



Altos Las Hormigas

Discover Malbec through a different lens: Altos Las Hormigas Appellation Altamira 2021 combines succulent dark berries, fragrant mountain herbs and fine tannins in an exhilarating expression of Mendoza's limestone-rich soils.



Alcohol :13,50 %

Composition: 100% Malbec

Appellation Altamira Malbec 2021

Mendoza, Argentina

Region and Vineyards

Set against the Andes in Mendoza's Uco Valley, **Paraje Altamira** is renowned for Malbec that combines expressive fruit with compelling freshness, precision and texture. For this cuvée, **100% certified organic grapes** come from two parcels of Altos Las Hormigas' Jardín de Hormigas vineyard, situated at **1,200 metres above sea level**. Planted in 2017, the vineyard is organised into distinct soil plots, with native vegetation integrated to encourage biodiversity. This commitment to regenerative vineyard management helps preserve the site's individual character.

Underfoot, two contrasting soil profiles create a mosaic. One parcel has approximately **80 cm of silty topsoil**, with dissolved limestone over granite and carbonate layers. The second has only **10 cm of silt and clay** above gravel rich in associated calcium carbonate. Large, limestone coated stones and gravels occupy about 85% of the soil volume. The 2021 growing season combined a cool, dry spring, moderate summer temperatures and settled conditions near harvest, favouring vivid aromatics, fresh fruit and defined tannins.

Winemaking

Crafted from **100% Malbec**, the 2021 Appellation Altamira reflects a sensitive approach to each parcel. Fruit from two vineyard plots is handled separately, twice selected and transferred by gravity into small **unlined concrete vessels**. Alcoholic fermentation begins with indigenous yeasts and continues at approximately **26°C for 25 days**. Gentle extraction preserves vivid fruit and supple texture. Rather than pumping wine over the cap, the team uses **manual punch downs three times daily**, avoiding aggressive handling.

After fermentation, the wine matures for **15 months**, with **50% in 3,500 litre untoasted French oak foudres** and the remaining **50% in concrete vessels**. Untoasted oak limits conspicuous wood influence, allowing the violet perfume, berry fruit and tactile stony character to remain at the forefront. The wine then rests for a minimum of **12 months in bottle** before release. The result is an expressive Malbec that combines fruit concentration with refreshing acidity, polished tannins and a lasting sense of place.



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Brilliant, vibrant ruby red with youthful violet reflections, displaying excellent clarity and inviting luminosity.
- **Aroma:** Beautifully expressive and layered, opening with fresh blueberries, blackcurrants, cassis and ripe cherries. Delicate violet perfume unfolds alongside orange peel, white pepper and jarilla, an aromatic native Andean shrub. Subtle impressions of wet stone and crushed minerals contribute to the wine's distinctive complexity.
- **Palate:** Juicy and energetic, with an impressively precise combination of fruit concentration and freshness. Blueberries, cassis and red cherries are supported by supple, finely textured tannins and lively acidity. A pronounced chalky sensation gives the wine remarkable definition and grip, while subtle flinty, herbal and saline nuances enhance its complexity. The long, persistent finish reveals lingering fresh fruit, citrus zest and stony mineral impressions.

Did you know?

The name Altos Las Hormigas has an intriguing origin. When the estate's first vineyards were planted in 1996, colonies of local ants began feeding on the tender shoots of the young vines. Rather than using poison, the vineyard workers sought natural ways to discourage them, joking that the ants were **the real landowners**.

The founders embraced this encounter, choosing the hardworking ant as the estate's emblem. In Argentina, the expression un trabajo de hormigas, meaning an undertaking requiring the patience and perseverance of ants, reflects the dedication behind the project.

The 2021 Appellation Altamira is particularly significant as only the second vintage produced entirely from the estate's own Jardín de Hormigas vineyard.



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Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Argentine Asado with Grilled Ribeye:** A natural pairing that celebrates the wine's Mendoza heritage. The beautifully textured tannins complement the richness of grilled beef, while its lively acidity refreshes the palate and balances the smoky, chargrilled flavours.
- **Herb Crusted Rack of Lamb:** The wine's notes of wild herbs, white pepper and violets harmonise with rosemary and thyme, while its concentrated berry fruit provides a delicious contrast to the lamb's savoury richness.
- **Wild Mushroom and Parmesan Risotto:** Earthy mushrooms and aged Parmesan accentuate the wine's savoury, stony character. Its vibrant acidity cuts through the creamy texture of the risotto, creating a beautifully balanced pairing.
- **Roasted Duck Breast with Cherry Reduction:** The wine's fresh cherry and blueberry flavours echo the fruit sauce, while its elegant tannins and refreshing acidity complement the duck's richness without overpowering its delicate flavour.



Robert Parker (RP) : 97 Points (2021)

From silty soils at the estate Jardín Altamira site, the 2021 Malbec Appellation Altamira is another benchmark example of Altamira's distinctiveness. A broad, expansive and expressive bouquet of crystal-clear purple flower aromas bounds from the glass, supported by a rich yet measured bed of black and purple fruits. The palate is both wide and broad, with a laser-focused, tensile core, releasing into a finish that is equally high and refreshing yet deep and grounded. This is all about flowers and textural breadth, sitting lower in the mouth with a pronounced horizontal richness, juxtaposing the equally fantastic Appellation Gualtallary bottling, which exudes a more vertical, stony profile with a distinctly herbal bouquet. Even while attempting to correct for vintage variation, I find the Altamira wine a touch more complete and three-dimensional, but it really is splitting a hair. Drink: 2025-2036. (May 2025)



Tim Atkin (TA) : 97 Points (2021)

Organically farmed on the Jardín Altamira estate, a terroir that is delivering remarkable quality at only seven years of age, this is a wonderfully scented second release, showing impressive purity, focus and palate length. Chalky and savoury, with raspberry, blueberry and pomegranate flavours, filigree tannins and a long, stony finish. 2024-2032. (Feb 2023)



James Suckling (JS) : 97 Points (2021)

A sophisticated and complex red with blackberries, blueberries, sea shells, terra cotta, crushed stone and sea salt. Medium-bodied, savory and juicy on the palate with a creamy yet firm texture. Opens and softens in the end. Drink now or hold.



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