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Drinking from the Roots of the Andes in Chile's Cachapoal Valley

Where: [Rancagua](#), [Bernardo O'Higgins](#), [Chile](#)

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*This week, Jaunted Special Contributor **Eric Rosen** continues his worldwide wine wanderings south of the equator in the Andean foothills of Chile, visiting some of the biggest names in its famous Colchagua and Rapel Valleys. So start looking for a bottle of Carmeneré in your grocery store, and join us as we taste through the wines of Chile. Salud!*

Yesterday we drank at a breakneck pace through the famous wineries of Chile's Colchagua Valley. We spend today tasting at a more leisurely clip in one of Chile's newest wine regions: **the Cachapoal Valley**.

• A Valley By Any Other Name...

To call Cachapoal (pronounced *cah-chah-poh-all*) Chile's newest wine region, though, is a little misleading since it's actually a part of one of the country's other famous appellations, the Rapel Valley. However, the conditions here are distinct enough from the rest of the Rapel thanks to its proximity to the Andes and its lack of maritime influences from the Pacific that it was given its own denomination.

Thus, it's well known for producing rich red wines, especially Cabernet Sauvignon and some of the country's most prized Carmeneres. The nearest major town is Rancagua, notorious for a bloody 19th-century massacre during Chile's war of independence.



• One Wine to Rule Them All

Our first stop in Cachapoal, about two hours southeast of Santiago, was at a new winery called **Vik**, which only just recently bottled its first vintage, a 2009 red blend that is mostly Carmeneres, with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and just a dash of Merlot and Syrah blended in.

They only produced 1,000 cases for their first vintage, so it's only going to be released at a high-end premium price (we're estimating about \$100 a bottle), and trying it was a real treat. They are currently building a massive new winery on the property, and aim to produce 15,000 cases of next year's vintage.

Though you can come just for a vineyard tour and tasting visit, one way to get to try their wines is to book one of the five rooms in their small inn, which is perched on a hillside above a valley and overlooking the nearby Andean foothills. A stay here includes horseback riding or mountain bike rides through the vineyards and hills, the possibility of a hike and picnic lunch, a winemaker dinner and tours of the vineyard and the winemaking facilities.