

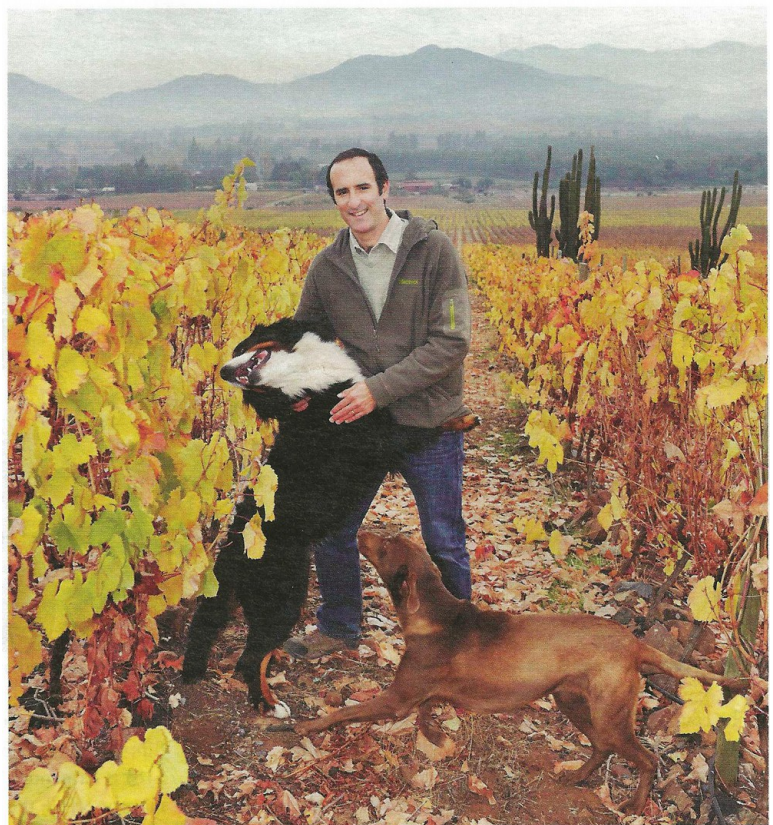
Wine Spectator

In the Andean foothills of the Cachapoal Valley, Viñedos Lagar de Bezana, a newcomer to the U.S. market, is crafting flashy reds from Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Viñedos Lagar de Bezana, which was founded in 1997 by the late Ricardo Bezanilla, has recently entered the U.S. market with a trio of exciting wines, among them the Syrah Alto Cachapoal 2010 (92, \$40). Planted at 1,800 feet above sea level in the Andean foothills on an alluvial mix of silt and loam over gravel, the 14-year-old vines achieve a fine balance between ripe fruit, fresh acidity and silky tannins.

“This variety is drought-sensitive,” says consulting winemaker Cristóbal Undurraga. “But the deep roots avoid sudden water stress, yet at the same time control vigor.”

Undurraga and Dutch winemaker Meinard Jan Bloem employ both pre- and post-fermentation macerations. The former, Undurraga says, “extracts color and fresh aromas,” while the latter “lets the tannins sink in.” For the Syrah, which has softer tannins than Cabernet Sauvignon, for example, the team also performs daily punch-downs for additional tannin extraction, lending more structure to the finished wines.



Viñedos Lagar de Bezana, assisted by consulting winemaker Cristóbal Undurraga, has recently entered the U.S. market with three standout wines, including the reasonably priced Syrah Alto Cachapoal 2010.

TOP WINES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
VIÑEDOS LAGAR DE BEZANA Syrah Alto Cachapoal 2010 Spice cake, licorice and mocha notes lead to a rich palate of kirsch, plum sauce and grilled herb notes, with a long, fruit- and spice-filled finish.	92	\$40