



Catena Zapata

The Catena Zapata Nicolás Catena Zapata is a premier expression of Argentine winemaking, blending Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, and Cabernet Franc to showcase the finest characteristics of Mendoza's terroir. This wine continues the legacy of its inaugural 1997 vintage, which set new standards by triumphing in blind tastings against prestigious First Growth Bordeaux wines.



Nicolas Catena Zapata 2020

Mendoza, Argentina

Region and Vineyards

The **Catena Zapata** estate is located in **Mendoza, Argentina**, a region renowned for its high-altitude vineyards and exceptional viticultural conditions. The grapes for this wine are sourced from the **La Pirámide, Domingo, Adrianna, and Nicasia vineyards**, each contributing unique characteristics due to their varied elevations ranging from **950 to 1,450 meters above sea level**. This high altitude ensures cooler temperatures and greater diurnal temperature variations, which are crucial for developing the grapes' complexity and aromatic intensity.

The soil in these vineyards is primarily **sandy-loam**, providing excellent drainage while retaining enough moisture to sustain the vines. The vineyards are managed using the **Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP)** training system, optimizing sunlight exposure and air circulation. With a vine density of **5,486 vines per hectare** and a yield of **1.2 tons per hectare**, the focus is on quality over quantity, ensuring each grape contributes to the wine's concentrated flavors.

Winemaking

The **Nicolás Catena Zapata** is composed of **54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Malbec, and 25% Cabernet Franc**. The grapes are hand-harvested between March and April, ensuring optimal ripeness. Fermentation takes place in vertical open barriques and small stainless steel tanks, with a fermentation temperature maintained between **26-30°C** for about **20 days**. Manual punching down is employed during the **25-35 day** maceration period to enhance extraction.

Malolactic fermentation occurs in barriques and small vats, all made from 100% new French oak, contributing to the wine's complexity and aging potential. The wine is aged for **24 months** in these barrels, followed by an additional **12-18 months** of bottle aging before release.

Alcohol :13,90 %

Composition: 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc, 21% Malbec



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Intense, deep purple with bluish-black tones.
- **Aroma:** Aromas of black fruits such as blackberries, black cherries, and black plums dominate, with subtle notes of vanilla and dark chocolate, intermingled with savory hints of green olive and stony minerality.
- **Palate:** The palate is tremendously complex, revealing layers of red currant, eucalyptus, and black pepper flavors. Black cherries and blackberries transition to cassis, followed by a hint of saline minerality. The wine is remarkably concentrated with a firm tannic structure, providing the backbone for the lush fruit. The finish is long, indicating the wine's excellent aging potential.

Did you know?

The inaugural 1997 vintage of **Nicolás Catena Zapata** set a new standard for South American wines by winning a series of blind tastings against prestigious First Growth Bordeaux and other esteemed cuvées worldwide. This wine is crafted from specially marked vines within the Catena family's vineyards, ensuring meticulous attention to detail and exceptional quality.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Bone-in Ribeye Steak:** The rich, robust flavors of the wine complement the juicy, charred steak, enhancing the meat's savory depth.
- **Lamb Chops with Rosemary:** The wine's tannins and complexity balance the rich, earthy flavors of the lamb, while the rosemary adds a complementary herbal note.
- **Dark Chocolate Tart:** The dark chocolate notes in the wine harmonize with the dessert, creating a luxurious pairing experience.
- **Aged Gouda:** The wine's firm structure and fruity notes pair wonderfully with the sharp, nutty flavors of aged Gouda, making for an elegant cheese course.



James Suckling (JS) : 98 Points (2020)

Cassis, tobacco, wet stones, iron and baking spices to the nose, showing class, restraint and complexity. Medium- to full-bodied on the palate with super fine tannins. Dry, super elegant and silky with a lengthy, polished finish. Really Bordeaux-like. Juicy and long. 54% cabernet sauvignon from Gualtallary, 25% cabernet franc from Altamira and 21% malbec from both areas. The highest portion of cabernet franc this year helped retain its nervy freshness! This is classy and beautiful. Harvested on March 12th and 13th. Drink or hold.



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Decanter (DCT) : 97 Points (2020)

Wonderfully aromatic and nuanced on the nose, so alive and open. Energetic and lively on the palate, this has so much spark and brightness to it. Really compelling from the first sip, the tannins ample and cushioning the slick black fruit and accompanying savoury spices. Feels lean and taught, but with so much flair. Really a lovely expression, so generous and well defined. Youthful as you'd expect right now but when this softens it will be a beauty. Just gorgeous, with a minty fresh finish. Wine director Alejandro Vigil, winemaker Fernando Buscema.



Tim Atkin (TA) : 97 Points (2020)

Fernando Buscema picked the components of Nicolás three weeks early to preserve acidity in 2020. The result is a brilliant release of this iconic red, made with Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc and a lowest ever 21% Malbec. Fine, detailed and ethereal, it has graphite and blackcurrant leaf aromas, cassis and blueberry fruit, subtle cigar box oak and remarkable palate length. 2025-35 (6/2023)

