



Catena Zapata

A benchmark of Argentine fine wine, Nicolás Catena Zapata 2021 pays tribute to 18th-century Bordeaux blends, with Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon in balanced harmony.



Nicolas Catena Zapata 2021

Mendoza, Argentina

Region and Vineyards

The 2021 Nicolás Catena Zapata is born from **two of Mendoza's most exceptional high-altitude crus: Adrianna Vineyard** in Gualtallary (planted in 1992 at 1,450 m) and **Nicasia Vineyard** in Paraje Altamira (planted in 1996 at 1,095 m). These sites, located in the Uco Valley, showcase contrasting terroirs—Adrianna with **calcareous gravels**, Nicasia with **gravel, sand and loam**—contributing complexity and minerality to the final blend.

2021 was a **cool vintage** with moderate rainfall, offering ideal conditions for slow, balanced ripening. Particularly beneficial for **Cabernet Sauvignon**, which thrives in these altitudes and cooler temperatures, the vintage enabled long macerations without overextraction—preserving freshness and tannin finesse.

Winemaking

Harvested by hand, the grapes underwent fermentation in **small oak barrels, concrete, and stainless-steel tanks** at 26-28°C for 15 days, followed by **maceration of 18 to 22 days** to build structure and depth. After malolactic fermentation, the wine was aged for **18 months in French oak barrels**, enhancing integration and complexity.

The final blend is curated under the guidance of **Dr. Nicolás Catena** himself, together with **Wine Director Alejandro Vigil** and **Winemaker Fernando Buscema**. The 2021 assemblage includes **46% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Malbec, and 10% Cabernet Franc**, all sourced from old, ungrafted vines—a nod to Argentina's viticultural legacy.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with violet edges, bright and youthful.
- **Aroma:** Highly perfumed, offering layers of cassis, blackberry, dried rose petals, graphite, and subtle oak spices.
- **Palate:** Full-bodied yet refined, showing dark fruit intensity, vibrant acidity, and velvety tannins. The palate is structured and linear, with long mineral tension and a persistent, elegant finish.

Alcohol :13,50 %

Composition: 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Malbec, 10% Cabernet Franc



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Did you know?

Nicolás Catena Zapata 1997 was the first Argentine luxury wine to be sold on **La Place de Bordeaux**, and it helped redefine the international perception of South American fine wine. Its stylistic inspiration comes from **historical Bordeaux blends** —before Merlot dominated, when **Malbec stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Cabernet Sauvignon** in the Médoc. Today, this cuvée is a **global icon**, produced from ungrafted massale vines that reflect Argentina's unique viticultural heritage.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Beef Wellington with truffle jus:** The wine's depth and acidity stand up to the richness and savoriness of this classic.
- **Grilled lamb chops with rosemary:** Herbaceous notes of Cabernet Franc and freshness pair beautifully with lamb.
- **Mature Comté or aged Manchego:** Hard cheeses bring out the wine's structure and layered aromatics.
- **Duck breast with cherry reduction:** A luxurious, fruit-acid harmony matches the blend's finesse.



Robert Parker (RP) : 97 Points (2021)

The 2021 Nicolás Catena Zapata was produced with a blend of 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Cabernet Franc and 25% Malbec. It comes from Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon massal selections of ungrafted vines from Nicasia in Altamira and Adrianna in Tupungato and Cabernet Franc from Agrelo. It fermented in small oak barrels, concrete and stainless steel tanks and matured in 2,000-liter oak foudres for 18 months. It's a powerful but fresh red with 13.7% alcohol and mellow acidity, perhaps because the Cabernet Sauvignon was picked earlier (and with lower yields) and they discarded the clay soils and went more for stony plots. The wine feels more streamlined and elegant. 2021 is a cool and very good year, following the path of the 2019, and the wine shows the classical herbal and spicy character of the Bordeaux varieties with pungent notes of black peppercorns and is spicier because of the high Cabernet Franc content.



James Suckling (JS) : 97 Points (2021)

Sweet tobacco, cigarbox, berries and minerals. It gets a little zesty and citrusy on the nose. Really refined and juicy on the palate with a lot of fine tannins. Silky, fluid and linear with very elegant, soft-spoken finish. 46% Cabernet Sauvignon from Adrianna vineyard and 44% Malbec and 10% Cabernet Franc from Nicasia vineyard. Really refined, long, and Bordelais. This is already drinking well, but it will hold like this for a long time.



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Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 96 Points (2021)

For some procedures, the 2021 vintage, marked by certain rains in February that tempered the harvest temperatures in March, represents the closest thing to a Bordeaux year that can be achieved in Mendoza. In that sense, the 2021 was an ideal vintage for Bordeaux-origin varieties. This unique situation is clearly reflected in the 2021 Malbec Nicolás Vineyard, which unveils a new label for this vintage after being aged up to 21 months in French oak barrels. The wine blends 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Malbec and 10% Cabernet Franc from Uco Valley vineyards. With a deep purple hue and a garnet tint, it opens with delicate cassis and Bordeaux-like nuances of ash, tobacco, black fruit and cherry. Expressive and compact, it features cedar notes on a long, lingering finish.



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