

Itata

Chile's oldest wine region

The hills of Itata are a fantastic place with a lot to tell. We want our wines to share the story of Itata's



beautiful heritage and old bush-vines – planted on volcanic and granitic soils. Through organic viticulture, dry-farming practices and natural winemaking we wish to capture a sense of place in a bottle. Our wines are full of life, vibrancy, tension, freshness and joy. Just like the sensation of standing on an Itata hillside, with the fresh afternoon sea-breeze blowing. We have translated our love for Itata's bush-vines into two passionate projects:

A los Vinateros Bravos: an ode to Itata's brave vigneron.

Focusing on Itata's most common varietals, País, Cinsault and Moscatel, this project shows Itata's terroir diversity and tradition.

Itata, Leonardo Erazo: towards an Itata grand cru. By vinifying the grapes of small parcels of our own Itata vineyards, this project demonstrates the full potential of Itata's terroir.

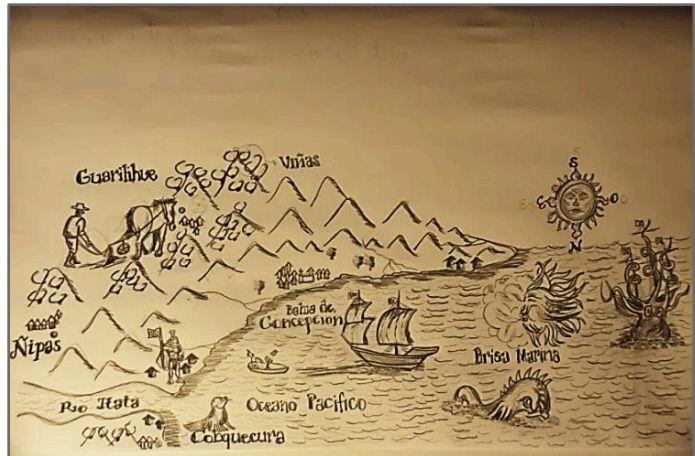
Viva Itata!

Once the viticultural center of the new world colony named Chile, the Itata hills have for a long time been forgotten. Only recently through projects such as *A Los Viñateros Bravos*, Itata has been regaining recognition as a top wine-region. After all, the fact that the vines can live up to 60, 100 and even 120 years means something; Itata's bush-vines have found a unique balance with their environment and the vigneron.

The first vineyards in Itata were planted in 1551 making it Chile's first winemaking region. The Itata Valley lies some 500 kilometers South from Santiago. In the 1500s this was a huge distance to go planting. No public transport existed and so the only means of transport through this still undiscovered terrain was by ship or horse caravans. This was not the only problem. At the time the area was inhabited by a very strong indigenous tribe called the Mapuche. The Mapuches have a strong link with the earth and a very strong spirit to defend the land they live in. Considering these problems: why would the Spanish conquistadores want to plant vineyards here? The answer can be found in Itata's climate. The rainy seasons allowed the Spanish missionaries to plant without irrigating. So the vineyards were planted under dry-farm conditions using a trellising system on Itata's steep granitic and volcanic hills. These characteristics have remained unchanged for over 500 years, so this is the Itata we still find today.

Itata lost its fame around the 1800s when the Chilean wine industry moved to the central valley. Big vineyards were planted and big wineries were born. In contrast the farms in Itata were getting smaller and smaller. Today an average Itata vineyard comprises about 3 to 5 ha. In order to facilitate the purchase of grapes from this amalgam of small vineyards the big wineries created "middle men", who gather all the grapes for big wineries and propose a fixed price for everyone. Setting a singular price and ignoring the rich diversity of Itata for centuries has made a huge impact on the area. Today grapes from Itata are sold for the lowest prices in the Chilean wine industry and its vineyards are slowly disappearing. Not only due to the harsh economic conditions but also because of an increased pressure to plant pines and eucalyptus trees in the region. The power of Chile's forestry-industry in the Itata-Valley is difficult to overestimate. Pines and eucalyptus trees are encroaching upon vineyards and native forests, destroying biodiversity and creating erosion in its path. Luckily Itata's brave vigneron and a handful of younger outsiders have been able to make a mark, resisting these difficulties and making wines that have impressed critics such as Tim Atkins and Jancis Robinson.

May the tide turn for Itata's old bush-vines. Viva Itata! Viva the bush-vine revolution!



A los Viñataros Bravos

A los Viñataros Bravos is a project in which we work with small producers in Itata. A key problem in the region is the difficulty for winemakers to find their way to a market in which their product is valued respectfully. By linking small grape producers to an international market and buying grapes at a fair price (twice of what the big wineries pay) we support old Itata vignerons to share their dedication. In return we have the honour to learn from the Itata experts about its terroir and the way to farm old bush-vines. All grapes are handpicked. We use native yeast and ferment in concrete tanks, only adding a little sulfur before bottling, allowing the wines to express the unique character of Itata to its full potential.

Pipeño Tinto

Pipeño is in Chile's winemaking DNA. Back in 1551 the first wines made in Itata were Pipeños, traditionally a blend of País and Cinsault. The Pipeños are the first wines to be released and drunk, much like a Beaujolais nouveau. We've adopted this tradition, carefully selecting our grapes from un-irrigated, un-grafted, old vineyards, to make this fresh natural wine.



País Volcanico

The delicate underbrush aromas of Itatas wild grass, red fruits and a little bit of cassis are aromas and flavours that characterize this wine. A fresh wine, delicate, marked by fine grain tannins that give a very unique structure and create a long lingering ending with a distinctive mineral character due to the volcanic soils where the old vines thrive.



Pipeño Blanco

Our Pipeño Blanco is an interpretation of Itata's tradition of Pipeño. This fresh muscatel, due to the early picking of the grapes stems from un-irrigated, un-grafted, old vineyards. Following Pipeño's tradition the wine is unfiltered and made to drink early after harvest. It's the sort of wine you enjoy sitting in the sun with friends.



Cinsault Granitico

Resulting into simple wines elsewhere in the world, Cinsault in Itata is a translator of its terroir; characterized by steep hills, the granitic mother-rock and a cold climate. This unique environment brings about a complex wine, which opens-up with time and through every sip.



País Granitico

This delicate wine made from País grapes has a fresh nose with hints of reds fruit and grass after a rainfall but is defined by its minerality (from the granite mother rock) and a distinct saline taste which lingers on in the mouth. It's a wine that talks about the terroir where it comes from.



Granitico Blanco

This field-blend of Muscatel and Semillon (approx. 60 % to 40%) has a fresh and long persistence in the mouth that reinforces citric notes such as grapefruit and white flowers together with a lengthy saline sensation. It expresses the granite slopes on which the vineyards lie and the Pacific Ocean which is felt.



Leonardo Erazo

Leonardo Erazo is a project that grew out of our luck of being able to buy three small old bush-vine vineyards in Itata: El Quillay, La Puntita y La Roca. We manage these farms with the same care and attention as the Itata Vingerons. No machines are used, everything is organic.

El Quillay, planted in 1867



La Puntita



La Roca

All grapes are handpicked, we only use native yeast, fermented in concrete tanks and a little sulfur is added before bottling.

La Ruptura

La Ruptura breaks through conventional ideas of Muscatel. This fresh and citric field-bled, made from a 0.6 hectare 170 year old un-grafted vineyard, breaths the fresh and saline winds of the Itata hills. Unpretentious, organic winemaking allows unique characters of the Granitic Hills where it thrives and Muscat to

flourish in this handcraft wine.



La Resistencia

La Resistencia reflects the stubborn persistence of Itata's old vineyards and their vigneron. Against all odds they have survived the test of time. This delicately fresh País, grown out of a 0.5 hectare 170 year old vineyard (planted in August 1867), orates Itata's history of honest, organic and respectful viticulture.



El Tunél

El Tunél embodies the journey of Itata's Cinsault. Planted in the 50s by Victor Fuentealba the 0.4 hectare vineyard, from which this herbal Cinsault with delicate notes of red fruits originates, reflects the unique symbiosis of the grape with Itata's hills. Organic viticulture lets the fruit speak for itself and its natural surroundings. Vineyard planted in 1959.

