

FOUR

Discover | VIK Vineyard, Chile

FOUR looks at the latest experience from Vik Retreats with the debut of VIK: An Unprecedented, Holistic Vineyard in Millahue, Chile.



The creative force behind some of South America's most celebrated private retreats, Estancia Vik José Ignacio, Playa Vik José Ignacio, Bahía Vik José Ignacio and La Susana in Uruguay, offers guests a unique perspective into the VIK wine and terroir as well as the culture and art of Chile at their holistic vineyard and retreat.

At VIK, holism is a guiding force helping to make a great wine and an extraordinary experience. The philosophy that guides the entire VIK experience centers around the concept that every element, from the diversity of the terroir and natural relationship of the flora and fauna, to the warmth of the Chilean people, come together to create what is a truly innovative and exceptional wine experience.

Under the direction of Alexander Vik and Wine Maker Patrick Valette, a team of some of the most knowledgeable and passionate wine professionals have come together with the singular mission to produce the best wine that this exceptional terroir can offer. The goal from inception has been to have VIK join the pantheon of the great wines of the world. The vineyard location in Millahue (in the Mapuche language, "place of gold") was selected after two years of intense scientific research to find the ideal terroir to grow the best grapes, which would then express themselves in the best wine. The vineyard consists of twelve expansive valleys situated on 11,000 acres of land.

The plantation and clonal selection of rootstocks were carefully chosen following more than 4,000 meticulous deep soil studies conducted across the vineyard to ensure that each block of land afforded the optimal growing conditions for each root stock and grape varietal which include Cabernet Sauvignon, Carménère, Syrah, Cabernet Franc and Merlot.

Additionally, climate conditions were taken under careful consideration. Weather stations were installed and a team of scientists, wine and agricultural experts intensely researched all elements of the terroir including the diversity of exposures to the sun, wind, soil types and conditions, hydric flows, thermal amplitude and geographic orientation. All of these essential elements further determined the VIK location as the optimal location to grow the perfect grape.

Viticultural precision is essential to yielding the highest quality grapes. In order to attain that precision VIK is planted in high density ranging from 3,000 to 4,000 plants per acre with vines planted on the valley floor and on hillsides. The latest technology and machinery is utilized, but more importantly, tremendous care and attention is paid by hand to the differing requirements and needs of each block, parcel and vine while a specially designed irrigation system precisely controls hydric resources for each vine. Grapes at VIK are harvested by hand at night when they are at their optimal natural temperature, insuring that the grapes perform at their best through the selection and crushing process. They are then fermented in stainless steel tanks to maintain the freshness of the fruit and the aromatic precision of the wine. Aging of VIK is conducted in new French barrels, for twenty to twenty-four months, with racking every three months. The VIK wine is world-class and meant for long-term aging. The wine is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère, Syrah, Cabernet Franc and Merlot, which are blended each year in unique combinations creating a complex, elegant wine with finesse and fresh fruit aromas of cherry, strawberry and plum.

At VIK, sustainability is an integral part of the holistic approach to winemaking. The team takes great care to mitigate, recover and improve the natural landscape, with specific measures being taken to maintain the natural equilibrium between the vineyard and the surrounding wilderness and to preserve native wild animals and plants.

The VIK winery, designed by celebrated Chilean architect Smiljan Radic, who was selected following a lengthy architectural competition of Chile's best architects, is located at the end of this most beautiful Millahue valley. While visiting the VIK winery, guests enjoy wine tastings and winery tours highlighting the process by which this world class wine is created and the winery's design of utilizing the most innovative and advanced technologies to create an exceptionally efficient and green winery.

The winery's design features a uniquely transparent, stretched fabric roof that allows for natural sunlight to permeate the winery and thereby to operate without artificial lighting. The entrance to the winery is an arresting visual display of a two-degree sloping plaza of running water streaming over the space, which provides an additional cooling element. Placed throughout the plaza of running water is a sculptural installation by Smiljan Radic and Marcela Correa, Chile's inspired and talented husband and wife team. Walkways have been cut into the plaza, allowing visitors to walk through the water-filled landscape. The majority of the building is located underground to naturally cool the wine during the wine making process by maintaining a consistent temperature of 57 degrees using the natural thermal amplitude of the valley. The fabric roof, the primary architectural element, which can be seen from the outside, gives the impression of an enormous white wing suspended over this underground winery.

Perched on a hilltop in the center of the valley, Viña Vik boasts breathtaking 360-degree views across the 11,000 acre property. Featuring a floating, sculptural roof of bronzed titanium inspired by the surrounding mountains, the wind, and the work of Frank Gehry and Richard Serra, the hotel is visually arresting. This daring design is extraordinary and playful, and as with all Vik Retreats, completely unique and inspiring in its conception. Guests are welcomed through a central open-format public living area and gardens. The convivial living room offers a wide range of art including works by Roberto Matta, one of Chile's most beloved artists, and a diptych from Anselm Kiefer's iconic "Secret Life of Plants" series. Beyond the living room, guests find a beautiful cantilevered slate pool extending out over the valley and lake below, providing the sensation of swimming above it all.





The remarkable suites are marked by pioneering design and an extensive collection of artwork by Chilean and international artists. Each of the 22 suites features floor to ceiling glass windows with expansive views across the vineyard while also showcasing remarkable art and décor, ensuring a truly unparalleled guest experience.

VIK and Viña VIK are accessible via the Santiago airport, which is serviced daily by flights from international airports throughout the world. VIK is located approximately 200 kilometers or 2 hours from the Santiago airport and is easily accessible by car.

Find out more information about VIK Vineyard and Hotel here | www.vik.cl