# Sauzal Vineyard

**D.O. Empedrado, Maule Valley**
**Cariñena / Garnacha / Monastrell**
**2018**

**Lot #95**

> "A compact universe of earth spice & perfume"

- Alcohol: 14 % vol
- pH: 3,22
- Acidity: 5,84 g/l
- Residual sugar: 1,13 g/l

- 4 087 bottles filled
- 14 barrels

## In a nutshell how is 2o18 vintage different?

- Over the last 10 harvests in Sauzal the wine has changed its varietal composition. First it was all cariñena, then we added Garnacha & Monsatrell and then the Garnacha from a second section until in 2018 there is equal parts Garnacha and Cariñena.

- With 2018 Sauzal V. has had more stems added (15 20%)
- Grower / partner Nivaldo Morales (and his wife Otelia!)
- Ancestral farming cultivating vineyard by hand and horse "originario"

## Bottom line

- with equal parts Garnacha & Cariñena the wine is more generous, more earthy and most of all has greater depth with more layering [capas] that open with time in the glass.

## What you need to know

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| The Vineyard & Farming | - undocumented old (It was very old and gnarly when Nivaldo was a child, and NIvaldo is now old so…<br>- 2 hectares<br>- old bush-head vines<br>- 1,2 kg per plant / 2,5oo - kgs per hectare<br>- On Coastal Range of mountains (much older than Andes and slower to cool) full of crystals and decomposed granite<br>- Cuarcic silty sandy granitic soils / subsoils<br><br>- Combination of original methods of cultivating the old vines ie. Farmed by hand and horse, accompanied by the lens, analysis and scientific ideas of Prof Alvaro Peña [Garage partner] and in-house PhD in Viticulture.<br>- Uncertified organic<br>- Pruned with the moon cycles, but not to a modern bio-dynamic calendar, but rather with local custom. |
| Winemaking: | - Ancestral farming by hand and horse<br>- Naturally fermented with native yeasts<br>- Open top fermenters. Caps were punched down by hand.<br>- Pressing manual.<br>- Small portion was made with whole stems stomped with clean feet—this part was more tannic and with higher VA and complemented the rest of the barrels.<br>- Yeasts native (we add Sauzal wine from previous vintage to a pie de cuba)<br>- No temp control (besides opening closing windows) open tank, no nada<br>- Pinch of sulfites after Malolactic that normally finishes a full 7 months after harvest with next summer´s heat |
| Elevage: | Aged in barrels over two winters— barrels third use or more.<br><br>Various cooperages (Sylvain, Berger, Nadalie – Alliers Noisette toast, and some Burgundy barrels |
| Appellation: | D.O. Empedrado Maule Valley |
| Varietal: | Garnacha / Cariñena / 11% Mataró |
| Color: | Purpuro profundo |
| Personality: | Broad shouldered, well-braced. Perfume and earth |
| How many lots? | Just one each year |

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|---|---|
| Previous Bottlings | Sauzal Vineyard Lot 85 – 2017<br>Sauzal Vineyard Lot 75 – 2016<br>Sauzal Vineyard Lot 65 – 2015<br>Sauzal Vineyard Lot 55 – 2014<br>Sauzal Vineyard Lot 45 – 2013<br>. . . |
| Ageability | 2018 is a brilliant vintage with more Garnacha in the blend than ever before. It is rather well braced and will age 10-15 years, but we like to think the wine is more approachable young with proper decanting than previous vintages. |
| Best drinking | House: 2021-2035<br>TA: 2023 - 2030 |

## The Vintage

- Superb to extraordinary (best year since we began in the neighbourhood in 2006)

- High pressure for mildew thwarted by close attention paid in December

- Many thought that the extremes of late February > 35 C would be too much, but the old plants shutdown and resist like shock absorbers.

- The many misty mornings of March (fruit cut in April) made us nervous but again in the long run it led to proper hang time.

- With old vines that drink deep any given year is the culmination of the years previous. Perhaps some of the concentration of 18 we owe to the very dry 2017. Perhaps some of the purity is from there being less growth of herbs and flowers around the vineyard. But the tannins and balance are very 2018!

- Maule in 2018 was superb. [Robert Parker rated it 96E – E for extraordinary.]

- What began with worries about the lack of rainfall turned into a terrific quality fruit. Specific improvements with control of mildew on the Carignan (Oidio) made for improvements which offset less rain falling which should have led to lower yields in the secano. If one manages parcel by parcel, cultivating the soil properly, the rains of any given year do not have the heightened pendulum effect many assume the olvines acting as shock absorbers.

## House note

Tantalizing aromas of blueberries, violets, orange peel, raspberry leaf and aniseed with a touch of aromatic herbs that provide freshness. The palate is electric, with pulsing acidity, ultra-fine tannins and very good length. Both rustic and elegant, wild and subtle. It has precision, elegance, balance and life. Shows no alcohol nor wood. A fresh, Mediterranean blend from a vineyard that was forgotten, revived, regenertaed and today shows what the Maule is capable of.

Hashtag
**#gwcosauzalvineyard**

*Scan me!*

## Critics Notes

Robert Parker's Wine Advocate
**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2018 - Lot # 95** **96 Pts**
The Sauzal Vineyard is now in the DO Empedrado, and I tasted two of the vintages, starting with the 2018 Sauzal Vineyard, a field blend of Cariñena, Garnacha and Monastrell from grower Nivaldo Morales, which Garage's Derek Mossman described as "a universe of perfume, earth and spice." About the blend, the old bush vines that have been worked by horse and following the moon cycles in ancestral ways, he also explained that "over the last 10 harvests in Sauzal, the wine has changed its varietal composition. First it was all Cariñena, then we grafted Garnacha and Monastrell and then a few years later more Garnacha until in the 2018 vintage the wine is composed of equal parts Garnacha and Cariñena with 6% Monastrell." It has a lively, medium-bodied palate with grainy tannins (think granite!) and bright acidity. There's no lack of ripeness, aromas or flavors, but the wine is very balanced. 4,087 bottles were filled in January 2020.

La Cav – Mesa de Cata
**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2018 - Lot # 95** **96 Pts**

Descorchados – Patricio Tapia
**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2018 - Lot # 95** **94 Pts**
This blend is 50% garnacha, 40% cariñena, and the rest is monastrell, all from vineyards planted in the Sauzal area, almost on the border with Truq- uilemu, in the coastal-most part of this area in the middle of the Maule Val- ley's dry-farmed coastal secano. And it's a delicious juice with floral tones and pure red fruits amid fierce, wild tannins full of youth and vitality. The flavors are deep, and the fruit never yields but rather expands as the wine progresses across the palate. Give it another five years in the bottle—or drink it now with blood sausage.

## Vinous – Joaquin Hidalgo

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2018 - Lot # 95** **94 Pts**

The 2018 Cariñena Garnacha Monastrell Sauzal Vineyard - Lot 95 is equal parts Cariñena and Garnacha and 10% Monastrell from an old vineyard in Empedrado, Maule. Violet in the glass. The reductive nose initially offers notes of gunpowder, wet stone and sour cherry, and subsequently opens-up to become much fruitier. The heightened acidity on the palate keeps the extract and concentration juicy even though they're channeled by the tannins. Manages the best of both worlds, delivering intensity and concentration while maintaining character and potency.

## James Suckling

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2018 - Lot # 95** **93 Pts**

A medium-bodied red with aromas of black fruit, walnut, bay leaf, tobacco and licorice. It's firm and structured with tight-grained tannins. Mineral and saline undertones. Juicy, wild and succulent. Carignan co-fermented with monastrell, blended with garnacha. Try from 2022.

## Tim Atkin

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2018 - Lot # 95** **93 Pts**

Based on Cariñena (Carignan), with support from 33% Garnacha and 17% Mataró, this is the meatiest and most shuttered of Pilar Miranda and Derek Mossman Knapp's reds, all sourced from Nivaldo Morales' vineyards on granite soils. Firm, chewy and serious, with notes of wild thyme and pine, grippy tannins and considerable ageing potential. 2023-30

## Notes on Previous Vintages from this parcel

## Robert Parker's Wine Advocate # 239

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2016 - Lot # 75** **95 Pts**

As with other wines where I had the chance to taste the 2015 and 2016 versions side by side, the 2016 Sauzal Vineyard is more elegant and has more finesse and a nice texture, and even if the tannins are there, the quality is amazing. 2016 was not an easy year; it was challenging, but they picked these grapes two days before the rain. It's very fresh, and analytically, it has a lot of acidity. This is just great. 1,901 bottles were filled in November 2017. It's lot #75. – Luis Gutierrez

## Descorchados - Patricio Tapia

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2015 - Lot # 65** **95 Pts**

Sauzal Vineyard Lot 65 Carignan, Garnacha, Mataró 2015 De un viejo viñedo de carignan en la zona de Sauzal, en donde también había país que se ha injertado con garnacha y monastrell o mataró, este es una verdadera mezcla mediterránea y funciona como tal. Llena de notas florales, a frutas negras intensas, y una acidez que marca los contornos de la lengua y una profundidad deliciosa. Es un vino tremendo en porte, pero a la vez tremendo en frescor. Déjenlo en la cava por unos 2 a 3 años, cuando menos.

## Robert Parker's Wine Advocate # 239

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2015 - Lot # 65 93+ Pts**

A field blend of Carignan, Garnacha and Mataró, the 2015 Sauzal Vineyard is produced with grapes from the vineyard of Nivaldo Morales in the village of Sauzal. It's an expressive, powerful, very Mediterranean vintage for this wine. This has quite a lot of other grapes, but the imprint of the Cariñena seems to be quite strong. This lot #65 was put into 1,908 bottles in November 2016.

## Descorchados - Patricio Tapia

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2014 - Lot # 55 95 Pts**

De aromas un tanto más maduros y algunos leves torrados. La boca es recia y jugosísima, ideal para esos cerdos cocidos a la llama por horas y horas.

## Robert Parker's Wine Advocate # 23o

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2014 - Lot # 55 93 Pts**

The 2014 Sauzal Vineyard is also a field blend of Carignan, Garnacha and Mataró (Monastrell) from the vineyard of Nivaldo Morales in Sauzal on degraded granite soils that allow roots to get deep into cracks. Tannins in 2015 were a little bit firmer than normal and the wines in general a little denser. Nivaldo cultivates his vineyards in an ancestral way, by hand and horse. A small portion of the grapes were kept with whole stems and stomped by feet and resulted in more tannic and slightly higher volatile acidity that complemented the rest of the barrels. It's more powerful, with flowers, spices and something earthy, resinous even. The palate is medium to full-bodied with balance in a slightly XL way, lifted by great acidity. 1,694 bottles were produced from three barrels of Carignan, two of Garnacha and one of Mataró. It was bottled in November 2015. Drink 2017–2027 - Luis Gutierrez

## James Suckling

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2014 - Lot # 55 93 Pts**

Soulful red with juicy and earth with meat and berry. Full body and beautiful. Long and flavorful. Juicy and intense.

## Robert Parker's Wine Advocate #222

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2013 - Lot # 45 94 Pts**

I visited an amazing vineyard from a grower called Nivaldo Morales with Derek Mossman, an old vineyard planted mostly with País and some Carignan, and some País vines were regrafted to Garnacha, Mataró (Monastrell) and Garnacha (Grenache). The 2013 Lot #45 Carignan Garnacha Mataró Field Blend is sourced from that Sauzal vineyard in the Maule Valley. A very similar wine is also sold in the United Kingdom as The Ploughmen. The nose is fresh and has tantalizing aromas of blueberries, violets, orange peel, raspberry leaf and aniseed with a touch of aromatic herbs that provide freshness. The palate is electric, with citric acidity, ultra-fine tannins and very good length. This is both rustic and elegant, wild and subtle. None of these wines show any alcohol or wood. This is a superb, fresh, Mediterranean blend that shows what the Maule is capable of. Bravo! Around 2,500 bottles were produced. Drink 2015 – 2021 Luis Gutierrez

Descorchados - Patricio Tapia

**Sauzal Vineyard - Carignan, Garnacha & Mataró Field-blend 2013 - Lot # 45 93 Pts**

Dominado por una acidez deliciosa, este tinto se mueve con nervio por la boca, como su tuviera su propia luz. Delicioso.

## Anecdotal narrative

### Story of Sauzal Vineyard :

The face of our grower Nivaldo Morales is well known in the wine world today but a decade ago no one recognised him – nor his neighbors. We met Nivaldo in 2010 after the earthquake when we developed a boot strapping programme to get small farmers back on their feet by making fine wine from their unrecognised under-appreciated Cariñena. Niva has been a tremendous partner grower over the years.