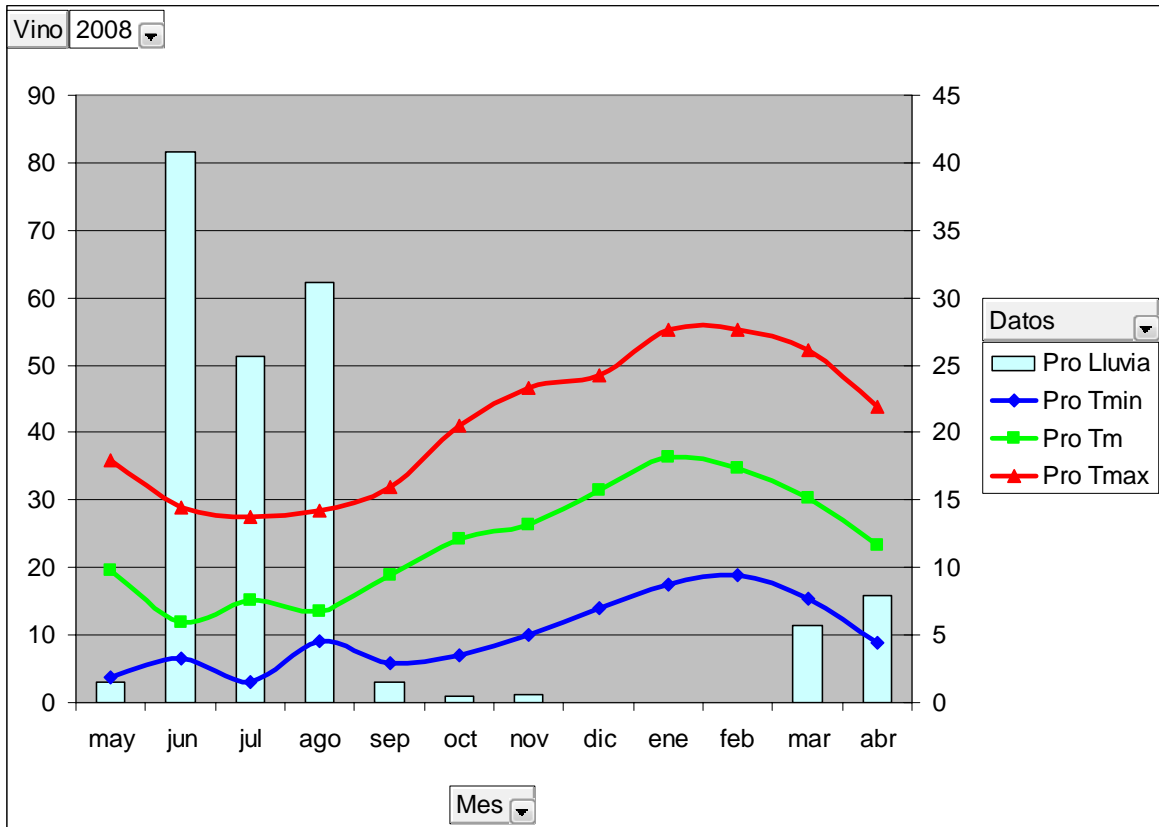
- In order to develop an optical sorting, we started to work with Bucher on a new technology. They came for several weeks in our winery to create a photographic database of the different type of berries and varieties in order to develop a optical sorting table.

The 2008 vintage: vineyard by vineyard

Las Kuras vineyard, Cachapoal valley:



Atalayas vineyard, Casablanca valley:



Apalta vineyard, Colchagua valley:

