



Country:
Argentina

Region:
Mendoza

Estate owned by:
Alejandro Sejanovich
and Jeff Mausbach

Winemakers:
Jason Mabbett and Duncan Killiner

Vineyards:
Non-certified organic farming
without pesticides. Only organic
fertilizer and Bordeaux mixture
are used in the vineyards.

Year founded:
2010

Home link:
<http://www.manosnegras.com.ar/>

Production:
Malbec: 20,000 cases
Pinot Noir: 16,000 cases
Stone Soil Malbec: 10,000 cases
Red Soil Pinot Noir: 8,000 cases
Malbec "Artesano": 3,000 cases

Alejandro Sejanovich and Jeff Mausbach are co-owners of Manos Negras, a winery born from friendship, experience, and hard work. The winery's name reflects their philosophy towards winemaking: getting down and dirty with a fearless, hands-on approach from bud-break to bottling. Jeff and Alejandro have worked together for more than 25 years.

The story begins at the famous Bodega Catena Zapata where Alejandro Sejanovich and Jeff Mausbach worked for many years together. Jeff is an American born sommelier who eventually became the Director for Wine Education and the ambassador for the Zapata wines. Alejandro Sejanovich is a viticulturist who is considered one of the most knowledgeable experts on the terroir of South America.

"Nurturing the wines in a gentle, non-interventionist fashion to allow the fruit and wine to express the terroir."

–Alejandro Sejanovich

In 2010, they teamed up with two additional winemakers to create an all-star team in pursuit of authentic terroir-driven wines. Those winemakers, originally from New Zealand, have extensive international experience. Jason Mabbett was a professor of winemaking at Auckland University, he has made wine in Australia, California, and in Argentina. Duncan Killiner has made wine in Israel, Uruguay, Italy, and Chile. This "super group" of experienced professionals have not lost sight of a minimal-interventionist approach allowing nature to craft these remarkable wines. Eager for new challenges, they bought an old-vine finca in Paraje Altamira, and in 2009 Alejandro planted his own 7-hectare vineyard. These two properties became the backbone of the new Manos Negras project.

Sejanovich has been lauded in the wine press for his pioneering work over the years. He initiated high-altitude vineyard planting with the Zapata family when he planted the highest altitude vineyards in Mendoza at 5,000 feet above sea level. He was also integral in conducting groundbreaking research on specific Mendoza Malbec clones. After a degree in Agricultural engineering, he went to Montpellier in France to further his wine studies. In 1993, Sejanovich returned to Argentina full of energy and progressive ideas. In 1994, he was hired at Catena Zapata to explore the terroir and soils of Argentina as well as rejuvenate the way the wine was being made at Catena. Known as El Colorado for his red hair, he was born and raised in Mendoza and grew up surrounded by vineyards that his father had bought. The family owned a small vineyard and farm, but they were not a winemaking family. Alejandro knew from an early age that he was destined to become a winemaker.

Real winemakers get their hands dirty, hands black with soil and wine. That's what Manos Negras is all about. Step by step this team has built something that will last, creating quality wines with great value; wines driven by the terroir and natural character of Argentina's most respected wine regions.

