# Isidore Vineyard
## Maule Valley
### Semillon
### 2021
**F4**

*"A Fieldcraft Bottling"*
*– farming wisdom passed down over the ages*

- Alcohol: 12,5 % vol
- pH: 3,08
- Acidity: 6,42 g/l
- Residual sugar: 1,06 g/l

- 4 145 bottles filled
- 14 barrels

## In a nutshell

Today's wine business would have the small modernise: spray instead of cultivate, scale instead of focus, above all reduce the cost of labour. But it's the labour that unlocks the flavour of the wisdom of farming passed down through the ages. We call it fieldcraft.

Just imagine old vineyards being shunned, not because they stopped making wonderful wine, but because modern day business claims they are too small to fill a truck, too far away from a paved road, they cannot be worked with a tractor nor can they be picked by a machine.

## What you need to know

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| The Vineyard & Farming | - 65+ yrs old<br>- 1 hectare<br>- decomposed granite soils and sub-soils<br>- old-bush head vines<br>- Harvested manually with our GWCo crew painstakingly separating Sauvignon B. in the field<br>- 1 - 1,3 kg per plant / < 3,ooo kgs per hectare<br>- farmed by hand and horse with traditional methods of dry-farming |
| Winemaking: | - fermented naturally in amphora / tinaja with skins<br>- some whole bunches added<br>- Seeds were removed when they floated to the surface and skins remained in the juice for 8 months. |

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| Elevage: | Aged in amphora, flex eggs, and old barrels for one year |
| Appellation: | DO Maule |
| Varietal: | 100% Semillon |
| Color: | Honey |
| Personality: | Sophisticated and nuanced, but generous. |
| How many lots? | 1 |
| Previous Bottlings | Isidore Vineyard – 2020<br>Isidore Vineyard – 2019<br>Isidore Vineyard – 2018 |
| Ageability | 10 yrs easily |
| Best drinking | House : 2021-2031<br>This wine is made with skins, but with very little oxygen. It has some serious phenolics. This is a white to age or an amber wine as they say in Georgia (the original Georgia with the Kevris). We are putting bottles away for a future library release. |

*This wine is a tribute to the resilience of the Semillon Variety in the Maule—forgotten and neglected for decades. It was the fourth Fieldcraft bottling so we made it Lot # F4*

## The Vintage

2020 was complicated. First, Winter brought little rain and dry winters generally make for Spring frosts in the cooler sections of the Secano Interior where we are. That said, old vines drink deep so their yield is defined not by the single season but rather by the two Winters of rain previous. Old vines also have better capacity for second budding allowing many parcels to recoup some of what the frost burns.

Flowering came early and there were hot peaks in summer. All of this had us picking early helping us to get a good deal of the harvest in before Covid became the real challenge of harvest.

In general wineries depend upon their growers for the labour to pick and they pick large trucks for efficiency- we don't. In the Garage have a team of our own and we go parcel by parcel picking small lots daily. (We literally do not need a selection table because bum fruit never makes it into a basket.) So when Covid hit it was relatively simple for us to create our own bubble and continue to work without contact with others. Our team live relatively isolated lives raising their own livestock growing their own wheat for bread and so on…

Thanks to the dedication of our small team we made it through 2020 and 2021 without anyone in our bubble getting ill, and what is more, brought in two wonderful vintages.

## House note

Amber in color this wine smells of lemon, candle wax and bee pollen with a hint of flor / orange that adds complexity. In the mouth, lemon juice, candied lemon peel and a touch of bee pollen mixed with white flowers and honey (without the sweetness). High acid with faint chalky texture make this a mouthwatering package. Tasty and with time in the glass: vast. A portion of the wine sat on its skin for 8 months, but with little oxygen. 13% alcohol.

## Hashtag

#gwcoisidorevineyard

## Critics Notes

Just released not tasted as of yet.

## Notes on Previous Vintages of this wine

La Cav – Mesa de Cata

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2020 Maule Valley - Lot # F3** **96 Pts**

Robert Parker – Wine Advocate

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2020 Maule Valley - Lot # F3** **94 Pts**

The flinty and faintly reductive 2020 Isidore Vineyard Maule Valley Semillon is part of what they call Fieldcraft Bottlings, "wines we make when we see an old vineyard that screams of potential but does not 'fit' into the modern wine trade: too small to fill a truck, too far away from a paved road, too narrow to be worked with a tractor. . ." Mossman explained a bit more, "As mainstream wants the small modernize 'like everybody else': spray instead of cultivate, scale instead of focus, above all reduce the cost of labour—it's the labor that unlocks the flavor of the wisdom of farming passed down through the ages. We call this wisdom: fieldcraft." I was blown away by the 2018, the first vintage of this wine, and the 2019 and 2020 are brilliant too and seem to have different personalities. This is a little rounder and softer, obviously

younger and less developed. When I asked him about the vineyard, he said, "uncertified organic for 60+ years." Amen. 2,671 bottles were filled in January 2020.

## James Suckling

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2020 Maule Valley - Lot # F3 94 Pts**

Very attractive and tangy nose, showing fresh orange and tangerine with loquat and a hint of resin, jasmine tea and saffron. Nicely chewy, with some structure and weight, showing good phenolics and natural, fresh acidity and a supple center-palate. Zingy, with some mango at the end. Very fun and delicious to drink now, but can hold, too.

## Descorchados – Patricio Tapa

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2020 Maule Valley - Lot # F3 93 Pts**

Este semillón viene de un viejo viñedo de unos 65 años, alrededor de una hectárea plantada sobre granito descompuesto (maicillo, como se le co- noce en Chile) en la zona de Sauzal, en el corazón del Maule de secano. El vino es fermentado en ánforas y luego criado en esas mismas ánforas y también en barricas usadas por un año. Tengan paciencia porque este blanco tarda en revelar sus aromas en la copa, pero cuando lo hace, los aromas herbales y los tonos a miel se roban la película. La boca es suculenta, pero a la vez moderada por una acidez que es tensa, lineal. Uno de esos blancos que uno quisiera abrir en diez años o más aún.

## Robert Parker – The Wine Advocate – Luis Gutierez

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2019 Maule Valley - Lot # F2 94+ Pts**

"I am often asked: Why do old vines make such great wine? I think the answer is that old vines don't make good wine because they are old—they are old because they make good wines," is what Mossman told me when I asked him about the 2019 Isidore Vineyard Maule Valley Semillon, which has a truly spectacular savory nose reminiscent of chicken broth and yellow flowers. The palate is vibrant and also savory, with an almost salty finish. Almost? I think it IS salty! I was tempted to just copy and paste what he has in his technical sheet, "Amber in color, this wine smells of lemon, candle wax and bee pollen with a hint of flor/orange. In the mouth, lemon juice, candied lemon peel and a touch of bee pollen mix with white flowers and honey (but without sweetness). High acid with faint chalky texture make this a mouthwatering package. Tasty, and with time in the glass: vast. A portion of the wine sat on its skin for 10 months, but with little oxygen. 13% alcohol." 1,584 bottles were filled in February 2020.

## Vinous – Joaquin Hidalgo

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2019 Maule Valley - Lot # F2 94 Pts**

The 2019 Semillón Lot # F2 Isidore Vineyard from Empedrado, Maule, was made in ampnorae and tanks. Golden in hue. The aromatic nose presents honey, blackberry and herbs such as dull and fennel. Dry and austere on the palate, with great expression, it is as refreshing as it is exotic, while the tension keeps things buzzing throughout. An unusual, rich, ebullient wine that will delight aficionados.

## Descorchados – Patricio Tapa

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2019 Maule Valley - Lot # F2 94 Pts**

Garage buys the grapes for this semillon from a small, one-hectare vine- yard in the Sauzal zone of the Maule Valley's dry-farmed secano interior. It's an old vineyard, planted about 65 years ago, back when the variety was popular on the tables of

Chile's capital. Today semillon is undergoing an important revival, and with this delicious white that's herbal yet rich in honeyed notes, we can include Garage in the group of producers trying to restore the grape's former glory. The texture is dense, and the tannins are firm, the product of skin contact for almost a year, which has given it an imposing, monolithic structure, although no bitterness, which is a common problem in wines of this style.

## James Suckling

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2019 Maule Valley - Lot # F2 93 Pts**

A medium-bodied white with aromas of gooseberry, chamomile, white pepper and lemon zest. Sleek, waxy and mineral with tangy, citrusy acidity. Good length. Drink or hold.

## Tim Atkin MW

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2019 Maule Valley - Lot # F2 93 Pts**

This small-volume Semillón hails from a one-hectare parcel of 65-year-old vines on decomposed granite soils. It's a tight, pithy, stony style with notes of lanolin, citrus peel and pink grapefruit, stony minerality, some grip from partial skin contact and a sappy quality from ageing in amphoras rather than oak. 2022-27

## Robert Parker – The Wine Advocate – Luis Gutierez

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2018 Maule Valley - Lot # F1 94 Pts**

A new "proper" white here, the 2018 Isidore Vineyard Maule Valley Semillon could very well be the finest Semillon I've ever had from Chile. It comes from a vineyard between Cauquenes and Sauzal that the González family farms by hand and horse. In the field, it's mixed with Sauvignon Blanc that was separated and sent to the local cooperative. Sixty percent of the volume fermented with skins in amphorae (tinaja) and the rest in tanks, all with native yeasts. The two parts matured separately for 11 months, and the part in amphorae went through malolactic, while the portion in stainless steel did not. It's all wild flowers and herbs and smells of the wild countryside in the spring, with intoxicating notes of pollen and beeswax. You don't really notice the skins of the amphorae; it's just a little darker, but that's all. It's amazingly tasty, almost salty, a white for food that should develop nicely in bottle. This has 13.8% alcohol, high acidity and low pH, the wonders of decomposed granite soil and ancestral farming… 1,300 bottles were filled in January 2019.

## Tim Atkin MW

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2018 Maule Valley - Lot # F1 92 Pts**

A 100-year-old parcel supplies the fruit for this impressive Semillón, which spends 11 months on skins and is partly fermented in clay pots, or tinajas. Fresh, textured and assertive, it has some subtle reduction, lime and citrus fruit and some tannic grip. 2020-24

## Descorchados - Patricio Tapia

**Isidore Vineyard Semillon Fieldcraft 2018 Maule Valley - Lot # F1 92 Pts**

Este semillón viene de un viñedo viejo, en la zona de Sauzal. La mitad fue fermentada y criada en acero inoxidable y la otra, en tinajas de greda nuevas, con sus pieles, por 11 meses. El resultado es un vino muy fresco, con una acidez jugosa y taninos provenientes de esa maceración con las pieles y que le dan un agarre importante, pero sin exagerar. Este no es otro vino naranja imposible de beber, es un semillón de muy buen cuerpo para cerdo ahumado.

## Anecdotal narrative / rant

**Story of Fieldcraft Bottlings**

The Secano Interior, or dry-farmed interior, is the cradle of Chilean viticulture dating back to the 1500's. Revived attention in wines from what are some of the oldest pre-phyloxera vines on the planet has led to interest and investment, but the machinations of the modern world do not always mesh with the gearing of the old. At Garage Wine Co. we have worked with small farmers in the Secano Interior ploughing the vines and cultivating the land for years now. We have built our small firm together. The vignerons' families have dry-farmed the Secano since colonial times, and not just their vineyards, but mixed farms of heritage seed wheat, free-range livestock, and local market gardening. Yet as South American wine exports have boomed over the last quarter century, it has grown increasingly difficult for these small growers to sell their grapes at a proper price.

Unfortunately, this success is isolated. In the region today, modern buyers want more for less and they would have the small modernise: ie spray instead of cultivate, scale instead of focus, and above all reduce the cost of labour. But the labour is precisely where you find the wisdom of farming passed down through the years: the fieldcraft if you will. With the pushing aside of this wisdom of farming down the ages, proper farming and fine wine are being undermined by short-term thinking.

At the Garage Wine Co. we think the wine trade is stronger with the small farmers in it—and the wines are too. In a world that wants more sustainably grown foods, these farmers have a 400+ year head-start. -