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Onshore Cellars top 100 of the most iconic wines and producers in the world

ARGENTINA



BODEGA CATENA ZAPATA

MENDOZA - ARGENTINA

Catena Zapata is a family owned winery located in Mendoza in Argentina. Italian migrant, Nicola Catena, founded the winery in 1902 but it wasn't until the property was under the management of his grandson Nicolás that the estate grew and became internationally recognised.



Nicolás dared to be different and challenged the winemaking traditions in Argentina, planting grapes where no one thought they would ripen. His high altitude risk paid off as now, in the Adrianna Vineyard, Catena Zapata is home to some of the world's best wines.

The high altitude vineyards, some as much as 1500 metres, produce fruit of an intensely rich quality. The teams at the Catena Institute of Wine meticulously study the vineyard, looking at every rock, every insect and microorganism to discover new ways of expressing the most authentic fruit in the wine.



“ Nicolás Catena Zapata is justly credited with putting Argentinean wines on the world map—by the best expedient of focusing entirely on quality. It's great to know he has started a wine dynasty, too. ”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW, Financial Times wine journalist

“ Nicolás Catena Zapata is a man of vision, of high intellect, always curious about others and about how the world is developing. He has been instrumental in changing the Argentinian wine scene more than anybody else, pushing it towards high quality. ”

Baron Eric de Rothschild, Château Lafite

White Bones Chardonnay

2014

MENDOZA

The White Bones Chardonnay has a bright lemon yellow colour in the glass. The nose shows an enticing mélange of apples and pears interwoven with stone fruit notes and vanilla. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied with a rich and concentrated mouth feel and flavours of ripe Anjou pears, apples, quince, and apricot with hints of vanilla and nuttiness. The overall impression of the wine is one of balance with a bright, clean acidity and lingering finish.



CHEVAL DES ANDES

MENDOZA – ARGENTINA

Pierre Lurton, President of the legendary St Emilion estate Château Cheval Blanc, first found himself on the sloping hills of the Andes in the 90's. He was captivated by the quality of Malbec wine that was being produced here and was fascinated by the grape that once dominated the Saint Emilion and Pomerol regions. He wanted to make the connection between the grape and the terroir, so founded Cheval des Andes in collaboration with Terrazas de los Andes.



Cheval des Andes

2013

MENDOZA

“ Cheval des Andes’ 2013 vintage is the result of precision work in vineyards and greater control of picking dates. This still has plenty of Argentinian typicity, with rich raspberry fruit and generous extraction, but the finish is lighter and lifted, which brings a welcome sense of relief. There is light and shade here, with touches of violet giving depth and freshness to the aromatics. ”

Jane Anson, Decanter Magazine

Cheval des Andes wines are a blend of Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc grapes from the high elevation, old vine vineyard “Las Compuertas” near Mendoza. The soil is sandy-loam with a high stone content and good drainage, which encourages deep root growth and ensures greater balance and durability. Warm daytime temperatures followed by fresh crisp nights allow for grapes to reach optimum ripeness whilst preserving acidity.

In addition to amazing growing conditions, the winemakers have one purpose, to make Cheval des Andes the Argentinian expression of Château Cheval Blanc. Through the art of assemblage they work carefully to bring out the most elegant and refined expression of the grape varieties making it the ‘Grand Cru of the Andes’.

“ The purity of fruit is so impressive here with floral, dark fruit and strawberry. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a focus and beauty that make you think. So long and beautiful. All about purity here. ”

James Suckling

“ Best of two worlds: a combination of the intensity of Argentinian fruit but dressed in a very elegant way with that French style. ”

Nicolas Audebert, Decanter Magazine

MATIAS RICCITELLI

MENDOZA – ARGENTINA

Matias Riccitelli established Riccitelli Wines in 2009 in Las Compuertas, 1100 metres above sea level. The highest area of Lujan du Cuyo, which is itself the most prestigious region of Mendoza, Riccitelli has 20 hectares of ungrafted old vineyards that were planted between 1927 and 1930. Here the intense UV from the sun and the long, high-altitude growing season conspire to produce some of the best fruit in Argentina. In perfect well drained and largely sandy soils the very essence of Malbec is produced.



“So much has been happening in Argentina recently, and it is young winemakers like Matias Riccitelli who are at the helm. Vineyards are creeping out from their heartland around the city of Mendoza and climbing up into the mountains – to the very edge of cultivation potential. Here, at altitude, the growing season is extended resulting in complex and full flavoured grapes which make for the most multi-layered wines.”

Rod Smith MW

The charming and fun-loving Matias and his family also make wines from across the country – from Cafayete in Salta (where Matias was born) to the cool vineyards of the Patagonian Rio Negro.

“Matias Riccitelli – Argentina Young Winemaker of the Year 2016.”

Tim Atkin MW



Republica del Malbec 2015

LUJÁN DE CUYO

“From a single high-altitude vineyard in the exquisite sub-region of Las Compuertas, comes this definition of Malbec. Juicy and packed with blueberry fruit overlaid with coffee and cocoa dust complexity and very mild hints of nutty oak. This is a deep and spicy wine which really defines the grape, from one of the superstar young winemakers of Argentina, Matias Riccitelli.”

Rod Smith MW



AUSTRALIA



GROSSET WINES

CLARE VALLEY – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Jeffrey Grosset is a one-man revolution. The Germanic heritage of South Australia means that the Lutheran settlers took with them many things from their homeland, including the Riesling grape variety. Seemingly unsuited to the warm climate of Australia, it took some time before pioneers like Jeffrey realised that the best Rieslings would be Australian Rieslings made here, and not ersatz German copies.



“ The vineyards are sited on some of the oldest geology (500 million year old glacial slate) and as such, challenge the appropriateness of the term ‘New World’ sometimes used to describe Australian wine. ”
Jeffrey Grosset

“ Jeffrey captures the best of the earth – the mineral steely nature of Polish Hill’s hard rocks, through to the more floral and fruity character of Watervale’s sandier softer soils. Truly delicious wines. ”
Rod Smith MW

An independently owned winery, Grosset was established in 1981 in the historic township of Auburn in South Australia’s Clare Valley. There are four estate owned vineyards, each certified organic, producing nine highly regarded premium wines every vintage.

“ We believe in producing the best examples of variety and place; Clare Valley rieslings which express dramatic differences between soft and hard rock sites, and uniquely sited cabernet from the coolest place in the region. Our challenge is to make the most of this unpolluted environment. We work organically and are not afraid to use different approaches to show grape variety and vineyard at their best. Each wine we make is testament to this philosophy. ”
Jeffrey Grosset

With razor sharp precision, mouth-watering acidity and zesty sherbet fruit flavours the wines have all the hallmarks of their grape variety, but with a distinct orchard fruit character which is all their own.



Polish Hill Riesling 2015 CLARE VALLEY

“ The floral bouquet is still to fully open its wings and fly, but the palate makes you spring to attention... As you come back again and again, the purity and balance of the flavours shine even more brightly, the length and balance immaculate, lime, lemon and a hint of apple exactly pitched. It is a finer wine than the joyous Springvale. ”

97 points
James Halliday’s
Wine Companion



HENSCHKE

EDEN VALLEY – AUSTRALIA

Henschke is located in the Eden Valley in South Australia and is a remarkable vineyard steeped in history. Johann Christian Henschke settled on the farm over 165 years ago and began producing wine on the rich, red, brown earth. Stephen and Prue, a husband and wife team and the fifth generation, now manage the estate and produce one of the best Australian single vineyard Shiraz, Hill of Grace.



A unique, delineated, historic vineyard that lies opposite an old Lutheran church, which is named after a region in Silesia called Gnadenberg, meaning Hill of Grace. With vines dating back to 1860 and biodynamic vineyard management, Stephen and Prue are producing wines of intense colour and flavour.

Recently, Hill of Grace 2012 was awarded 'Wine of the Year' and 'Best Shiraz' by distinguished Australian wine critic James Halliday.

“ It is an absolute honour to receive these accolades. Hill of Grace vineyard is a special site. The vineyard is only made up of 4 hectares of shiraz ranging from 70 to over 150 year old vines. The wine really is history in the bottle. ”

Stephen Henschke



Hill of Grace 2012

EDEN VALLEY

Very deep crimson, with violet hues. Captivating briary blackberry and mulberry aromatics lead to alluring exotic five spice, star anise and black peppercorns, with herbaceous notes of thyme and dried basil and slight gamey hints. The palate has incredible length and purity, with a focussed core of blackberry and plum fruit, wrapped by beautifully integrated layers of silky tannins and lingers endlessly with flavours of sage leaf and blackcurrant skin.

“ One of the greatest Australian shiraz's... It is a magnificent, flawless wine, with balance, length, line and purity. It has perfect colour, fragrant dark cherry/berry aromas and flavours, positive tannin and French oak support. As it ages over the next 45 years, it will achieve a lustre, a silk and satin mouthfeel, flavours and spices ever-changing and intermingling. ”

99 points

James Halliday
Halliday Wine Companion 2018



TORBRECK

BAROSSA VALLEY - AUSTRALIA

Torbreck is an Australian winery on the western ridge of the Barossa Valley at Marananga. Founded by David Powell in 1994, the famous vineyard was named after a forest in Scotland where he spent time as a lumberjack. He honed his oenological skills at Rockford, the celebrated Barossa winery.



Year after year David has refined the style of his wines, remaining faithful to his inspiration of the Rhône valley, perfecting his yield of Shiraz, Grenache and Mataro. The aim was to build one of the finest wine estates in the world and his vision was accomplished when the winery was named one of the World's top 100 Wine Estates by Robert Parker.

“ Every now and then, in life and in wine, we are presented with unique opportunities to express ourselves and create something truly remarkable. When these rare opportunities arise, we need to capture, nurture and develop them so that their potential is fulfilled. ”
Craig Isbel, Senior Winemaker

Interview with Andrew Tierney, Sales & Export Director

What, for you, has been the most important moment in the history of Torbreck?

The purchase of The Laird Vineyard from the Seppelt family in 2014. The vineyard was planted in 1958 is now part of the Torbreck vineyard estates.

How do you feel Torbreck The Laird has been received by the international wine trade?

Having received the perfect score 100 points on 3 occasions this has certainly given us great exposure for a relatively new wine. First released in 2005, the insistence on producing only in the best years (no 2007, 2009, 2011 or 2014) means that the international wine trade trust the reliability and credibility of Torbreck to produce one of the world's best expressions of the Shiraz grape.

“ Deep garnet colored with a touch of remaining purple at the rim, the 2012 The Laird is one of those wines you could just go on smelling all day. It opens with a complex perfume of kirsch, dried mulberries, blackberry tart and spice cake over cloves, mocha, dusty earth, incense, star anise, yeast extract and aged beef. The full-bodied palate is drop-dead seductive, unfurling in the mouth to reveal exotic spice, meat, earth and berry preserves layers, supported by firm, velvety tannins and seamless acid. The finish seems to go on forever—and this is exactly what you want it to do. Stunning. ”

100 points
Lisa Perrotti-Brown
The Wine Advocate



The Laird 2012

BAROSSA VALLEY

“ The 2012 Vintage will undoubtedly go down as one of the great vintages that the Barossa Valley has experienced. The Vintage is completely 'dirt driven' in that there was no serious weather event that pulled the flavour profiles of the wines either way. The cool weather conditions and resulting slow ripening period allowed us to pick The Laird with perfect aromatic ripeness and purity of fruit and the sublime quality is second to none. ”

Craig Isbel, Senior Winemaker



PENFOLDS

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Penfolds was founded in 1844, and since then has passed through the hands of several generations of visionaries and innovators, going on to become one of Australia's most famed and respected wineries.



By 1907, Penfolds had become South Australia's largest winery. It was propelled onto the global stage with the creation of Penfolds Grange in the 1950s by the company's first chief winemaker, Max Schubert. Schubert began experimenting with long-lasting wines and it was during this time that the tradition of 'bin wines' began, named after the storage area of the cellars where they were aged.

“All winemakers should possess a good fertile imagination if they are to be successful in their craft.”

Max Schubert

Following a trip to Europe in the 1950s, Schubert was inspired and impressed by the French cellared-style wines in Bordeaux and was determined to create something similar back in Australia. His first efforts of an aged Shiraz, the first ever Grange, were universally snubbed by management and he was told to shut down the project. Schubert continued to make Grange vintages in secret. These were eventually recognised by the Penfolds board who ordered production to restart. From the 1960 vintage onwards Grange went on to receive international acknowledgement and awards. On its 50th birthday in 2001, Grange was listed as a South Australian heritage icon and is arguably Australia's most celebrated wine.



Grange 2013

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

“This vintage is a blend of 96% Shiraz and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, coming from the Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale, Coonawarra and Magill Estate. Very deep inky purple-black colored, the 2013 Grange has a profoundly scented nose of crème de cassis, preserved black plums, blueberry pie and licorice over nuances of baker's chocolate, smoky bacon and fragrant earth, plus exotic spice wafts of cumin seed, cardamom, fenugreek and star anise. Unfurling and slowly building in the medium to full-bodied mouth with wonderful grace and depth, it reveals an incredible array of ripe black fruit, spice, meat and earth-inspired flavors, with a rock-solid frame to support this beauty (it should easily cellar for 40+ years!), while previously latent flavors emerge fully on the epically long finish, culminating in that ultimate Grange experience. Oh, yes.”

100 points

Lisa Perrotti-Brown
The Wine Advocate



Interview with Peter Gago, Chief Winemaker

Penfolds is a winery with a lot of history, what is special about the property other than the iconic wines?

Penfolds Magill Estate is the spiritual home of Penfolds and one of the very few urban single vineyards in the world, just 8km from the central business district of Adelaide. The site is heritage listed and planted with Shiraz vines. Visitors to the cellar door can still visit the Grange cottage, home of Penfolds founders Dr Christopher and Mary Penfold in 1844.

What does the future hold for Penfolds?

At the start of 2018 all on the Australian wine horizon is looking very bright indeed! At 174 years young, Penfolds has never been better placed. The global awareness of the quality and diversity of the Australian white, red, sparkling and fortified wine offer grows daily. New markets across both hemispheres are increasingly attracted to the 'seriousness' of this offer. Wines that age, wines of character. Wines that offer great value at one end of the spectrum... and at the other, very serious flagship styles that add prestige to any table or cellar. New varieties, new viticultural areas. Refinements in the cellar, improvements viticulturally – a continuum of innovation geared towards quality. So much potential – the soils, the climate, the people... the wines!

LANGMEIL
BAROSSA VALLEY – AUSTRALIA

Langmeil Winery is located in the Barossa Valley in South Australia and is regarded as one of the countries top wine producers, famous for having some of the world's oldest producing vineyards. Owners, Richard and Shirley Lindner and their sons Paul (wine maker) and James (sales and marketing) create unique single vineyard wines from the Barossa old vine gardens.



“Langmeil has the oldest vines in Australia (planted 1843) and a team driven by quality in every aspect, and continues to be recognised as one of the top Australian wine producers.”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW

Langmeil is a blend of old, pre phylloxera vines from estate owned vineyards as well as vines from growers in the Barossa region. The commitment to produce 100% Barossa wines means that Paul works closely with all the growers and recommends practices like gentle destemming and hand harvesting to produce an authentic, quality wine.

South Australia is incredibly dry so with little irrigation the old vines push their roots deep in the soil. With careful pruning these old vines maximise their strength and produce fruit of outstanding quality, depth, colour and flavour not found in other irrigated vines.

By keeping individual vineyard parcels separate throughout the winemaking process, Paul can assess each vineyard for consistency and quality in every vintage. He can highlight varietal characteristics and produces well balanced, complex wines year after year.



Freedom 1843
Shiraz

2012

BAROSSA VALLEY

“169 yr old vines, open-fermented, basket-pressed, 2 years in French oak. A brilliant exposition of elegance and balance: the idea that very old vines produce full-bodied thick fruit is 100% wrong, this has a gloriously juicy palate with both red and black fruits running through an extremely long palate. Mouth-watering purity. You should kneel in the presence of a wine such as this.”

98 points

James Halliday
Wine Companion



AUSTRIA



DOMÄNE WACHAU

WACHAU - AUSTRIA

Domäne Wachau is a quality driven cooperative situated in the heart of the Wachau region of Austria. With close to 440 hectares of vineyards, nearly 30% of the entire Wachau vineyard area, it is one of the largest wineries in the country. Producing solely premium wines, Domäne Wachau is also widely perceived to be one of the top white wine producers in Austria, only making wines in the categories Steinfeder, Federspiel and Smaragd.



The vineyards are found on steep terraces reinforced by old dry stone walls and are a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to the fact cultivation here can be traced back to the Celtic times. One of the most stunning wine producing regions in the world, without the efforts of the team at Domäne Wachau it is likely that many of these would have been abandoned due to the challenging nature of viticulture in this dramatic landscape.

Interview with Roman Horvath MW, Director

How was the 2016 vintage?

Vintage 2016 was low in quantity due to late frost at the end of April freezing the freshly emerged buds. However, cool temperatures and the long growing season highlights the spiciness, minerality and elegance, which are expected and highly appreciated attributes in Wachau wines. Harvest was demanding, while being interrupted by rain multiple times, but after all we were very pleased with the grape quality and expect the 2016 wines to have great ageing potential.

What is so special about Domäne Wachau?

Domäne Wachau has deep roots in the Wachau Valley. Our cellars are over 300 years old, built by the church from Dürnstein in account of the priest's love for good wine. In these cellars the tradition lives on and we still produce high quality wines for all the wine lovers around the world.

We are a classic, even somehow conservative (in a positive way) Wachau winery. Additionally, we also have our Backstage wines (our playground so to say), with wines like Riesling in Amphoras, unsulphured wines or Pinot Noir Rosé aged in small oak barrels. These wines allow us to go freestyle and play with the traditions and creativity. Wines with a twist!



Domäne Wachau is the only winery in the Wachau with wines from all of the most prestigious vineyard sites in the region, with famous names like Achleiten, Kollmitz and Loibenberg found on their vineyard map. Headed up by Roman Horvath MW, with oenologist Heinz Frischengruber, the winery is a model for sustainable winemakers around the world.

Grüner Veltliner Smaragd 2016

ACHLEITEN

“The soil from Achleiten is a colourful mix, leading to a distinctive “Achleiten-aroma” on the wines, a specific flintiness. It’s The Top Vineyard in Austria!”
Heinz Frischengruber, Winemaker

Achleiten is a legendary vineyard in the Wachau village of Weissenkirchen and is famous for wines with inimitable mineral character as well as its dry stone walls dating back to the 12th century.

“Clear, deep and fresh on the nose, the 2016 Ried Achleiten Grüner Veltliner Smaragd is perhaps the finest of the Veltliners of the Domaine. Medium to full-bodied, pure, finessed and fresh on the palate, this is a beautifully clear, straight and well structured Achleiten with a long and salty finish. Still very young, the 2016 will surely improve over the years.”

92 points

Stephan Reinhardt
The Wine Advocate



CHILE



VIÑA MONTES

COLCHAGUA - CHILE

In 1987 two experienced wine partners, Aurelio Montes and Douglas Murray, came together to alter the course of wine in Chile. Alfredo Viadurre and Pedro Grand joined the team in 1988 and they soon became pioneers on the Chilean wine scene. Now the largest exporter of Chilean wines, they are considered the 'benchmark' for all new wineries in the region.



Aurelio Montes has always been of the mindset that 80% of good wine comes from the vineyard and only 20% from the cellar and as such vineyard care is meticulous at Montes. Apalta, the terroir in the Colchagua Valley where Montes is located, is unique allowing the vines mild exposure to the sun, which contributes to a slow, although more complete, maturation of the grapes. In the same valley, the Marchigüe vineyards are where the red grapes mature slowly under the influence of colder temperatures.

High on the mountain slopes, Montes planted Chardonnay, Petit Verdot, and was also the first to plant Syrah. But the real star was Carménère, the long lost grape variety that resurfaced in Chile after being presumed extinct in Bordeaux, its original home. Montes continuously strives for quality and finally in 2005 they launched their first Premium Carménère, Purple Angel. Purple Angel has been recognised as one of the best Carménères of Chile, with critics of all over the world naming it a 'wine from another planet'.



“ This superb wine represents a whole new dimension for Carménère. ”

Montes

Purple Angel 2014

APALTA VALLEY

“ If you feel like a big, ripe and well-oaked red, the 2014 Purple Angel is for you. It's super-premium Carménère with 8% Petit Verdot. Very dark, opaque, brooding and dense, it boasts plenty of balsamic and smoky aromas and a powerful palate with fine-grained, abundant tannins. There are tons of black fruits and spices from the 18 months in spent in brand new French oak barrels. ”

92 points

Luis Gutiérrez
The Wine Advocate



ALMAVIA

MAIPO – CHILE

In 1997, Baroness Philippine de Rothschild and Eduardo Guisasa Tagle of Concha y Toro, sealed a partnership to create an exceptional Franco-Chilean wine. Over 50 hectares of the Concha y Toro vineyards in Puente Alto were put to the task of creating the first Bordeaux ‘grand cru classé’ in Chile and the result was an exceptionally elegant and complex wine.



Almaviva is a marriage between two countries. Chile offers the soil and climate and France contributes its winemaking savoir-faire and traditions.

This ‘château concept’ had been around for centuries in France as a way to honour master winemakers in Bordeaux, but Almaviva was the first wine in Chile to be created in this way.

The wine is a classic Bordeaux blend in which the main variety is Cabernet Sauvignon accompanied by Carménère and Cabernet Franc. Its launch in 1998 was a major milestone in the development of Chilean wines and it continues to be one of Chile’s most renowned wines today.



Almaviva 2014 PUENTE ALTO

The 2014 vintage displays a dark ruby, red colour, deep and opaque. The nose reveals a generous, layered and powerful bouquet of blueberry, blackberry and blackcurrant, associated with hints of cedar and spices, fine notes of vanilla, walnut, licorice and dark chocolate. Dense and full bodied, this wine fills the mouth with round, ripe and refined tannins, leaving an overall impression of balance, finesse and persistence.

“ A wine with wonderful blueberry, blackberry and hints of cedar and spice. Full body, dense and beautiful fruit. Chocolate, walnut and berry. It goes on for minutes. A fabulous wine. Better in 2020 but gorgeous now. ”

94 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



DE MARTINO

MAIPO - CHILE

The De Martino family moved to Chile from Italy in 1934 in search of the perfect place to make wine, settling in Isla de Maipo just 50km from Santiago in-between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean. The winery has grown significantly since then and now has 300 organically farmed hectares under vine.



Over the years the family has become a leader of innovation in the Chilean wine industry, focusing on crafting wines from selected terroirs and exploring and discovering the potential of different climates and origins.

“From the beginning of our winery in 1934, we have worked to create wines that represent us as a family. Our philosophy is summarized in creating wines that reflect their origin in the purest way possible, bringing origin and balance together. Over the years, we have explored more than 347 vineyards throughout Chile, thus covering most of the Chilean territory from north to south and from the Andes Mountains to the coast. That is how we have selected the vineyards that best represent our philosophy and which we believe have the highest potential.”

De Martino

Now one of the most progressive and exciting names on the Chilean wine scene, the winery is led by the third generation of the De Martino family, with the fourth generation incorporating their dynamism and vision leading new winery projects.



“They are an old family operation whose current motto is “Reinventing Chile,” and a lot of what they are doing is not “inventing” anything, but rather looking back at reliable old traditions, unearthing old dry-farmed vineyards planted in the past, and producing wines that reflect their origin, without any makeup. De Martino is now one of the leading producers in Chile with a very exciting line of wines.”

Luis Gutierrez, The Wine Advocate

Alto De Piedras, Single Vineyard Carménère

2015

D.O. MAIPO. VALLEY

In 1996, the family decided to label and export Chile's first Carménère, coming from the renowned vineyard of Alto de Piedras.

Complex aromas dark berry fruit, tobacco and black pepper are joined by a smoky minerality and subtle cedary notes coming from a well integrated use of oak. The palate is fresh and medium bodied, with a rich ripe fruit core, polished tannins and a silky texture. The wine has a showy mid palate weight and a long lingering finish. Although it can be enjoyed now, it has great ageing potential to develop further complexity for the next 15-20 years.



ENGLAND



RIDGEVIEW

EAST SUSSEX - ENGLAND

Founded in 1995 by Mike and Chris Roberts on the South Downs in England, Mike has been since been awarded an MBE for his services to the English wine industry. One of the first English wineries to explore making sparkling wine in the same style as champagne, Ridgeview has gone on to win numerous awards and gain international praise. A hugely popular name on the domestic market, Ridgeview is served by Her Majesty The Queen as well as at 10 Downing Street.



Interview with Tom Surgey, Sales and Business Development Director

Ridgeview is widely perceived as being one of the best sparkling wines to come out of England. How easy has it been to break into the international market?

Winning our first gold medal in the IWSC in 2002 was a key moment internationally, and when we won Decanter's 'Best Sparkling in the World' trophy in 2011 export boomed. As a family business, we make a very limited amount of wine and focus purely on quality meaning we aren't in a position to grow export massively. It's about finding great partners like Onshore Cellars in a market and building strong relationships with customers to ensure every bottle is enjoyed to the maximum!

What is the biggest challenge that you face as an English sparkling wine producer?

The cool climate in the UK means that frost risk at the start of the growing season is a key challenge each year. We mitigate this risk by working hard in the vineyards between April and June. We light bougies (candles) throughout the vineyards to create hot air currents and help protect from frost. England has the perfect climate for sparkling wine, but certainly one that demands high levels of work by hand and dedication from the vineyard team.

How does it feel to be the official sparkling wine of 10 Downing Street and to be served by The Queen at state banquets?

We are exceptionally proud of our relationship with 10 Downing Street. It is fantastic to be recognised as one of the pioneers of the English sparkling wine industry. We have for a long-time been served by HRH and the Royal family and had the honour of being the official wine of the Diamond Jubilee. One of our proudest moments was when our Fitzrovia Rosé was served by HRH The Queen to President Obama when he visited the UK.

“ Although my preference changes regularly, Blanc de Noirs 2013 is I think my favourite wine in our current release. It shows black cherry and liquorice, is a full, rounded wine with great length. A perfect wine to sip on the deck after a good days sailing. ”

Simon Roberts, Head Winemaker and Director



Ridgeview Blanc de Noirs 2013

The Blanc de Noirs is only made in the best vintages with a combination of the estates finest pinot grapes. A deep golden colour with a persistent fine stream of bubbles. Rich, earthy red fruit aromas are followed by a complex toasted palate. The finish is long-lasting and beautifully balanced.



FRANCE
CHAMPAGNE



BOLLINGER

CHAMPAGNE – FRANCE



Founded by Paul Renaudin and Joseph Bollinger and now managed by Jérôme Philipon, the famous Champagne house of Bollinger has been producing masculine champagnes with body, depth and power for centuries.



Over the years the vineyard holdings have been steadily increased with the largest expansion taking place under the management of the legendary Madame Lily Bollinger. She ran the company between 1941 and 1977 and was best remembered for her statement -

“ I drink champagne when I’m happy and when I’m sad. Sometimes I drink it when I’m alone. When I have company I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it if I’m not hungry and drink it when I am. Otherwise, I never touch it -- unless I’m thirsty. ”

Every stage of the production of Bollinger wines is meticulous and kept in line with tradition. Production secrets are passed on from generation to generation including hand riddling, reserve magnums, vintage cuvées stoppered with natural corks and a resident cooper. The house proudly preserves ancient skills and valuable crafts, making them the first Champagne house to receive the highly respected Patrimoine Vivant seal of quality (an award presented to companies who are committed to the highest level of quality, showing exceptional craftsmanship and skill).



“ Since 1892, Bollinger has been producing great Champagnes with a powerful, sophisticated and complex style. ”

Bollinger



As well as attracting admirers among champagne aficionados, Bollinger has a number of other fictional fans. Most notably, James Bond, who was sipping the champagne in Ian Fleming’s books from the 1950s, then regularly in the films, and for whom Bollinger released a special 007 Edition of its 2002 La Grande Année.

“ Bollinger’s 2002 Brut Vieilles Vignes Françaises isn’t really champagne, nor is it a wine. Rather it is an extraordinary and frankly addicting concoction all its own. Endowed with the most refined mousse imaginable and endless layers of fruit, the 2002 VF captivates both the hedonistic and intellectual senses to the fullest. Waves of subtle red fruit, smoke, mint and incense appear to be virtually endless, but at the same time, it is the wine’s textural richness that stands out the most. With time in the glass the 2002 just gets better and better. Readers fortunate to have the discretionary income needed to purchase the 2002 VF should not hesitate. It is a once in a lifetime treat for most mortals! ”

98 points

Antonio Galloni
The Wine Advocate

Vieilles Vignes 2002

CHAMPAGNE

An exceptional champagne for an exceptional moment. Three parcels of vines from the Bollinger champagne house survived phylloxera at the end of the 19th century. From these old vines was born this sublime Blanc de Noirs cuvée “les Vieilles Vignes Françaises”, carrying a memory which almost disappeared: a patrimonial memory, extraordinary and upsetting. Indeed, this champagne represents the excellence of the Bollinger house and all Champagne.



KRUG

CHAMPAGNE - FRANCE

Joseph Krug had a vision, to create champagne every year regardless of variations in vintage. He felt the essence of champagne was pleasure and when he founded Krug in 1834 he worked tirelessly to pursue his dream. Joseph's knowledge has been passed down through the family and as such his great great great grandson, Olivier Krug is the director today.



Krug Clos Du Mesnil 2002

CHAMPAGNE

“ At first sight, a bright and luminous golden colour of ripe wheat. On the nose, aromas of citrus fruits, white pepper and spices, slightly grilled nuts and brioche. On the palate, it is precise, pure and fresh with tension, vivacity and great balance. Notes of peach, orange, citrus fruit and liquorice are all enhanced by a very long finish. ”

Olivier Krug

Interview with Olivier Krug, Director

As the sixth generation director, what do you feel was the most important moment in Krug's history to date?

In my eyes, the most important day was, in 1842, the day when Joseph Krug, my great great great grandfather, decided to create his own house, producing solely Prestige and exceptional champagnes. His vision was that champagne is about pleasure so he decided to follow his dream, which was to offer every year, whatever the climatic challenges, the best and most generous expression of champagne. Not only did he achieve this but we are proud to share with you today Krug Grande Cuvée 165th Edition, the 165th time in a row that we have recreated his dream.

What is the idea behind the Krug ID?

The Krug ID allows every Krug Lover to get the story of her/his bottle. Not only does it give a direct access to all craft information but also lots of helpful advice on service (never use a flute nor serve it too cold), and pairings. Besides the obvious food pairings, I am especially enthusiastic with music pairings and I can confirm that the right music with the right champagne does enhance the spectrum of discoveries.

When did you first taste champagne?

I had Krug on my lips the day I was born, even before mother's milk. Consequently, I must be the only one who forgot his first Krug.

RUINART

CHAMPAGNE – FRANCE

Founded by Nicolas Ruinart in Reims in 1729, Ruinart is the oldest Champagne house. Its Gallo-Roman chalk cellars are a UNESCO world heritage site and every two years the finest sommeliers in Europe gather here to compete for the Trophée Ruinart. With a production of 1.7 million bottles per annum, Ruinart is considered a small house by Champagne standards.



“ The House of Ruinart was founded in 1729, well into the XVIIIth Century, at a time when a new ‘art of living’ was emerging in France. Sustaining, developing and exporting this art is a mission that comes naturally to the oldest champagne House. ”

Ruinart

The house has kept its distinguished rounded bottle shapes for centuries as well as retaining the values of quality, authenticity and elegance. The estate is now part of the LVMH group that also owns Moët & Chandon.

The Dom Ruinart range represents the prestige cuvées of the house. Dom Ruinart Blanc de Blancs is a Grand Cru Chardonnay, predominantly from the Côte des Blancs (70%) and the remainder from the Montagne de Reims. Dom Ruinart Rosé champagne has the same basis as the Blanc de Blancs to which 15-20% red wine, Pinot Noir from Verzenay and Verzy, has been added. These are amazingly rich and pure in youth, developing red Burgundian notes with long ageing.



Brut Rosé Dom Ruinart 1998

CHAMPAGNE

“ The Ruinart 1998 Brut Rosé Dom I sampled was noticeably marked in texture and complexity by both its long stay on the lees and considerable time in bottle, not to mention by its significant share of red wine. Sour cherry and rhubarb, rose hip geranium, smoky black tea and old leather, grapefruit zest and sea water combine for an aromatic performance whose counterpart on a still very sappy and vivacious yet expansive and richly textured palate is satisfyingly long-lasting. ”

92 points

David Schildknecht
The Wine Advocate



CHAMPAGNE CHARLES HEIDSIECK

CHAMPAGNE - FRANCE



Champagne Charles Heidsieck was founded in 1851 by Charles-Camille Heidsieck. An entrepreneur and visionary, he designed the house in his image and a wine reflecting his personality. Thanks to his charm and ear for languages, Charles confidently toured his champagne around Europe, rapidly earning praise and accolades from the Universal Exhibitions and a reputation with Europe's most prominent royal courts. Charles' pioneering spirit meant that he quickly became an ambassador for champagne in America, back when the 'New World' was still a mystery for many.

Reflecting Charles' independent character in the champagne remains significant to this day and is the role of Cyril Brun, Chef de Caves, who consistently expresses the Charles Heidsieck style - complex, deep, generous wines, always with precision.

“ My own acquaintance with Charles Heidsieck goes back to the early '90s. With complete candour one can say that the wines in the glass are as hedonistic, rich, ample yet elegant as they always were. ”

Michael Edwards

Given the importance of blending and ageing, Charles invested in the development of crayères dating back from the 2nd century; a labyrinth of 47 chalk cellars, connected by galleries, located 65 feet underground. These were given UNESCO World Heritage status in July 2015. Throughout the years the House has maintained a firm commitment to ageing, making Charles Heidsieck one of the most awarded champagnes in the world.



Blanc Des Millénaires 1985

CHAMPAGNE

“ Hindsight is an indispensable aid to understanding. Looking back 20 years, it's quite clear that the foundations of Charles Heidsieck's current reputation as one of the greats of champagne were first laid in 1985. ”

Michael Edwards
Decanter Magazine

1985 is remembered by winemakers as a year of exceptional harvest and optimal in terms of quality despite record frosts in winter which irreparably devastated part of the Champagne vineyards.



“ Immediately, the tasting of the Chardonnays revealed the potential for our prestige wine. Among them six were selected: Cramant, Avize, Oger, Le Mesnil sur Oger, Couilly, Vertus. ”

Thierry Roset, former Chef de Caves

“ Disgorged 20 years ago, the golden coloured 1985 Blanc des Millénaires displays a deep and beautifully matured nose with wax, honey, caramel and butterscotch aromas. Full-flavored, rich and highly elegant in the mouth, with great intensity, structure and complexity in the aromas, this 31-year-old prestige cuvée is fascinatingly vital – although there are almost no bubbles visible. There are dried stone fruit flavors in the finish. A great drinking experience. ”

97 points
Stephan Reinhardt
The Wine Advocate

CHAMPAGNE PIERRE PÉTERS

CHAMPAGNE - FRANCE



The Pierre Péters estate is located in the heart of the Côte des Blancs in the village of Le Mesnil sur Oger. Known for producing champagnes which are crystalline, mineral and elegant they have been making Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs champagnes since 1919. Rodolphe Péters took over the reins in 2008, becoming the fourth generation to lead the house since it was founded. One of the leading and most highly respected small growers in Champagne, all of the wines come exclusively from their 17.5 hectares of vineyards, which are now 30 years old on average. The style of Le Mesnil champagnes focuses on mineral power and capacity to age and Péters consistently produces stunning examples, mastering the steely acidity of the wines.

“ The always smiling and tremendously skillful Péters controls 17.5 hectares, twelve of which lie in the very best parts of Le Mesnil. For several years grapes from the [80-year] old vines in Les Chétillons were included in the vintage wine, but nowadays they make a Cuvée Spéciale from grapes from this unique location... The enthusiasm over this wine all over the world is huge—and that’s before anyone has had a chance to taste a mature bottle. Le Mesnil’s wines take a long time to mature, but champagne from Peters offers from the start an accessible fruitiness that resembles tangerine and a large portion of butterscotch and nut aromas. With age they become majestic and deep as a water well, full of coffee and walnut aromas and a fleeting vibrant exotic fruitiness. Pierre Péters is a hidden treasure of Champagne... and the prices are laughable considering the quality of the wines. ”

Richard Juhlin, 4000 Champagnes



Les Chétillons Cuvée Spéciale Blanc de Blancs Brut 2009

CHAMPAGNE

Les Chétillons is a lieu-dit located in the grand cru village of Le Mesnil sur Oger and enjoys an almost perfect aspect. Three parcels of old vines, ranging from 40 - 70 years of age, are vinified separately and then blended to produce a legendary single vineyard vintage cuvée. First produced in 1971, all the power and mineralogy of Le Mesnil’s calcareous soil is expressed in this wine.

“ Péter’s prestige cuvée offers a rich and complex, chalky and buttery nose with flavors of fresh mushrooms, honey, brittle and really ripe Chardonnay fruit. However, despite its richness, the wine indicates a great purity and elegance—and this is exactly what you get on the palate. Due to its shocking purity, this 2009 is incredibly fresh and seemingly light on the palate, but rich and complex at the same time. The finish is forcefully mineral, highly complex, salty and very, very long. It is provided with a piquant grip and mouthwatering lemon flavors in the aftertaste. The total production is 7,000 bottles and every bottle you don’t drink will be drunk by somebody else. ”

95 Points

Stephan Reinhardt
The Wine Advocate

LOUIS ROEDERER

CHAMPAGNE - FRANCE

Established at the end of the eighteenth century, Louis Roederer is one of the last great Champagne houses to remain independent and family-run. The estate was inherited by Louis Roederer in 1833, who gave it his name and forged the wine's unique style, character and taste. Under his visionary leadership the fame and reputation of the house of Louis Roederer was firmly established.



© Eric Zeziola

Louis Roederer's champagnes all share an attractive and direct expression and a dense, fresh, and sophisticated attack that develops into a sparkling and subtle bouquet. This is complemented by vivacious effervescence and delicious acidity. These sunny, pure, chiselled, and harmonious wines have a natural gift for creating pleasure: each wine has a unique way of embodying Louis Roederer's distinctive style and constant quest for perfection.

The idea for the cuvée Brut Nature was born in 2006 in the Louis Roederer vineyards, and it is the first 'new' champagne to be released from the house since the 1970s. This champagne is the result of an encounter between a Champagne house working alongside nature and a creative genius with a free spirit: Philippe Starck.

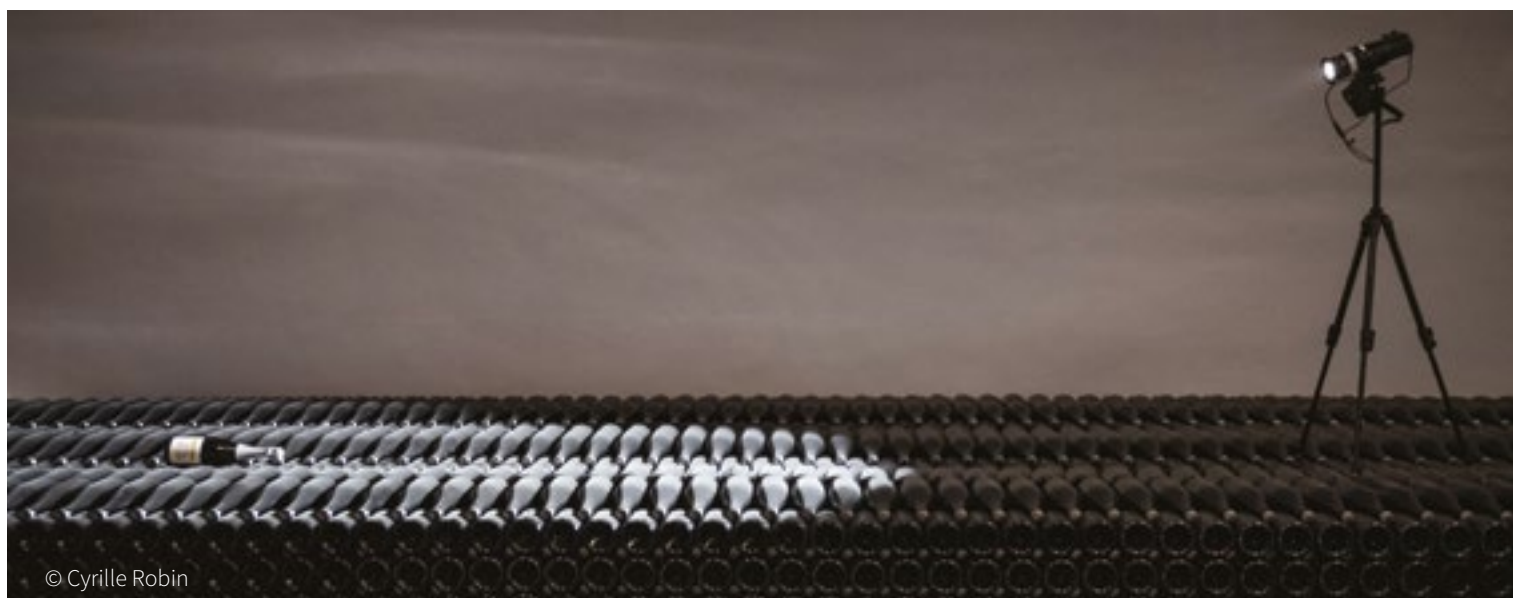
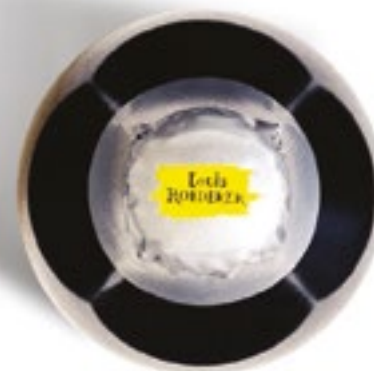
One of the most famous designers in the world, Philippe Starck is by no means a stranger to the yachting industry with a fleet of super yachts showcasing his considerable talent including the likes of both Motor Yacht A and Sailing Yacht A as well as Motor Yacht Venus.

“ The first adventure was a memorable experience. We worked with Roederer to create a unique, diagonal and dynamic language that stems from the work in the vineyards and results in a remarkably precise reinvention of an evolving champagne. We adhered to the same codes with the Brut Nature 2009 and once again relied on a concept and words in order to create a wine with no preconceptions. We sought to produce a perfectly honed, elegant, vertical and honest champagne, balanced out by its terroir. ”
Philippe Starck

The foundations for the Brut Nature 2009 was that it should be honest, minimal, diagonal and modern. A champagne with no sugar dosage, the Brut Nature 2009 was produced as a demi-mousse and is a paradox in balance, the dual discourse of a vertical, refined wine that reflects an exceptionally rich history. It is the embodiment of an abstract idea nurtured by Louis Roederer.

“ It is the marriage of the king of punks to the Queen of England. ”

Philippe Starck



© Cyrille Robin

Interview with Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon, Cellar Master

How does the Brut Nature compare to the rest of the Roederer range?

This is without a doubt the least Roederer in style of all our champagnes, as well as the most modern. It was the perfect opportunity to move away from our usual habits and shake up our methods. This wine was born from an abstraction and has evolved to become this idea.

How did you decide on the style of wine?

We came up with the idea of making a fresh cuvée from clay soils in a sunny year. In order to achieve this, we did exactly the opposite of what we would normally do when crafting a new cuvée. We started with the finished article and then moved back up the process of its creation and construction.

2009 was a warm vintage, how would you rate it?

2009 was incomparable in terms of quality and produced consistent, fresh, crunchy grapes. The wines are more Burgundian in character in hot years and are characterised by a gentle freshness and a pure expression of their terroir.

The packaging was designed to reflect the champagne, a work of purity with nothing to hide.

Philippe Starck created the Brut Nature 2009 label in the spirit of “a man who has created a champagne that he is proud of. He draws the beautiful, classical script on a piece of white paper that he happened to come across, a flyleaf of a book or a sheet from his daughter’s sketch book. Then, simply, naturally, he underlines the significant words in felt-tip. This champagne requires nothing artificial. Beauty is revealed at its very core, when there is nothing left to remove. This is the case with Brut Nature 2009, the only thing left to remove is the cork in order to drink the champagne.”



“ A new page has been written and the story continues. It is like the second volume of a literary work penned by Louis Roederer. Champagne is a project, a relationship with the other, a celebration, an encounter. It’s love. ”

Philippe Starck

Brut Nature 2009

CHAMPAGNE

Brut Nature 2009 offers a true reflection of its soil with a stunning array of ripe fruit aromas. The nose offers an explosion of red and yellow plums, apricot kernel and a touch of red fruit complemented by notes of white flowers, acacia, broom and mimosa blossom. Its velvety texture and lively freshness lend it a cheerful character. It is impulsive and bright with a pleasant bitterness on the attack, delicate beads of mousse and a long, lingering finish.



FRANCE

ROSÉ



CHÂTEAU D'ESCLANS

CÔTES DE PROVENCE - FRANCE

Château d'Esclans lies in the centre of the Department of the Var, where the majority of Provence rosé is produced. The first traces of the château's site date back to Gaullist times during which the location served as a lookout point to spot intruders coming by boat into the Gulf of Frejus. The property was bought by Sacha Lichine, son of famous Alexis Lichine who owned Château Prieuré Lichine in Margaux, in 2006 with the intention of making the world's best rosé. Combined with the efforts of Patrick Leon, who was previously Managing Director of Mouton Rothschild, his wines have gone on to receive international acclaim.



Sacha felt that rosé had an opportunity to become more serious in addition to being served and consumed by a broader audience. Since then he has built a world class brand while providing a strong contribution to the unprecedented growth of the rosé category.

With 44 hectares under vine Esclans, is known for its old Grenache vines, some of which are as old as 90 years in the highest vineyards. In 2006, Château d'Esclans made a few barrels of rosé from an 80 year old vineyard and the flagship wine Garrus was born.



“This is a spherical wine with a gossamer sheen. This will be a typically long-lived Garrus, and it will show a more fluid and lively side to this label's character than we have seen before, but don't, for a second take your eye off this wine because it will bite. There is a rapier-sharp acidity here which is every bit as combative as in years gone by and, dare I say it, it seems even more finessed in this department than in any previous vintage. This is a fascinating wine and one which I anticipate will prove even more successful to newcomers to Esclans than its preceding vintage, simply because the fruit is so damned stunning already.”

Matthew Jukes

“Best rosé in the world? I'm impressed!”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW

“Greatest rosé ever.”

James Suckling

Garrus 2016

CÔTES DE PROVENCE

Only the best quality fruit is selected in the production of Garrus, from the top parcels of 80 year old Grenache as well as some Rolle, or Vermentino as it is known in Italy. Unlike most rosé, it is a wine designed to age.

The wine is barrel fermented and then aged for ten months in barrel on the lees.



FRANCE

ALSACE



DOMAINE WEINBACH

ALSACE – FRANCE

Domaine Weinbach is situated at the foot of the Schlossberg hill in Alsace and is named after a small stream, ‘Wine Brook’, that runs through the Estate. Founded in 1612 by Capuchin monks and then taken over by the Faller brothers in 1898, it is now in the hands of Catherine Faller and her son Théo who produce some of the country’s finest wines.



“ I visit a lot of wine estates, but this is one visit I will remember for a long time. Weinbach, based in Kientzheim, is one of the star domaines of Alsace. ”

Jamie Goode, wineanorak.com

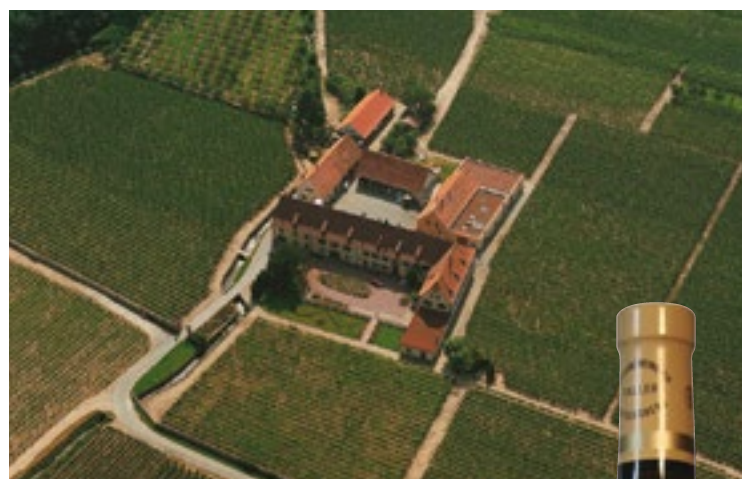
Domaine Weinbach farms biodynamically and hand harvest all of the crop with a view to quality over quantity. Each vineyard has its own specific terroir, which along with the other unique characteristics of grape and vintage, shimmer through these elegant and sophisticated wines thanks to their ageing in large old oak foudres.

Catherine and Théo grow a variety of grapes within the estate - Pinot Gris, Gewurztraminer, Muscat, Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc and Sylvaner - but it is Riesling that is the king of Alsace wine and at the hearts of the Faller family. The Domaine owns 8 hectares of Riesling vineyards and they were among the first in Alsace to receive Grand Cru status in 1975.

On a base of granite rocks, the soils are brown, slightly acidic, and pebbly. The Schlossberg’s steep, south-facing slopes ensure exposure to optimal sunshine. The soils are very well drained and warm up very rapidly producing delicate fruit with a bouquet of great finesse.

“ I have already nailed my colours to the mast by listing Domaine Weinbach in my 100 Most Iconic Wine Estates book. I am always absolutely mesmerised by the thrilling wines from this Domaine. ”

Matthew Jukes



Riesling Schlossberg 2016

ALSACE GRAND CRU

Offers a fine nose of white flowers and white peach with a subtle hint of minerals. 2016 displays a fine palate with a beautiful and crystal clear acidity wrapped in pure and bright fruit. A delicate, penetrating and intense wine combining power, concentration, fruity juiciness with a firm underlying minerality framing the flavours. Elegantly textured Riesling with a harmonious and long finish.

“ Smoky nose. Then lots of nervy fruit on the palate. This is very refined and should grow old gracefully. Very clean and refreshing. Real tingle. Very fair price compared with the white burgundies. Long. ”

17/20

Jancis Robinson OBE MW



DOMAINE ZIND-HUMBRECHT

ALSACE - FRANCE

Domaine Zind-Humbrecht was created in 1959 by the marriage of two well-respected families who had been producing wine in Alsace for many years. The domaine is now run by Master of Wine, Oliver Humbrecht, who has been described by Robert Parker as one of the greatest white winemakers on earth.



Oliver is passionate about his small family domain of 40 hectares. The Humbrecht family has been producing wine since 1620 and Oliver still uses the same non-interventionist and biodynamic farming principles today. There are no pumps in the winery, the wine is never filtered and no cultured yeasts are used. As a result the wines of Zind-Humbrecht are concentrated, complex, vibrant and balanced.

“Winegrowing is a passion that has been passed down from father to son in the Humbrecht family since the 17th century. Domaine Zind Humbrecht today comprises of 40 hectares of vines, spread out over an array of different terroirs in the geological patchwork which is the Alsatian wine region and birthplace of our noble grape varieties.”

Domaine Zind-Humbrecht

“He may very well be the ultimate intellectual of the wine world, a god from Alsace.”

Robert Parker

The level of residual sugar in the wines may vary considerably between vintages. In order to guide the consumer as to what they may expect inside the bottle, Zind-Humbrecht introduced a sweetness index on the labels of their bottles from the 2001 vintage onwards. This index is a number from 1 to 5, which is found in fine print as “Indice 1” to “Indice 5”, typically next to the alcoholic content. The index is assigned based on an overall impression of the wine.



Pinot Gris Clos Jesbel Vendange Tardive 2006

ALSACE

“This vineyard is quite amazing, because every single year it shows its capacity to produce rich sweet wines. We don't think that we will be able to produce one year a dry Jesbal! The combination of warm precocious climate and rich marl-gypsum soil (that keeps good humidity) allows for such botrytis regularity. The vineyard can also take huge concentrations because it doesn't go in the direction of exotic sweet easy wines, but rather keeps a complex structure and flavour profile that can age very well. The 2006 was heavily botrytised and the fermentation stopped with a very sweet balance.”

Domaine Zind-Humbrecht



FRANCE
LOIRE



DOMAINE DES BAUMARD

SAVENNIÈRES - LOIRE

Domaine des Baumard is situated right in the heart of the Anjou, in the town of Rochefort-Sur-Loire, just south of Savennières itself. The property has been in the Baumard family since 1634, but it was reconstituted and improved by Jean Baumard in the mid-1950s. Since 1992 the Estate has been run with meticulous care by Jean's son, Florent, and the domaine is now regarded as one of the best producers in the Loire Valley and one of the greatest producers of white wine in the world.



Clos du Papillon 2011

SAVENNIÈRES

One of the finest examples of Savennières from the single-vineyard 'Clos du Papillon', named after its butterfly shape. Baumard owns 7ha of this famous 14ha vineyard producing wines from 35 year old Chenin Blanc vines that are amongst the most unique and rewarding in the world - honeyed, dry whites of unmatched concentration, perfume and longevity.

Interview with Florent Baumard, Owner & Winemaker

You were one of the first fine wine makers to move towards bottling under screw cap, what was your driving force to do so?

Screw cap and crown caps are, so far, the only reliable closures to protect a wine from age (oxidation) in a glass bottle. They are neutral, airtight and leak-proof and avoid oxidation meaning that each bottle will taste the same, preserving the freshness of flavour. They also make storage easier as it makes no difference if the wine is stored horizontally or vertically and the wine is able to age according to its own qualities. Some of my wines can age for over a century so it is very important to have efficient closures.

What do you like most about the wine business?

What I like most about the wine life (business is not the right word for me) is the diversity. The cycle is annual, but never the same. It is worrying and exciting at the same time.

If you could only drink one wine for the rest of your life what would it be?

A Savennières Clos du Papillon of course!
It makes you fly away every time.

What is your favourite food and wine pairing for your wines?

Our wines work really well with fish, vegetables, fruits and spices. My tip is to prepare as many bottles as possible ahead of time so that you are always able to react to the best match!

What do you do in your spare time?

Share wine with people of good taste, or with a developed enough sense of humour.
Travel. Surf on snow, kite-surf on water. Sail and cycle.



Quarts de Chaume 2012

QUARTS DE CHAUME

“If you love chenin, as I do, do yourself a favor and pour a glass of this wine. You’ll be welcomed into a gracious aristocratic pleasure of the Loire and, maybe, as the silken grace of this vinous bliss threatens to leave you but just keeps lasting for minutes, you’ll think to yourself, this golden beauty is one reason why it’s great to be alive. Or maybe you’ll think of the best peach you can remember tasting, concentrated in its sweetness yet so deft and elegant it simply won’t leave your memory.”

95 Points

Wine & Spirits Magazine



DOMAINE HUET

VOUVRAY - LOIRE

Nestled in the heart of the Vouvray appellation, Domaine Huet was founded in 1928 by Victor Huet and his son, Gaston. The estate farms 30 hectares of Chenin Blanc, planted across three historic vineyards each with their own distinct style: Le Haut-Lieu, Le Mont and Clos du Bourg. The estate became biodynamic in 1988 and is regarded as a pioneer in the culture of biodynamic farming in France. Huet's philosophy is focused on respecting the soil, plants and the environment, encouraging purity in the expression of the wines and preserving authenticity of terroir.



“ The late Gaston Huet was known as the Pope of Vouvray, partly because of the superb quality of his wines, partly because of his administrative work on behalf of Vouvray (of which he was mayor for decades), Loire wines in general and the Indre-et-Loire département. He was certainly a leading light of the Loire. ”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW

Gaston passed away in 2002 at the age of 92 and the majority shareholding was sold to New York businessman Anthony Hwang. The winery is now run by his daughter Sarah with Jean-Bernard Berthomé as Chef de Cave.

“ Domaine Huet is very dear to my heart. My parents began working on the estate in 1966, part of Monsieur Gaston's first team, and I became part of the team in 1979. I learned very quickly that in order to realise great wine it is crucial for three elements to come together: a great terroir with good exposure, near to a river such as the Loire; a noble Varietal - Chenin Blanc; people who respect the environment and local traditions. ”

Jean-Bertrand Berthomé

Domaine Huet produces dry, demi-sec, sweet and sparkling wines. Sweet wine is only produced in warmer years, while cooler vintages focus more on sparkling and dry styles. The estate is most famous for its moelleux wines, especially the Première Trie releases.

“ Domaine Huet means ‘I make the best damn Chenin Blanc on the planet... ”

Mike Steinberger



Cuvée Constance 2009

VOUVRAY

Named after Gaston Huet's mother, this is the one wine produced by Domaine Huet which is a blend of different vineyards, and is produced only in the best vintages.

“ At 11% alcohol and 150 grams of residual sugar, the Huet 2009 Vouvray Cuvée Constance – fourth in the past decade, incidentally – offers a striking nose of honey, white raisin, and concentrated herbal and floral essences. Salted caramel, hazelnut cream, marzipan, white raisin, liquid floral perfume, and honey are all leavened with fresh lime, white peach, and grapefruit. Like a refined cocktail of essence-of-Chenin mingled with fresh fruit juices with dashes of salt and chalk, this finishes with ravishing and invigorating persistence and should be worth following for 3 or more decades. ”

96 points

David Schildknecht
The Wine Advocate



DIDIER DAGUENEAU

POUILLY-FUMÉ - LOIRE



Known as the ‘wild man of Pouilly’ as much for his appearance as for his ideas, Didier Dagueneau was widely recognised not only as a brilliant winemaker but also the best producer in the appellation.

“ Dagueneau is one of the great winemakers of our generation. ”

Denis Dubourdieu
consultant to Châteaux d’Yquem, Cheval Blanc and Margaux

Unlike many winemakers, Dagueneau didn’t start his career in wine, but instead racing sidecars. Following two nasty falls, his life took on a new direction and he set out to make the best Sauvignon Blanc possible and to redeem the reputation of Pouilly-Fumé.

When asked in an interview with Oliver Styles at Decanter Magazine why he went into wine, Didier’s response was -

“ I had a few scores to settle with the family, so I decided to make wine, to make better wine than them. That was my first motivation. So I decided to make the best Sauvignon Blanc in the world. Not at all pretentious for someone who’s been making wine for two years. ”

One of the pioneers of biodynamics in the Loire, his success was due to the rigorous attention to detail he placed on every stage of the winemaking process from vineyard management to the cellar.

“ Due to a titanic level of work in the vineyard, his pure-bred Sauvignon Blancs act like a terroir sponge. ”

Michel Bettane, Le Grand Guide des Vins de France

“ In view of how long Didier Dagueneau’s success has been recognized and how many ambitious Loire attempts at wooded Sauvignon prove inexpressive of their fruit and sites but depressingly similar to one another, one would think that the “methode Dagueneau” should be studied and adopted by at least a few other ambitious Loire growers. ”

David Schildnecht, The Wine Advocate

Didier sadly passed away at the tragically early age of 52 following an ultra-light aircraft accident. His son, Louis-Benjamin, now runs the Domaine following several years under his father’s tuition.

“ We need not have worried. Louis-Benjamin has now completed two vintages on his own, and his 2008 and 2009 vintages are nothing less than splendid, fully the equal of any wine made by his father. ”

Jacqueline Friedrich, Los Angeles Times

“ We have been experimenting here for 25 years in every area – vineyard management, winemaking, types of oak, time on lees - every single detail has been closely looked at, to establish precisely how we could produce the greatest possible wines from our soils. Today we know what we are doing. We still progress, and every year is different, but now any changes are at the margins. ”

Benjamin Dagueneau

Silex 2009

POUILLY-FUMÉ

“ From an enclave just outside the cuverie in Saint Andelain, the Dagueneau 2009 Blanc Fumé de Pouilly Silex delivers an almost inordinate diversity of floral, herbal, citrus (predominately grapefruit), and pit-fruit (predominately nectarine) elements, with the bitterness of fruit pits, smoky pungency of red currant and crushed stone, as well as notes of shrimp shell reduction and iodine inflecting a long, bittersweet, yet at the same time vibrant, buoyant finish. This silken textured seducer should gain with time in bottle and be worth following for ten or a dozen years. ”

94+ points

David Schildnecht
The Wine Advocate



ALPHONSE MELLOT

SANCERRE - LOIRE

Alphonse Mellot is widely regarded as one of the best producers in the Loire and is one of the region's leading producers in biodynamics. The majority of the wines are vinified and aged in wood, much like Benjamin Dagueneau in neighbouring Pouilly-Fumé. Alphonse Mellot has done a lot over the years to promote the appellation and develop and inspire younger producers.



“...[the Mellot family's] worthy aspirations have gradually raised them to the peaks of the great Sauvignons of the world. Alphonse Mellot's white Sancerres are amongst the most brilliant and pure illustrations of the genius of the Sauvignon grape.”

Michel Bettane & Thierry Desseuve, *The World's Greatest Wines*

Local records dating back to 1513 mention the Mellot family, whose life even then was linked to producing wines of excellent quality. Alphonse Mellot founded a hugely popular tavern in Sancerre at the beginning of the 19th century offering local wines which marked the beginning of a flourishing trade. In 1881 he was granted a licence to ship his wine throughout France and all over the world which marked the beginning of the hugely successful wine company as we know it, which has been passed down through generations of the family ever since. The eldest son of each generation has continued to bear the name of the founder and today the property is run by Alphonse Mellot, father and son, the 18th and 19th generation to bear the name.

“Alphonse Mellot (senior) is one of the great characters of Sancerre. His enthusiasm and passion for quality are legendary. The arrival of Alphonse junior in the early 1990s raised the quality still further.”

Jim Budd, *Decanter Magazine*

The cellars are based at 'La Moussière' right at the heart of the historic town of Sancerre, and were built between the 15th and 17th century.

“A touch eccentric, and always boiling over with ideas, he [Alphonse Mellot] has taken the world of Sauvignon Blanc to new heights. The estate, though, is not a one-man show. With 55 hectares of organically farmed vineyards, [and] 45 employees...it is an orchestra conducted by a sometime delirious genius.”

Joel B. Payne, *vinous.com*



Génération Dix-Neuf 2014

SANCERRE

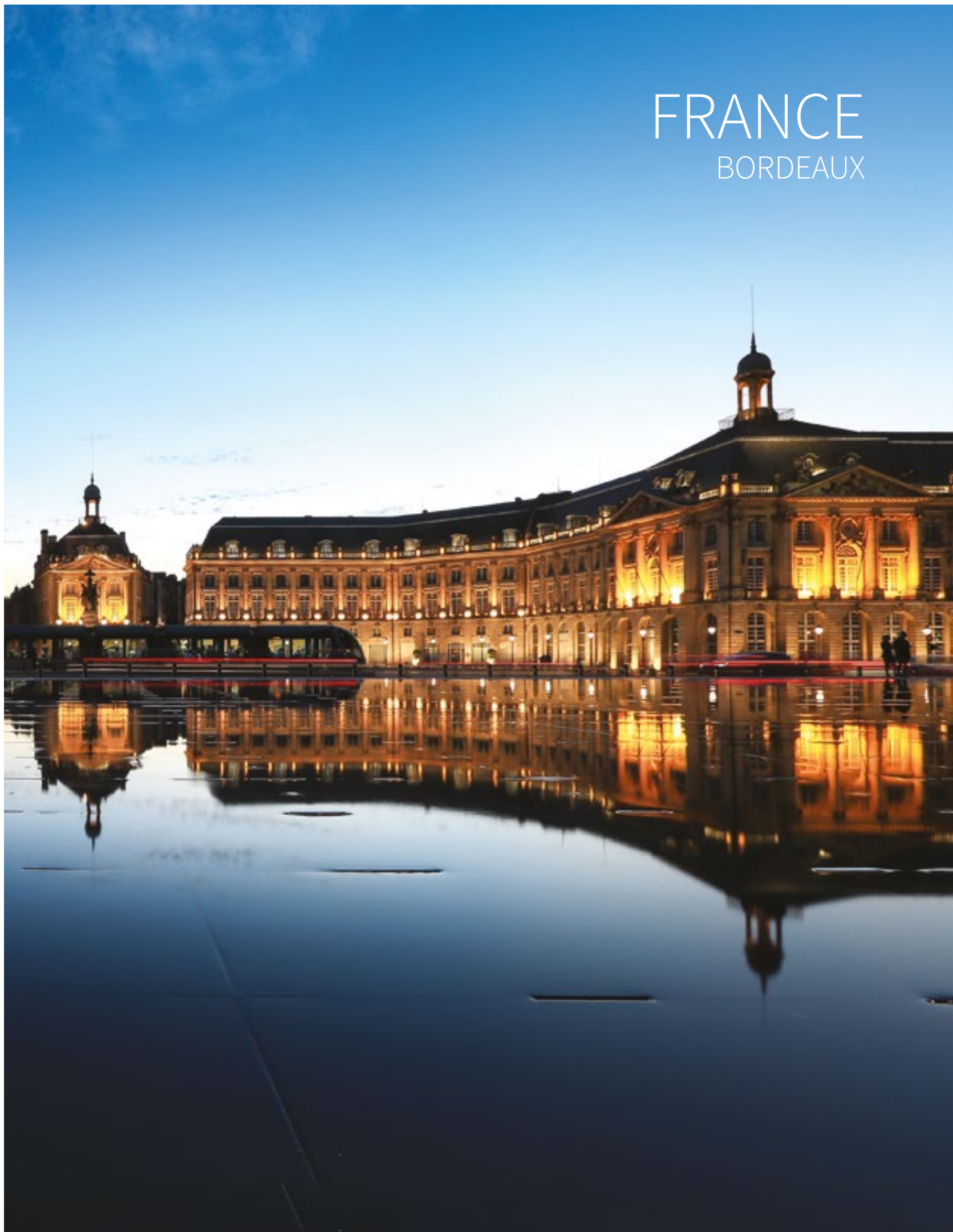
“From almost 100-year-old vines on kimmeridgian marl and limestone soils, Mellot's 2014 Sancerre Generation Dix-Neuf displays a deep, clear, intense, spicy and terroir-driven bouquet of perfectly ripe fruits, green leaves fresh pepper, green chili and minerals. Very flinty and pure on the nose but also concentrated and very promising. Full-bodied, intense and racy, this is a very pure and dense, firmly structured and expressive wine with great elegance and a lot of grip and tension. Great finish and a wine with an enormous aging potential.”

94 points
Stephan Reinhardt
The Wine Advocate



FRANCE

BORDEAUX



CHÂTEAU HAUT BRION

PESSAC-LÉOGNAN - BORDEAUX

One of the longest and most illustrious histories of all of Bordeaux's great wines, Haut Brion can lay serious claim to being the world's first luxury brand.



“ And there drank a sort of French wine called Ho Bryan (sic), that hath a good and most particular taste that I never met with... ”

Samuel Pepys, 10th April 1663

Château Haut Brion 2009

PESSAC-LÉOGNAN

“ The terroir is expressed in this wine through a unique signature with an empyreumatic bouquet (Havana cigars, chocolate, roasting, cedar wood and so on). The attack has the same restraint with precise, exceedingly soft tannins. But the power of this wine is revealed in the surprising long mid-palate and even longer finish. ”

Jean-Philippe Delmas
Winemaker and Managing Director

“ What a blockbuster effort! Atypically powerful, one day, the 2009 Haut Brion may be considered to be the 21st century version of the 1959. Even richer than the perfect 1989, with similar technical numbers although slightly higher extract and alcohol, it offers up a sensational perfume of subtle burning of ambers, unsmoked cigar tobacco, charcoal, black raspberries, wet gravel, plums, figs and blueberries. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
Wine Advocate

From Pepys and John Locke to Charles II and Thomas Jefferson, Haut Brion has been just as celebrated as the people who enjoyed and wrote about it.

The only estate classified for the 1855 Grand Exposition in Paris from outside the Médoc, it was no surprise that Haut Brion was ranked Premier Grand Cru Classé – the best of the best. With its distinctive embossed bottle and sophisticated label, Haut Brion is truly one of the greatest wines in the world.

The estate is currently owned by Prince Robert of Luxembourg following the marriage of Joan Dillon of the American Dillon family into the Luxemburg Royal Family. The winemaking has been in the hands of the Delmas family for three generations, and Jean-Philippe Delmas, the current winemaker, has amply filled his father Jean Bernard's celebrated shoes. Often regarded as the wine aficionado's great Bordeaux château





Château Haut Brion Blanc 2010

PESSAC-LÉOGNAN

“ This wine is a mystery both because it is rare, and thus difficult to find, and because it has such a distinctive expression. In its youth, its aromas will transport you to Alsace or Burgundy, depending on the vintage. The generous palate will astonish you with its length. ”

Jean-Philippe Delmas, Winemaker and Managing Director

“ This full-bodied blend of 54% Sauvignon Blanc and 46% Semillon has a level of concentration and intensity that makes it the dry white wine of the vintage. Loads of minerality, a hint of subtle spice, but mostly just pure orange marmalade, candle wax, honeysuckle and caramelised melons make for a full-bodied, distinctive style of wine to drink over the next 50+ years. ”

98 points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

Without doubt the white wine of Château Haut Brion is the most sought-after dry white from Bordeaux.

From a tiny three hectare vineyard in the heart of Pessac, in the city of Bordeaux itself, the wine is crafted from roughly equal amounts of Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc, sometimes with a dash of Sauvignon Gris.

However, Haut Brion is so quality conscious that if the grapes are not worthy then they do not become part of the Grand Vin, meaning that depending on the weather the wine could theoretically be made from 100% of either.



CHÂTEAU MARGAUX

MARGAUX - BORDEAUX

Château Margaux, at the heart of the village of the same name, is one of Bordeaux's greatest estates, and also one of its largest. Covering 260 hectares, the park and its exquisite Palladian mansion house are as well known a wine landmark as any other the world over. 87 hectares are planted to vine, with the celebrated Pavilion Blanc being produced from a further 12 hectares of Sauvignon Blanc.



With a history dating back to the 12th Century, Château Margaux has been in the hands of the Mentzelopoulos family since 1978 and since then has consistently produced the finest wines in the Médoc. Now under the leadership of Madame Corinne Mentzelopoulos, recent developments have included a fabulous new cellar designed by Norman Foster, sympathetically dug into and blending with the surrounding countryside

But it is the red Grand Vin that makes Château Margaux so special. The most elegant and floral of the great properties of Bordeaux and one of the original four Premier Grands Crus Classés, it epitomises the style of the commune.



Château Margaux

1996

MARGAUX

“ Whatever the explanation, this vintage ended up producing a wine which will go down in history for its classicism and purity. The Cabernet Sauvignon has seldom achieved such a perfection of style and such good balance. What is even rarer perhaps, is to find in a young wine, only just after its blending, the ability to impress and move us at once through the purity of its fruit, the density of its structure and the harmony of its shape. It is a dream of a Margaux. ”

“ The 1996 Chateau Margaux, a blend of 82% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc, must be a strong contender for wine of the vintage. This is a Margaux that seems to light up the senses. It was outstanding in its youth...something that has not changed one bit over the intervening two decades. This may well turn out to be the Left Bank pinnacle of the 1990's. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



“ There cannot be a better bottle than a bottle of Margaux. ”

Thomas Jefferson

CHÂTEAU MOUTON-ROTHSCHILD

PAUILLAC - BORDEAUX

Mouton-Rothschild is famous on so many different levels. From the different artists' work that adorn each vintage label release, to the exuberant character of the late Baroness Philippine de Rothschild and her father Philippe, to its place in the Bordeaux hierarchy and of course to the utterly wonderful wine it makes.



Originally known as Château Brane-Mouton, it was renamed by Nathaniel de Rothschild in 1853 when he purchased it. Just two years later the great classification of Bordeaux for the Exposition Universelle in Paris was created. Nathaniel had begun a series of sweeping changes to improve the property and its wines and recapture the status for which they had been noted for centuries. But the changes weren't complete when in 1855 the Médoc classification awarded Mouton-Rothschild status as Deuxième Grand Cru Classé. This led to a long battle to have Mouton recognised for its true worth, which was finally achieved in 1973 by Baron Philippe de Rothschild. The wine was elevated, the first and only change to the classification ever made. The label of 1973 reads: 'Premier je suis. Second je fus. Mouton ne change' – 'First, I am. Second, I used to be. Mouton does not change'. Fittingly, somehow, 1973 was the year of Picasso's death, and so it is his painting that adorns this ever-so famous label.

“The Rothschilds of Château Mouton-Rothschild have been some of the most dynamic, visionary figures in the wine world, unwilling to accept second place and perpetually focused on the horizon. Who else could have rewritten the supposedly unalterable 1855 Classification of Bordeaux to join the select inner circle of first-growths?”

The Wine Spectator

Although Mouton means 'sheep', and the property and its wine label is flamboyantly endowed with a great deal of ram and sheep motifs, the word actually came from 'small hill'. It is this hill that provides the perfect exposure to the sun for the vines to create the bottled-magic that is Mouton Rothschild.



“It has a powerful and intense bouquet as always: exemplary graphite and cedar scents, a touch of black pepper and incense. It seems to unfurl in the glass, like a motor revving its engine. The palate is beautifully balanced with its trademark firm tannic structure, a Mouton-Rothschild with backbone and masculinity. Layers of black fruit intermingling with mint and graphite, a hint of licorice emanating from the Merlot, gently fanning out and my God, it is incredibly long.”

100 points
Neal Martin
The Wine Advocate

“The 1986 Mouton Rothschild is a monumental Bordeaux that will undoubtedly outlive anybody alive today. Amazingly youthful, with a dense purple color, it is an extraordinary wine that should age for a century or more.”

100 points
Robert Parker
Hedonist's Gazette

Château Mouton-Rothschild 1986

PAUILLAC



CHÂTEAU LATOUR

PAUILLAC - BORDEAUX

Owned by one of France's richest people, François Pinault, Latour is now back where it belongs – as the producer of perhaps the most complex and structured Cabernet Sauvignon wine on earth. The vineyards are planted with 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot, and 2% Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. The estate's supreme reach for quality means that only a small percentage (usually around a third) of this goes into the Grand Vin itself and on occasion the wine is 100% Cabernet, according to the vagaries of the vintage.



Although there is a beautiful château building on the property, Latour is famous for the tower which stands out on the Gironde skyline. It marks the crest of a small hill at the centre of the enclosed vineyard, L'Enclos, which is at the heart of the estate and the wine. The tower gave the property its name and was constructed in the 1620s as a pigeon roost, but is said to exactly replicate the original rather more militarily defensive tower built around 1331.

“ The heart of the Enclos is the only terroir that, every year, can produce the depth, elegance and concentration that we expect of the Grand Vin. It is here that the Cabernet Sauvignon (accounting for more than 90% of the blend) can achieve optimal expression in terms of colour, richness and freshness. ”

Château Latour

“ This is the most exuberant and long-lived wine, with layer upon layer of fruit, spices, oak and texture. Curiously approachable in youth, it lasts for decades, softening and evolving into an autumnal cornucopia of flavours. ”

Rod Smith MW



Château Latour 2010

PAUILLAC

Château Latour's Grand Vin is made exclusively from vieilles vignes, which are on average 60 years old.

“ A beautiful bright and intense garnet colour. The nose is incredibly expressive, pure and aromatic. On the palate, the wine reveals a well-balanced and delicate structure with elegant matured fruits flavours. The finale is noble, velvety with refined tannins. ”

Frederic Engerer, Winemaker



© Deepix

“ One of the perfect wines of the vintage. The 2010 is a liquid skyscraper in the mouth, building layers upon layers of extravagant, if not over-the-top richness with its hints of subtle charcoal, truffle, blackberry, cassis, espresso and notes of toast and graphite. Full-bodied, with wonderfully sweet tannin, it is a mind-boggling, prodigious achievement. ”

100 points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



© Neil Bicknell

CHÂTEAU LAFITE-ROTHSCHILD

PAUILLAC - BORDEAUX

Named Lafite since at least as early as 1234, this enigmatic celebrity of a Bordeaux château has been owned by the Rothschild family since 1868.



“ I have discovered the wine of Château Lafite to be a delicious, generous cordial, comparable to the ambrosia of the Gods of Olympus. ”

Maréchal de Richelieu (1755)

Ranked as the very best of the Premiers Grands Crus Classés in 1855, Lafite has been one of the world's most expensive red wines ever since. On the hill just north of Pauillac, with the land around the stream given over to a beautiful park and gardens, the Lafite property is just as pretty as its wines.

“ Lafite has a soul, a beautiful, generous, kindly soul. Lafite turns bare earth into heaven. Lafite is harmony, a harmony between man and nature, because without our magnificent winegrowers, nothing would be accomplished. ”

Baron Eric de Rothschild

One of the largest Médoc estates, the vineyards are planted with 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot and have an average age of 39 years old. One peculiarity of Lafite is that a small, but very highly prized, vineyard of Cabernet Sauvignon vines is not actually in Pauillac at all, but in the adjoining commune of St Estèphe. The wine from this parcel almost always ends up in the Grand Vin, but the property has a special exemption allowing this cross-border labelling.

The volumes of the Grand Vin vary according to the vintages, but is often less than half the total crop with 20,000 cases made. The second wine, Carraudes de Lafite, has a slightly higher percentage of Merlot and is therefore more approachable in youth.



Château Lafite-Rothschild 2003

PAUILLAC

“ A combination of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, it represents a ripe version of the essence of Lafite-Rothschild. Dense purple-colored, with classic notes of graphite intertwined with melted licorice, creme de cassis, smoke, and flowers, it reveals extraordinary richness, opulence, power, purity, intensity, and viscosity. Production in 2003 was less than half of normal. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



CHÂTEAU PICHON-LONGUEVILLE BARON

PAUILLAC - BORDEAUX

In full called 'Château Longueville au Baron de Pichon-Longueville', but often simply referred to as 'Pichon Baron', this is perhaps the most fairy-tale of all the Médoc châteaux. Clearly built to impress, as it is wholly visible from the road, the château is only one room deep thus giving the impression of being far more of a palace than it actually is. This was improved by the current owners, French financial giant AXA Millésimes. AXA installed a fabulous new underground cellar with a reflecting pool above it, which mirrors the Château building, and creates probably the most photographed sight in all of Bordeaux.



The property was one half of the celebrated Pichon estate which was divided in 1850 due to the arcane and complex French inheritance laws. One son, Raoul Baron de Pichon-Longueville received this Château, while his three sisters together received the other part which was to become Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande. Both the resultant properties were awarded Deuxième Grand Cru status five years later in the 1855 classification.

“ The wine has come to define the Pauillac style, with its wonderful notes of cigar-box and black fruit. Long lived and yet approachable relatively young, the wines from Pichon Baron are a masterpiece of the art of blending varieties together to produce more than the sum of their parts. ”

Rod Smith MW



“ Revealing incredible quality and performing better than it did from barrel, the 2009 appears to be the greatest Pichon Longueville Baron since the 1990 and 1989. An amazing opaque blue/purple color is followed by scents of spring flowers, graphite, smoky charcoal, incense, blackberries, blueberries and hints of coffee and chocolate. Incredibly intense, pure and flawlessly constructed with extravagant layers of fruit and richness, this offering has developed beautifully under the management of Christian Seeley. It is a voluptuous, opulent Pichon Longueville Baron that may eclipse anything they have made in the past. This brilliant wine should be at its peak between 2018 and 2045. ”

98 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

Château Pichon-Longueville Baron

2009

PAUILLAC

“ The Grand Vin of Pichon Baron comes from old vines of predominantly Cabernet-Sauvignon planted on deep layers of gravel on the great plateau at the historic heart of the estate. The 2009 vintage is among the greatest in the history of the property. A year where nature, terroir and the work of man combined to make great wines at the very highest level. While conditions were ideal this year, the 2009 was significantly warm, and the wines of 2009 have a generous opulence as a result, while at the same time retaining the classic freshness and balance of a great Pichon Baron. ”

Christian Seeley,
Managing Director
Château Pichon-Baron



CHÂTEAU DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU

ST JULIEN - BORDEAUX

Château Ducru-Beaucaillou is one of the leading Super Seconds and for many is the quintessential St Julien, producing wines that are deep-coloured, powerful, ripe and exquisitely well-balanced.



“ Ducru has always been a wine of finesse rather than sheer brute power, a kind of Burgundian Bordeaux. ”

Jay McInerney

It is said that the best wines of the Médoc are produced from vines in view of the sea. Ducru-Beaucaillou has 50 hectares of vineyards on the banks of the Gironde estuary overlooking the water, all with the famed Médoc well drained gravel, with stones up to 2.5 inches in diameter. The name of the chateau in fact is derived from these as 'Beaucaillou' means 'beautiful pebble'. The vineyards are planted with 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Merlot.

Ducru-Beaucaillou is owned and run by the illustrious Borie family who also own several other châteaux, including some that carry their name. It was here in the late 19th century that the cure for the mildew plague that decimated the vineyards of Bordeaux and elsewhere was created, safeguarding the future of viticulture. Bordeaux mixture as it became known is a copper-based preventative spray permitted in organic farming which wards off mould and mildew very successfully.

“ Chateaux Gruaud-Larose and Ducru-Beaucaillou are the other two St-Julien second growths, and produce two of the Médoc's finest wines in most vintages. ”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW



Château Ducru Beaucaillou

2009

ST JULIEN

“ The 2009 Ducru Beaucaillou will eclipse the brilliant wines produced in 2005, 2003 and 2000. It will be interesting to see how the 2009 fares against the 2010 after twenty years of ageing, but my money is on the 2009. A blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Merlot that achieved 13.5% natural alcohol, this inky purple, unctuous wine possesses classic aromas of graphite, creme de cassis, blueberries, violets, liquorice and Christmas fruitcake. Full-bodied and intense with Ducru's inimitable elegance and purity, it should firm up in the bottle after 7-10 years of cellaring and last for 40-50 years. Magnificent! ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



CHÂTEAU LÉOVILLE LAS CASES

ST JULIEN - BORDEAUX

One of the oldest Médoc estates, *Domaine de Léoville* belonged to some of the wealthiest and most influential noble French families before it was acquired by the Las Cases family. The estate was split up during the French Revolution and the three Léovilles that we know today came into being with Léoville Las Cases representing 3/5 of the former estate. Léoville Las Cases has been managed by the same family since the late 19th century and is today represented by Jean-Hubert Delon, sole owner of the Château and proprietor of Château Pontensac and Château Nénin in Pomerol.

“There are not many great Cabernet Sauvignon terroirs, even in the Médoc. But you know one when you see it, and you can unquestionably taste it in the wine.”

Jean-Hubert Delon, Owner

The Grand Vin is the product of exceptional terroirs from the former Léoville estate. These 60 hectares are located mainly in the famous Enclos of Las Cases producing Cabernet Sauvignons and Cabernet Francs with a complex, polished expression and characteristics which are totally unique to Leoville Las Cases and have been widely recognised for years. These are arguably the most exotically perfumed wines in the Médoc.

“Jean-Hubert Delon’s St Julien estate consistently delivers excellent wines in both great and difficult years.”

The Wine Spectator

“Las Cases is sometimes a St Julien, sometimes a Pauillac, and sometimes just Las Cases.”

Jean-Hubert Delon

“I was born drinking wines from everywhere. The surest way to make great wine is to drink a lot of it.”

Jean-Hubert Delon



Château Leoville Las Cases

2009

ST JULIEN

“The 2009 Leoville Las Cases may be the most open-knit and forward Las Cases I have tasted to date. It boasts an inky/purple color, monumental concentration and lots of sweet, jammy black currant, black cherry and kirsch fruit intermixed with crushed rock and mineral notes. As always, proprietor Jean-Hubert Delon has built a massive wine with exceptional precision, unbelievable purity and aging potential of 40-50 years. I was surprised by the lusciousness of this cuvée on several occasions, and how much more forward it is given the fact that Las Cases can often be forebodingly backward and in need of 10-15 years of cellaring (at age 30, the 1982 is still a baby in terms of development!). This is a brilliant, full-throttle St Julien.”

98+ points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



CHÂTEAU LE TERTRE ROTEOEUF

ST EMILION - BORDEAUX



Château Le Tertre Roteboeuf is a St Emilion Grand Cru property producing just over 2,000 cases a year from a tiny 5.7 hectare vineyard. Amongst the very top tier of producers in St. Emilion, the Château is owned by François Mitjavile, a self-taught magician of the vineyard and winery. It is his home, his land, his life and it shows. His winemaking is simple - allow the terroir to express itself to the fullest. This even includes the vintage. There is no such thing as a 'bad' year according to François – nature does not deal in 'good' and 'bad'.

“ With our top class ‘terroirs’ there is no need to produce a ‘tête de cuvée’ by separating a ‘second’ wine. So our wine is a true reflection of the character of the fruit harvested in that year. In our climate, humid, rainy... and warm too, the fruit ripens with different flavours according to the climatic conditions of the year. In our view, it is essential for us to try and present this diversity of character. ”

François Mitjavile

“ The talent and extraordinary wine-making skills of François Mitjavile have produced one of Bordeaux’s most luxurious, sensual and sexy wines. Le Tertre Roteboeuf is irrefutably one of Bordeaux’s superstars. ”

Robert Parker



Château Le Tertre Roteboeuf St Emilion Grand Cru

2014

ST EMILION

“ The Château Tertre Rôteboeuf 2014 already has an extremely pure bouquet that almost whisks you away to the Côte d’Or: vivacious raspberry coulis and fresh strawberry scents suffused with fine mineralité. It’s unmistakable “Mitjavile”, a bouquet you want to hug as much as inhale. ”

92 - 94 points

Neal Martin
Wine Advocate



From the small amphitheatre-like vineyard (80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc) on the côte (slope) in the heart of St Emilion, François crafts a wine that is the most Burgundian in St Emilion, powerful and yet delicate. One of the greatest, and most hard-to-find wines in all of Bordeaux.

“ Faced today with a surfeit of communication, hot air and personal ambition, to run into Francois Mitjavile at his Tertre Roteboeuf reminds us to our benefit that wine is first and foremost a matter of civilisation and culture. ”

Michel Bettane & Thierry Desseave

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC

ST EMILION - BORDEAUX

Cheval Blanc produces the most famous Cabernet Franc wine in the world and is without a doubt the leading estate in St Emilion. Vines have been grown here since the 15th century but the most prestigious part of Cheval Blanc's history can be said to date from 1832, when Jean-Jacques Ducasse, President of the Libourne Trade Tribunal, purchased the core of the present-day estate. Over the next twenty years, the purchase of plots belonging to Château Figeac led to the creation of the 39 hectare vineyard as we know it today.



The marriage of Jean-Jacques' daughter, Henriette, with Jean Laussac-Fourcaud, a Libourne wine merchant, opened a new chapter in the history of Cheval Blanc that would define and consolidate the identity of this unique property. Her husband, aware of Cheval Blanc's outstanding potential and helped by an extraordinary intuition, replanted part of the estate in the 1860s with a totally atypical proportion of grape varieties: half Merlot (the king of the Right Bank) and half Cabernet Franc. Formerly known as vin de Figeac, the wine was first sold under the name Cheval Blanc in 1852 and so began a prestigious career.

By the 1880s Cheval Blanc was considered to be on a par with the first growths of the Médoc and in 1954 was one of only four estates that was given the highest possible distinction in the first classification of St Emilion: Premier Grand Cru Classé "A".

Now owned by Bernard Arnault (owner of LVMH) and Baron Albert Frère, Cheval Blanc is turned resolutely towards the future. An impressive new cellar was completed in 2011 which is both futuristic and in keeping with the surrounding historic landscape listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



“ Cheval-Blanc has a unique style. It's a wine that really has some wherewithal to it, for lack of a better phrase. Or it is what the French say, 'a wine from a great terroir.' I love the perfumed and aromatic quality of the wine and its silky, refined texture. It sometimes reminds me more of Burgundy than Bordeaux as it gets old. It impresses you more with its elegance and beauty than its power and opulence. ”
James Suckling, The Wine Spectator

Château Cheval Blanc

2010

ST EMILION

“ The 2010 is one of the most impressive two-year-old Cheval Blancs I have tasted in 34 years in this profession. The final blend of 54% Cabernet Franc and 46% Merlot has the tell-tale berry/floral nose with subtle hints of menthol, blueberry, raspberry and flowers in addition to some forest floor and a delicate touch of lead pencil shavings. I like the description from the estate's administrator, Pierre Lurton, who said it tasted like 'liquid cashmere', a perfect expression, despite the wine's structure and intensity. This is another 50-year wine from this amazingly structured, rich vintage. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



PÉTRUS

POMEROL - BORDEAUX

Pétras is one of the most celebrated wines in Bordeaux, and undoubtedly the most famous in Pomerol. The tiny 11 hectare vineyard only produces 30,000 bottles a year, which is minuscule by Bordeaux standards. This is due to the older age (around 70 years) of the vines and the resulting very low yields. With so few bottles on the market it goes without saying that this archetypal Pomerol is one of the rarest and most expensive wines out there.



The history of Pétras isn't well known. For the second half of the twentieth century it had failed to achieve notoriety and was still relatively unheard of 30 years ago.



Pétras 2000 POMEROL

“A prodigious Pétras, this wine has that extra level of intensity and complexity that is monumental. The magic is clearly Pétras, and the 2000 will always be an interesting vintage to compare to another legend in the making, the 1998, or more recently, of course, the 2005, 2008, and 2009. Extremely full-bodied, with great fruit purity, an unmistakable note of underbrush, black truffle, intense black cherries, licorice, and mulberry, the wine seems to show no evidence of oak whatsoever. It has a sumptuous, unctuous texture, plenty of tannin, but also vibrancy and brightness. This is a remarkable wine that seems slightly more structured and massive than the 1998, which comes across as slightly more seamless, as if it were haute couture.”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

Following several successive ownerships, Madame Loubat bought the property in 1945 and entrusted the distribution of the wines to Jean-Pierre Moueix. Their combined efforts and passion raised the reputation of Pétras, achieving first growth status and making it one of the greatest wines of Bordeaux. Jean-Pierre Moueix went on to purchase shares in Pétras and full ownership was achieved for the Moueix family in 1969 who still own the property today.

There are a number of different reasons for the outstanding quality of the wines, the most important being the soil which, unlike any other vineyard in Pomerol, is all clay. Situated on the highest hill in Pomerol, the 100% Merlot planted vineyards enjoy excellent sun exposure and water drainage which are both integral to the wines production.

Jean-Claude Berrouet was the genius oenologist responsible for 45 vintages of Pétras before his retirement in 2008. His son Olivier has taken over the reins and now follows in his father's footsteps.

“Pétras has its own style, aroma and quality of tannins. It's not quantifiable, not measurable. I'm not looking for things you can find anywhere, such as over-fruit or over-extraction. The best wines express where they come from – and my father has taught me the patience and the need for hard work that allow them to do that. Above all, he's taught me to take pleasure in my work.”

Olivier Berrouet, Winemaker

“The famous Pomerol wine estate of Bordeaux has taken my breath away so many times over my more than 30 years as a wine critic. The nearly pure Merlot is a wondrous wine with soft and velvety tannins and a unique character of dark fruits, black olives, dark chocolate, and earth. It's a wine that can be amazing straight from the cask as just a baby wine or 50 years later as a mature red.”

James Suckling, The Wine Spectator

LE PIN

POMEROL - BORDEAUX

Le Pin is one of the most expensive wines in the world. The original 'garage' wine, Jacques Thienpont bought the minute 1.6 hectare vineyard for one million francs in 1979. Since then he has gone on to buy tiny pieces of adjoining land, doubling the size of Le Pin which still only brings the total production to 600 - 700 cases a year. Together Jacques Thienpont and famous consultant Michel Rolland went on to create a cult wine, with seriously high prices further driven by limited production.

The south facing vineyard is on a well drained gravelly slope and was named after a solitary pine tree on the property.

“ My winemaking is simple; I try to do as little as possible to the grapes in their transition from vineyard to bottle. My motto is: Simple mais Distingué or Simple but Distinguished. Le Pin has great class, one shouldn't meddle with that. ”

Jacques Thienpont, Owner and Winemaker



“ The obvious question is, is it worth the price? If you can afford it, YES. I can't afford a 599 Ferrari, but I think it is worth the price. You get the idea. I always remain hopeful that I'll win the lottery, or that a long-lost cousin from Norfolk, England, will leave me the lost family fortune. More dreams ... ”

James Suckling,
The Wine Spectator



Le Pin 2010 POMEROL

“ Made from 100% Merlot (one percent for each rating point I've assigned), this wine is explosively rich and compelling. Dense plum/purple, it boasts the remarkable delineation and freshness that are hallmarks of this vintage. From a much smaller production than normal because of Merlot's poor flowering, the very hot, dry growing and harvest conditions, this is a super-endowed, very rich Le Pin with its exotic new oak largely buried behind its extravagant concentration, power and richness. I don't know what its natural alcohol level is, but I suspect it is pushing 15% in 2010. Rich, tannic, but exceptionally well-endowed, this is a sublime example of Merlot at its very finest. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



CHÂTEAU LAFLEUR

POMEROL - BORDEAUX

Château Lafleur was founded in 1872 by Henri Greloud, who purchased a small domaine of 4.5 hectares which he named after the hamlet, Lafleur. Still in the hands of the family, the Château is now run by his great great grandchildren, Jacques and Sylvie Guinaudeau, and their children. The team today consists of fifteen dedicated vigneron, whose passion and enthusiasm in the vineyards and cellars are key in the production of the wine.



Château Lafleur

2005

POMEROL

“ This amazing wine puts on a display of fireworks in terms of its aromatics, with a stunning nose of blue and black fruits, forest floor, flowers and earth. Dense purple, full-bodied, rich, moderately tannic and super-concentrated, this is a profound Pomerol that still needs another decade of cellaring. This is possibly the greatest Lafleur of the modern era, rivaling the 1982 and 2000. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

“ We do everything ourselves, with exactly the same team in both the vineyard and cellar. The pruners are the same people who tie up the vines with us for trellising, or thin the leaves when necessary, or bring the grapes in at harvest, or bottle the finished wine. There is never the idea of handing one stage over to the next person – we are all in it together. ”

Baptiste Guinaudeau, Winemaker

“ What I appreciate particularly about the Guinaudeaus is that, most unusually for Bordeaux, they have an almost Burgundian ethos of care and personal attention in the way they run the property. The family personally works the vineyards and seems to know practically every vine. ”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW

The vineyards are located on the gravel-rich Pomerol plateau and adjoin those of la Fleur-Pétrus, while the property is opposite Pétrus. The wines are typically a blend of 50% Merlot and 50% Cabernet Franc with the best vintages ageing for up to 50 years.

“ One of the most distinctive, most exotic, and greatest wines – not only in Pomerol, but in the world. ”

Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate

“ The wine amply deserves its high prices. ”

Michel Bettane and Thierry Desseuve

“ The greatest wine I ever had was a magnum of Lafleur 1947 from John Avery's private cellar, even though it was served alongside the famous Cheval Blanc 1947. ”

Stephen Browett, Farr Vintners

CHÂTEAU D'YQUEM

SAUTERNES - BORDEAUX



Often described as the greatest sweet wine in the world, Château d'Yquem has a reputation that has followed it from the middle ages to today. Back then, d'Yquem was owned by the King of England and has since had an interesting history, including being used as a military hospital in both World Wars. In 1996 d'Yquem was bought by LVMH from Alexandre de Lur Saluces after centuries of family ownership.

Château d'Yquem has 113 hectares of vines planted with 80% Semillon and 20% Sauvignon Blanc situated at the highest point in Sauternes which has a unique microclimate. This is hugely important as it allows for winds from the east to move through the vineyard which is crucial to remove unwanted moisture during the growing season as the noble rot sets in. Only fully botrytized fruit is picked by 150 very highly skilled vineyard workers and yields are so low that each vine only produces one glass of wine.

In the 1855 classification of Bordeaux, Château d'Yquem was lauded not only to be the greatest wine of Sauternes, but of the entire Bordeaux region with its golden wines declared almost immortal.

Château d'Yquem was one of the first major estates to fight fraud by introducing a watermark on their label.

“ The wine starts off sumptuously on the palate, with uncommon volume and body. It is tremendously suave and well-structured, providing an intense tasting pleasure for which the keywords are balance, opulence, and refinement. Rarely have we encountered such an impression of perfection in the history of Château d'Yquem. The aftertaste goes on into infinity, echoing the multiple sensations experienced up until then. After experiencing this unique pleasure, one has only one idea in mind - to re-enter the extraordinary world of 2001 Yquem. ”
Château d'Yquem

“ I do not call Yquem a wine because there are an infinite number of “wines” as such, but Yquem is unique. I prefer the word nectar – the drink of the gods – and if I found one that was more noble, I would be less ashamed of our restrictive vocabulary so poorly suited to superlatives. ”
Frederic Dard



“ The nose is like the throbbing engine of an Aston Martin Vantage, ready to go. It is so packed with intensity, perhaps a little more resinous than I recall, but with almost crystalline delineation. The palate is perfectly balanced and laden with botrytis, not as unctuous or as rich as say, the 2009 d'Yquem, yet with heavenly focus and a crescendo of flavors that take your breath away: acacia honey, yellow plum, white peach and orange sorbet. The startling thing is ... this is just the opening act. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



Château d'Yquem 2001 SAUTERNES

Beautiful brilliant golden colour. Concentrated bouquet of ripe fruit (mirabelle plum, apricot, and mango) and dried fruit (fig, raisin, and quince), followed by hints of white fruit (pear and vine peach) and spicy nuances (saffron, curry, toasty aromas, fresh mint, and eucalyptus). This vintage's bouquet has a rare subtlety that can only increase with age.



FRANCE

BURGUNDY



DOMAINE RAVENEAU
CHABLIS - BURGUNDY



François Raveneau created his Domaine as recently as 1948, but winemaking and the terroir of Chablis was in his family's blood, and that of his wife who is part of the celebrated Dauvissat family. He combined the vineyards that she inherited with those he acquired to create the 9.3 hectare estate.

Almost all of the vineyards are of Premier or Grand Cru status and François is one of the only remaining producers to harvest entirely by hand. These stellar examples of Chardonnay came to the attention of celebrated US importer Kermit Lynch, who literally begged to be able to buy them. However, it took several years before François was prepared for his wines to be exported. Now in the hands of his sons Jean-Marie and Bernard, the wines of Raveneau demonstrate just what is possible in the cool fresh climates of the top vineyard sites in Chablis.

“We always used to chase sugar when I was younger. Now we have to look after our acidity.”

Jean-Marie Raveneau, Domaine Raveneau

“They are not interested in making quantity, they are probably not interested in making money, they are only interested in creating wine as art. The yields are small, and all the wines are aged in oak barrels for an extra layer of complexity. This is not, however, at the expense of the purity of fruit for which Chablis is justifiably famous, and it is this delicate tightrope act of winemaking for which the Raveneau wines are rightly celebrated. A perfect marriage of fruit weight and racy fresh acidity, making for the ultimate rich shellfish wine.”

Rod Smith MW



Chablis 1er Cru
Montée de Tonnerre
2014
CHABLIS

Montée de Tonnerre is a Premier Cru vineyard on the eastern side of the Serein river in Chablis, and is Raveneau's largest plot (although still tiny). The vineyard's south west aspect and perfect Kimmeridgian soils make it similar to the Grand Cru sites. The name 'Thunder Mountain' gives a clue to the vineyard hazards.

“This wine is mineral and super intense, with nutty, honeyed characters from a little age and the deft use of oak. Wonderful.”

Rod Smith MW



“It has a crisp bouquet with great clarity; Granny Smith apples, flint and wet limestone scents gently unfurling in the glass. The palate is fresh and crisp on the entry. I appreciate the brightness and tension of this Chablis, particularly the sappiness that comes through on the finish that shows assiduous use of oak. Sublime.”

94+ points
Neal Martin
The Wine Advocate

DOMAINE COMTES LAFON
MEURSAULT - CÔTE DE BEAUNE - BURGUNDY



Jules Joseph Barthélémy Lafon was not actually from Burgundy but arrived in the region as a lawyer. Following his marriage into a vineyard owning family, Jules rose to become the Mayor of Meursault. He is not only famous for creating the Domaine that bears his name to this day, but also as the instigator of reviving the post-harvest meal.

Originally just for the property workers, Lafon started inviting friends as well. His meal rapidly became a banquet and gradually evolved into the Paulée de Meursault, now an integral part of the harvest celebrations in the Burgundy Autumn, and one of the 'trois glorieuses', a succession of feasts in November every year. Over 600 lucky people attend, each bringing a celebrated or prized bottle, and the whole event has spawned further 'paulées' across the world, from California to Hong Kong.

Jules died in 1940 and during the less rewarding post-war years the estate fell into a slight malaise, but was rescued by René Lafon, Jules' grandson. Today the domaine is run by his son Dominique, a real live wire in Burgundy, who has propelled the estate and its wines back to the heights his great grandfather had envisaged and paved the way for.

“ It's a question of vineyard management. The winemaking is simple and similar for all the wines, so it's the vineyard expressing itself. ”

Dominique Lafon, Owner & Winemaker



Meursault
Les Genevrières
2014

MEURSAULT

“ The palate is well balanced with slightly honeyed fruit, a fine thread of acidity and great presence on the finish. You cannot deny the substance and length of this 2014 from Dominique Lafon, a wine with ambition. ”

94 points
Neal Martin
Wine Advocate

Farmed entirely organically and biodynamically, the estate's 16 hectares comprise some of the most highly regarded Premier and Grand Cru vineyard land in Burgundy's Côte de Beaune, largely Chardonnay vines around Meursault.

Along with Domaines Leflaive, Bonneau de Martray and Coche Dury, Lafon is considered one of the best creators of Chardonnay wines on earth.

“ Lafon now seems at the height of his powers, in total control of his vines and winemaking. There are no mysterious processes, no secrets of the trade, but an immense competence, based on 30 years of experience, that allows him to fine-tune each wine according to the vintage. ”

Steven Brook, Decanter Magazine



DOMAINE LEFLAIVE

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET - CÔTE DE BEAUNE - BURGUNDY

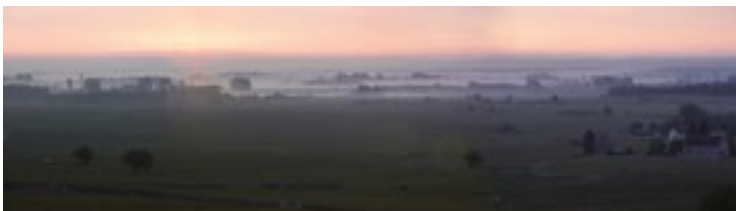
Domaine Leflaive, the most famous estate in Puligny-Montrachet, was founded in 1920 by Joseph Leflaive, an engineer in the marine engineering corps who helped to design and create the first French submarine. Following his marriage to Camille Biérix du Villars, his career took on a different path as he found himself looking after the family vines in Puligny-Montrachet. His sons, Vincent and Jo, made it their aim to bring the Côte de Beaune's Chardonnay up to the highest rank of excellence.



Under the management of Joseph's grand-daughter Anne-Claude Leflaive, who was at the helm between 1990 and 2015, the domaine became a leader in Burgundy's biodynamic movement, with the whole property being converted in 1997.

Now run by her nephew, Brice de La Morandière, the wines of Leflaive continue to startle, delight and astonish all those who are lucky enough to be able to drink them.

Leflaive has 22 hectares of vineyards, including 10 hectares of Premier Cru and 5 hectares of Grand Cru sites.



“ Anne Claude Leflaive was probably the most indomitable woman winemaker to have lived. Her passion – and occasionally dogma - can in no short measure be held responsible for the rise of biodynamics in vineyard management, the reduction in the use of pesticides in Burgundian farming, and the celebrity of the white wines of Burgundy. When she died in 2015, at tragically only 59 years old, the world of wine shed a tear. ”

Rod Smith MW

“ Before I had even heard of biodynamism, my instincts told me that whatever we do in our lives must be done with a respect for nature and the environment. ”

Anne-Claude Leflaive

Bienvenues Bâtard Montrachet Grand Cru 2015

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET

“ The Leflaive 2015 Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru is a superb achievement in the 2015 vintage, wafting from the glass with a complex bouquet of white peach, fresh bread, pear, preserved citrus, beeswax and crisp yellow orchard fruit. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied, multidimensional and authoritative, distinguished by its sense of completeness and control, with terrific depth and amplitude and a long, reserved finish. ”

96 points

William Kelley
The Wine Advocate



DOMAINE BONNEAU DE MARTRAY

CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE - CÔTE DE NUITS - BURGUNDY

Domaine Bonneau du Martray is considered to be one of the most renowned estates in Burgundy. With 11 hectares, unusually all in one contiguous vineyard located on the Pernand Vergelesses side of the Corton hill, Bonneau de Martray is the only domaine in Burgundy that produces nothing but Grands Crus. The domaine makes two wines: a white Corton-Charlemagne which is widely recognised as the benchmark for the appellation, and in lesser quantities a red Corton. As with Lafon, Leflaive, Drouhin and others, Bonneau de Martray is considered one of the pioneers of biodynamics in Burgundy. The wines have an outstanding reputation internationally and have been served at prestigious occasions such as Queen Elizabeth II's birthday dinner.



“Eleven hectares may not be a massive slice of France, but it is a sizeable portion of the hill of Corton, and an eighth of the entire Corton-Charlemagne appellation, one of Burgundy's very few grand cru whites.”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW

Bonneau de Martray had been in the Le Bault de la Morinière family ever since the French Revolution until 2017 when Stan Kroenke, the American businessman who owns Screaming Eagle, purchased a majority stake in the winery. The current generation was led by four brothers, including Comte Jean-Charles le Bault de la Morinière who managed and ran the domaine, and who is also undoubtedly the greatest producer of white Corton. The family will continue to be partners in the property.

“We are delighted to partner with Stan Kroenke and his highly-respected team. This partnership will enable us to strengthen our international reach further.”

Jean-Charles Le Bault de la Morinière, General Manager

“Bonneau de Martray is the classic expression of Corton-Charlemagne: lightly citric on the nose, with hints of stone fruits in very ripe years, and a dash of oak that rarely obtrudes, as well as an underlying mineral tang that sometimes approaches chalkiness. The palate has the grip of a fine Corton, a blend of virility and opulence, and exceptional length.”

Stephen Brook, Decanter

Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru

2015

ALOXE-CORTON

“The 2015 Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru has a very pretty, quite seductive bouquet with disarming scents of lemon curd, white peach and Mirabelle, well defined and the oak neatly integrated. The palate is very well balanced with very good weight in the mouth, a lightly brush of honey, praline, hints of almond and a touch of sea salt towards the finish.”

90-92 points

Neal Martin
The Wine Advocate



DOMAINE COCHE-DURY

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET - CÔTE DE BEAUNE - BURGUNDY

Established in the 1920s by Léon Coche, and run and expanded by his son and grandson (who married into the Dury family), Coche Dury is regarded as one of the greatest producers, certainly of white wines, in the whole of Burgundy.



Now in the hands of Raphaël Coche, the fourth generation to run the family estate, the 9 hectares of mainly Chardonnay (although with some Aligoté and Pinot Noir) are spread across the Côte de Beaune. The production of any one of the wines is tiny, and each single vineyard parcel is kept separate until the final blending with only the best wines making the cut, and the rest simply sold off to négociants.

Unlike the open and powerful wines of Dominique Lafon and Domaine Leflaive, Coche-Dury majors on elegance and restraint, with some of the flinty minerality for which Chardonnay grown on limestone soils is so justly famous. The wines are commensurately long-lived and refreshing.

“Certainly the most reliable source of great white Burgundies.”

Jancis Robinson OBE MW



“This is one of the finest white wine domains in the world.”

Clive Coates MW



Puligny Montrachet les Enseignères 2015

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET

“Les Enseignères is a small Premier Cru vineyard immediately adjacent to the Grands Crus of Bâtard-Montrachet and Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet, and it resembles both in style (if not – fortunately – in price). This wine is stony and flinty with peach fruit and grapefruit-pith restraint. The oak is understated, considering how much of it was new, and the whole is a multi-layered and complex array of flavours and textures with apple strudel richness but an almost saline streak. Beguiling.”

Rod Smith MW



DOMAINE LEROY
AUXEY-DURESSES - CÔTE DE BEAUNE - BURGUNDY



To understand this domaine it is necessary first of all to know a bit about the history of Maison Leroy which was founded in 1868 by François Leroy. His grandson Henri joined the business in 1919 and was a great friend of Edmond Gaudin de Villaine, whose wife's family had recently inherited Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. Due to the worldwide financial crisis in the 1920s, the domaine was for sale in a Notary's office in Paris and Henri managed to persuade his friend not to sell. He couldn't persuade Edmond's brother-in-law however, who sold his shares to Henri making him half owner of the famous property which is still in the Leroy family today.

Henri's daughter, Lalou Bize-Leroy, joined the family business in 1955 and with great devotion set about to understand the essential characteristics of each 'terroir'. She is constantly on the search even today to purchase the best wines for Maison Leroy. Unfortunately over the years it became more difficult to find growers with wines that met her strict standards and so Lalou decided to expand Maison Leroy's own vineyards, and founded Domaine Leroy in 1988. The 21 hectare domaine is farmed entirely biodynamically.

“ The controversial Lalou must drive many Burgundians crazy given the extraordinary quality of her wines, and the high prices they fetch. She is an uncompromising winemaker, with a portfolio of red and white Burgundies that qualitatively have no peers. ”

Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate



**Corton-Renardes
Grand Cru
2009**

ALOXE-CORTON

“ The 2009 Corton-Renardes hits the palate with waves of dark red fruit, smoke and incense. This is a decidedly virile, powerful wine, very much in keeping with the personality of the site. Exotic aromas and flavors come together beautifully in the glass as the wine opens up. This is a totally beautiful Burgundy, but it will appeal most to readers who like firm, structured wines. ”

96 points
Antonio Galloni
The Wine Advocate

“ This prestigious Domaine gathers nine Grands Crus. The vines are cultivated following biodynamic principles and produce extremely low yields, but with a quality that have no equal in the entire world of pinot noir. The beauty of the aromas of all of these [Leroy] wines only has an equal in the supreme elegance of their texture and precision of none other than the terroir itself. They are the absolute model of quality, recognized by everyone and universally sought after. ”

Michel Bettane & Thierry Dessauve
Le Grand Guide des Vins de France 2009

“ Leroy, absolute perfection. More than a model, the wines are an absolute reference. No other winery in the world holds itself to a higher standard in terms of exactitude in its viticulture. This unique winemaker lives for her vines and nothing else. Every new vintage is, for her, an event to live up to each year: produce, from the lowest possible yields, wines that are the absolute voice of their terroir. ”

La Revue du Vin de France

DOMAINE PONSOT

MOREY-ST-DENIS - CÔTE DE NUITS - BURGUNDY

Domaine Ponsot was one of the first estates in Burgundy to practice estate bottling in the 1930s, and also one of the pioneers in understanding the importance of clones and clonal selection. In fact, many of the important clones of Pinot Noir originate from their vineyards.

Established in 1872, Domaine Ponsot was bought by William Ponsot who set up home at the wine estate in Morey-St-Denis. His nephew and godson, Hippolyte Ponsot, took over the domaine in 1920. A lawyer by training, Hippolyte was one of the founders of the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée classification system for Burgundy wines in 1935. Not stopping there, Domaine Ponsot was also responsible for the internet's first wine property website in 1989 and invented a thermal indicator in the form of a spot on the label which will change colour irreversibly should the wine reach a temperature at which it is likely to spoil.

In 2008 the Domaine introduced customised bottles with the wording Domaine Ponsot moulded on the bottom to help combat counterfeiting. That year Laurent famously forced Acker Merrill & Condit to withdraw twenty-two lots of Burgundy that were estimated to have sold for \$603,000 as they were fakes, some from vintages that had never even been bottled by the domaine.

The domaine makes wine from 12 grand cru vineyards and is the largest single owner in the grand cru Clos de la Roche.

Laurent Ponsot and his sister Rose-Marie took over management of the estate in 1997, with Laurent stepping down in 2017 leaving Rose-Marie as the sole Director of the company.



“What I like about Laurent’s wines is that they are edgy, uncompromising, occasionally ‘Marmite’ wines that perhaps like the man himself, goes out to divide opinion and create debate. His strict use of old barrels combined with a dizzying array of grand crus combine to create distinct wines that tend to wear their heart of their sleeves.”

Neal Martin, The Wine Advocate



Clos de la Roche Cuvée Vieilles Vignes 2013

MOREY-ST-DENIS

“The 2013 Clos de la Roche Cuvée Vieilles Vignes, from vines planted in 1905, has an inviting, delineated bouquet with vibrant wild strawberry, raspberry preserve and mineral notes. The palate has great tension – so suave and poised with superb symmetry and an effortless finish that I don’t think the Clos Saint Denis has at the moment. Laurent Ponsot did not disguise his enthusiasm for this Grand Cru and I could understand why.”

97 points
Neal Martin
The Wine Advocate



DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI

VOSNE-ROMANÉE - CÔTE DE NUITS - BURGUNDY

In many ways, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, or just DRC, is the greatest wine estate on earth producing some of Burgundy's greatest (and most expensive) wines.



“Domaine de la Romanée-Conti – the most hallowed name in Burgundian wine, and quite possibly the entire vinous world; a name that is implicitly regal, indisputably coveted and effortlessly content in its position of unimpeachable noblesse. DRC. Its acronym alone suffices to command the attention of everyone who aspires to enter the realm of wine Valhalla.”

Sotheby's New York

The history revolves around the ownership of the eponymous vineyard. Called La Romanée, for reasons unknown, it was the subject of a bidding war between Madame Pompadour, the mistress of Louis XV, and her bitter rival, the Prince of Conti. He won, and added his name in victory. Of course the Revolution soon put paid to all that. Ownership has passed down through one or two families and multiple generations since then and the Domaine is now run by Aubert de Villaine and Henri-Frederic Roch.

Making wines almost exclusively from Grand Cru vineyards, including the wholly owned monopole parcels of La Tâche and La Romanée-Conti itself (from which the estate takes its name), the wines of DRC offer another dimension to Burgundy.

“I am reminded of my university studies in music. There are some compositions that are so profoundly moving because they only point out the futility in trying to truly understand them. Some things remain beyond the full grasp of the human intellect. Romanée-Conti is the vinous equivalent.”

Antonio Gallioni

Unusually for Burgundy the wines are matured entirely in new French oak barrels, for between sixteen and twenty months. It is undoubtedly this oak influence that lends them their depth and hugely long-lived ageing potential. Multilayered and full flavoured with huge depth and power, and yet the beguiling ethereal delicacy of Burgundy. Truly sublime.



Romanée-Conti Grand Cru

2010

VOSNE-ROMANÉE

“It's both airy and profound, it reaches upwards into the ether and down into the soil.”

Bernard Noblet, Cellarmaster

“A combination of power and finesse, featuring explosive aromas and a complex mélange of flowers, spice, mint, strawberry and wild cherry flavors. Displays a sweetness not evident in the other DRC reds, with a silky texture and amazing harmony, all supported by refined tannins.”

99 points
The Wine Spectator



DOMAINE GEORGES ROUMIER
CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY - CÔTE DE NUITS - BURGUNDY

Georges Roumier is to Bonnes Mares what Comtes de Vogüé is to Le Musigny. Founded in 1924 by Georges Roumier, and now in the capable hands of his grandson Christophe, the estate's vineyard holdings are a collection of plots owned by various members of the extended family.



“ Whenever I meet Christophe Roumier, I get the impression of a Burgundy superstar in the eye of a storm. Around him, the world over, Roumier is the Holy Grail for collectors bidding astronomical sums for bottles that bear his family name. ”

Neal Martin

Roumier produces some of the world's finest Pinot Noir, in particular from four red Grand Crus. Out of these, Bonnes Mares is his most celebrated wine and this historic 1.4 hectare slice of 40 year old vines is universally accepted as the perfect expression of the terroir.

“ I make wines from terroir which expresses itself through Pinot Noir. ”
Christophe Roumier

“ In sum, this is one of Burgundy's greatest domaines and Christophe Roumier is one of its most intelligent and knowledgeable wine-makers. The combination of the two produces magic. ”

Clive Coates MW

“ The 2014 Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru has a fragrant, floral bouquet with touches of blueberry, violet, wet limestone and effervescent blood orange. There is simply wonderful delineation here. The palate is very well structured, linear and strict in accordance with the vintage, driving acidity here maintaining the freshness with superb minerality on the finish. Oh yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. ”

95 – 97 points

Neal Martin

The Wine Advocate

“ This is just a brilliant Bonnes-Mares, but you probably knew that already. ”

Neal Martin, The Wine Advocate



**Bonnes-Mares
Grand Cru
2014**

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY

The Grand Cru 'Bonnes Mares' is one of two Grand Crus in the Chambolle-Musigny appellation. Domaine Georges Roumier has vines on two distinct terroirs. The best are planted on 'Les Terres Blanches' which consist of a large quantity of small fossilised oysters and gives the wines a spiritual quality. The 'Terres Rouges' gives power, backbone and concentration. The wines from each are vinified separately and blended together afterwards.



DOMAINE COMTE GEORGES DE VOGÜÉ

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY - CÔTE DE NUITS - BURGUNDY



Domaine Comte Georges de Vogüé owns a spectacular parcel of 7.2 hectares in Musigny, which amounts to 70% of the grand cru, and also has 2.7 hectares within another grand cru, Bonnes-Mares. The second most famous red wine estate in Burgundy, the domaine has a lineage traced back to the 15th century, and has since then passed through the hands of 20 generations to the present owners. In 1925, it was inherited by Comte Georges de Vogüé who was in charge for the next 52 years before handing over to his granddaughters, Claire de Causans and Marie de Ladoucette.

The domaine is an ambassador for Chambolle-Musigny, and highly regarded as its greatest estate renowned for producing wines which offer both richness and intensity, whilst remaining beautifully aromatic.

The philosophy is to blend tradition and modernity whilst respecting nature.

“ For the de Vogüé philosophy, man is obliged to control what nature provides, and ‘an alliance between man and nature’ remains the rule, as it has for centuries. ”

Steven Spurrier, Decanter Magazine

The technical director, François Millet, will only include vines that are over 25 years old in production - **‘Because that’s how long it takes for the vines to express the greatness of the terroir. Young vines remain young vines, however fine the grapes may be. They’re like a gifted teenager, brilliant, but lacking in experience. It’s a question of complexity. The Chambolle Premier Cru is like Musigny in short trousers.’**



Musigny Vieilles Vignes Grand Cru 2014

CHAMBOLLE-MUSIGNY

“ The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannin, a subtle marine influence flowing under the surface of red cherry and wild strawberry notes, an almost confit-like finish that feels dense and with plenty of substance. This is a sophisticated, almost saturnine Musigny -- a Pandora’s Box of secrets that will only be revealed with age. ”

94 -96 points
Neal Martin
Wine Advocate



DOMAINE ARMAND ROUSSEAU
GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN - CÔTE DE NUITS - BURGUNDY

Considered one of the grand old domaines of Burgundy, the Rousseau family has worked passionately on some of the finest terroirs on the Côte de Nuits for four generations. Today, managed by Eric Rousseau and his daughter Cyrielle, the domaine is 15 hectares in Gevrey-Chambertin and Morey-St-Denis, over half of which are Premier and Grand Cru vineyards.



The domaine was founded at the beginning of the 20th century by Armand Rousseau who inherited several plots of vineyards at the age of 18. His marriage in 1909 provided him with additional vineyards. Armand started out only selling his wines in bulk, but with the help of Raymond Badouin, founder of the 'Revue des Vins de France', he soon developed a clientèle of restaurants and private customers. He was also one of the first growers to start estate bottling in the 1930s.

“There are few finer domaines in the Côte D’Or than that of Armand Rousseau. With land in Le Chambertin itself, Chambertin Clos de Bèze, Mazis, Charmes, Clos Saint Jacques, Cazetiers and Lavaux-Saint-Jacques, all in Gevrey, as well as in Clos de la Roche in Morey-Saint-Denis, this 14 hectare estate can boast some of the finest sites in the northern part of the Côte. The vines are old, the rendement low, and the wine-making perfectionistic – and the wines themselves are stunning.”

Clive Coates MW, Decanter Magazine

“Domaine Armand Rousseau is part of the gold standard for Burgundy lovers.”

James Suckling, The Wine Spectator

**Chambertin
Clos de Bèze
Grand Cru
2015**

GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN

“Scents of raspberry preserve, red plum, crushed stone and incense that gain intensity with seemingly every swirl of the glass. The palate has a sorbet-like freshness on the entry, veins of blood orange, white pepper, tangy marmalade infusing the black and red fruit, with impressive structure and precision on the finish. Could a Clos-de-Bèze be any better from barrel? Answer: No.”

100 points

Neal Martin
The Wine Advocate



FRANCE

RHÔNE



CHÂTEAU GRILLET

RHÔNE – FRANCE

Château Grillet is located in the Rhône in between the villages of Vérin and Saint-Michel-Sur-Rhône. A terroir with a rich history of winemaking, dating back to the 3rd century AD, today this small appellation is considered one of the best in France and is famous for producing a single white wine.



It is certainly one of the world's most interesting vineyards for many reasons. Only one grape, Viognier, can be planted here. One producer occupies the entire region and the only vineyard and produces only one wine. This is one of the only wines in France to share the same name as the appellation in which it is produced. At only 3.5 hectares, Château Grillet is the smallest appellation in the Rhône Valley. It was granted official appellation status in 1936 and in 1976, Château Grillet was declared a National Heritage site.

“Château Grillet is an 8.6-acre monopole, one of France's rare micro-appellations. It has long been considered one of the Rhône Valley's most prized terroirs, with its steep, terraced vineyards featuring an ideal exposition and fine, decomposed granitic soils.”

James Molesworth, The Wine Spectator

The vineyard is in the form of a south-facing amphitheatre, protected from winds and opens to a sunny, hot microclimate where the grapes are 'roasted' hence the name 'Grillet'.



“It's a magical place, with a taste profile very different from Condrieu – more like a great Chardonnay from the Côte d'Or. It's truly one of the great white wines of France.”

Denis Dubourdieu, Professor of Oenology

The estate is now managed by Frédéric Engerer who is also in charge of other Artémis Domaines estates, such as Château Latour and Château Siaurac.



Château Grillet 2014

CHÂTEAU GRILLET

“The 2014 Chateau Grillet is fresher and more linear than the intense 2015. The fruit is more pineapple and citrus than apricot and melon, and it finishes long, cool and invigorating. This medium to full-bodied wine should drink well for close to a decade.”

95 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

DOMAINE JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE

RHÔNE - FRANCE

The Chave family is one of the oldest names in the world of wine and has been producing great wines since 1481. The label bears an inscription commemorating this achievement - Vignerons de Père en Fils depuis 1481 or Vine growers from father to son since 1481. Jean Louis Chave is the 16th generation of his family to manage the famous Hermitage estate. His father Gérard is still involved and they produce two reds and one white from old vines, with an average age of 50 years, planted over 15 hectares.



“ The Chave line could make a fair claim to be France’s winemaking royal family. ”

Andrew Jefford

What makes these wines so unique is the talented blending skills of Gérard and Jean- Louis. They assemble their vintage cuvées from various plots to produce wines of extraordinarily high quality and a pure expression of the Hermitage terroir.

“ Because we have plots in several different places, each with a defined character, we like to blend to create a more complete wine. That goes across all our wines. What I do treat differently is the stems – the Hermitage is fully de stemmed, and the St-Joseph retains half the stems because its granite-based vines contribute to the freshness of the wine. ”

Jean-Louis Chave



Hermitage Blanc 2013

HERMITAGE

“ Always 80% to 85% Marsanne and the rest Roussanne, from the lieux-dits of Rocoules, Peleat, L’Hermitage and Maison Blanche, it’s raised primarily in barrels with a small percentage new. Loaded with notions of buttered citrus, white currants, liquid rock, white flowers and hints of honeysuckle, this beauty hits the palate with full-bodied richness, beautiful freshness and purity, and a focused, clean, elegant profile that keeps you coming back to the glass. ”

97 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



E. GUIGAL RHÔNE- FRANCE

The Northern Rhône wine region exploded in popularity in the mid 80's and it was really down to two people, Etienne Guigal and Robert Parker. Etienne took over the vineyard in 1946, but it was his promotional efforts of the region combined with Robert Parker that put his wine on the map. Soon the Rhône Valley became famous as a wine region producing some of the most seductively elegant and aromatic wines in the world, Guigal's Côte Rôtie being one of them.



E.Guigal is truly a family business with Marcel, Etienne's son, taking over the business in 1961 with the help of wife Bernadette and today their son Phillipe and wife Eve represent the third generation of this iconic property.

Interview with Eve Guigal, Owner

What has been the most important moment in the history of E.Guigal winery?

Created in 1946 by Etienne Guigal, the grandfather of my husband Philippe, our winery is still very young as we represent 'only' the third generation. We might say that we had a lot of important moments in the history of the winery but wish the most important moment is still not happened!

What is your favourite food pairing with Saint-Joseph 'Vignes de l'Hospice'?

The Saint-Joseph 'Vignes de l'Hospice' is a complex wine, with an intense nose and tannins with a huge density. There is nice food pairings with red meat, game and cheese but our favourite is with a lamb shoulder cooked in oven with thyme and garlic served with grilled potatoes.



Vignes de l'Hospice, 2015

SAINT-JOSEPH

Saint-Joseph 'Vignes de l'Hospice' is cultivated on a single hill, composed of granite and whose vineyards are literally suspended on the steep slopes overlooking the town of Tournon. This wine is a treasure that offers a precious and rare nectar.

“ Still aging in 100% new oak, the 2015 Saint Joseph Vignes de l'Hospice is rich and concentrated, piled high with blackberries and mulberries, yet savory, with a black olive component as well. It's full-bodied, layered and complex, with a long, velvety finish. It should prove long-lived for a Saint Joseph. ”

96 points

Joe Czerwinski
The Wine Advocate



M. CHAPOUTIER

RHÔNE – FRANCE

The Chapoutier family can trace their history in the Rhône region back to 1808 but wine making didn't start until 1879. It wasn't until the late 1980's however, under the guidance of Michel Chapoutier, when the quality soared. Now, Chapoutier produces the most diverse and complex wines of the Northern Rhône.



“Michel Chapoutier is dynamic and irrepresible—his approach is damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead. At age 24, he pulled aside his grandfather Marc, who owned 72 percent of the family wine company, M. Chapoutier, and said he could no longer work under the current manager, who happened to be his own father, Max. Michel would stay, but only if he was in charge. With the company struggling, Marc listened and handed control to the young man.”

The Wine Spectator

He has spread production all over the Rhône region and produces wines from the best appellations such as Hermitage, Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Côte-Rôtie. But, no matter the location, all wines are crafted with the uttermost attention and respect. Winemaking and vineyard management are the strictest representation of terroir and vintage, making them so profoundly diverse but still holding the Chapoutier finesse throughout.

La Mordorée 2012

CÔTE-RÔTIE

“About as elegant and seamless as they come, it exhibits incredible notes of violets, peppery spice, spring flowers, rose petal and darker berry fruit. This is followed by a full bodied, sweetly fruited, expansive Côte Rôtie that's perfectly balanced, has beautiful mid-palate density, and ultra-fine tannin that emerge on the finish. It's a blockbuster effort effort to drink over the coming two decades.”

97 points
Jeb Dunnuck
The Wine Advocate

“It means paying attention to each plot, listening to the world, the environment, anticipating the needs of the earth.”

Michel Chapoutier

Not only is Chapoutier iconic for his production of wine, he was also the first wine producer to introduce braille on the label. Michel introduced this after hearing his blind friend, the singer Gilbert Montagné, explain on TV that he needed to take someone into the store with him to identify what wine to buy. This didn't sit well with Chapoutier, so he put braille on the labels so his friend could have the enjoyment of choosing his own wine!



CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE - RHÔNE - FRANCE

One of the largest and most famous estates in Châteauneuf du Pape, Château de Beaucastel has 200 hectares of vineyards and has been owned by the Perrin family since 1909. With a history dating back to 1549, the property is today in the hands of the fifth generation, lead by Jean-Pierre and François.



One of the first domaines to practice organic viticulture in 1950, Château de Beaucastel has been biodynamic since 1974. Unusually the domaine plants all of the 13 grape varieties permitted in the Châteauneuf du Pape AOC, with Mourvèdre being the signature grape often making up a third of the blend.

Amongst other things, Beaucastel is famous for vinifying wine 'à chaud', a controversial technique where grapes are rapidly heated when they arrive at the winery, extracting colour and aroma and killing harmful bacteria. The wines are all matured in 500 litre oak casks and are bottled with a light fining and without being filtered.



“ This reference point estate continues to achieve incredible quality in just about every vintage. ”

Jeb Dunnuck, The Wine Advocate

Châteauneuf -du-Pape 2015

A blend of 30% each of Mourvèdre and Grenache, 10% Syrah, 10% Counoise and the rest a mix of permitted varieties.

“ A stunner from the get-go, with waves of thoroughly seductive boysenberry, plum, blueberry and raspberry reduction forming the core, while roasted apple wood, rooibos tea, bergamot, and anise notes flash throughout. Has plenty of bass, with a Turkish coffee accent and a hint of alder driving underneath. Everything moves in lockstep through the seriously long finish. ”

97 points
The Wine Spectator



CHÊNE BLEU

VAUCLUSE - RHÔNE - FRANCE

In 1993 Nicole and Xavier Rolet began the task of restoring a medieval priory and vineyard that had been slumbering quietly for centuries in the foothills of Mount Ventoux in the Southern Rhône. The estate was named La Verrière in 1427, after the glass-blowing workshop established there by Aliot Montvin.



“ With our passionate commitment to authenticity and quality we have dedicated ourselves to restoring the priory and the estate’s 35 hectare vineyard to the highest international standards. Our guiding principle is to preserve the integrity and history of the estate and its ‘terroir’ whilst enhancing its exceptional character. ”

Xavier Rolet, Director

The label Chêne Bleu takes its name from a magnificent ‘blue’ oak tree that symbolises the beauty and uniqueness of the vineyards and vines. During the great drought of 2005, the oak was rescued and transformed by Marc Nucera, a young Provençal tree sculptor. He protected and preserved the tree by treating its branches with bouillie bordelaise, the blue-green solution used to protect organic vineyards around the world.

Situated at an altitude of 550m in the UNESCO biosphere of Mont Ventoux, the vineyards are planted predominantly with old vine Grenache and Syrah. Over the last decade other traditional Rhône varieties have been planted such as Roussanne, Marsanne, Viognier, Clairette and Mourvedre. The estate is farmed biodynamically and has a state-of-the-art gravity led winery.

“ We have endeavoured to capture and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of our land by dividing it into mini parcels, or plots, that reflect the specific terroir characteristics of each section, then tailoring our viticultural practices accordingly. ”

Xavier Rolet

The two flagship wines are named after the famed Medieval lovers, Abélard & Héloïse, whose unwavering passion has endured through the centuries as a symbol of true love.

“ Héloïse & Abélard can be enjoyed both as complementary parts as a whole, or distinctly as simple pleasures. ”

Nicole Rolet



Abélard 2010

IGT VAUCLUSE

“ Abélard is a masculine, muscular, Southern Rhône-style Grenache-Syrah blend; a brooding testament to the scholar’s cerebral intensity and resilience. ”

Nicole Rolet

“ When tasting the 2010 Abélard alongside the Héloïse, the derivation of the names becomes obvious. Abélard is the bigger, richer wine—the more ‘masculine’, to deploy a somewhat dated/sexist stereotype. This full-bodied Grenache-dominated (85%) wine is packed with black cherries, star anise and other ground spices, and features a wonderfully long silky finish. Despite the size and concentration, the wine is complex and elegant, not an easy feat. ”

95 points

Joe Czerwinski
The Wine Advocate



GERMANY



WEINGUT JOH JOS PRÜM

MOSEL-SAAR-RUVER – GERMANY

Joh Jos Prüm estate is situated in the heart of Germany's Mosel Valley. This legendary family wine estate has been involved in viticulture for several centuries but it was Dr. Manfred Prüm in 1969 that took the estate to the next level.

“ Few estates in the world can claim to have maintained the highest quality standards uninterrupted for half a century and more. Joh Jos Prüm, the most famous of the many Mosel wine estates bearing the Prüm name, is one estate that can. Since the early 1920's its wines have been among Germany's best, Rieslings with the Mosel's vivacious aroma and racy elegance in its highest form. ”

Stuart Pigott, The Wine Atlas of Germany

The vineyards are spread over 14.5 hectares of steeply sloping land and where Riesling is king. In the heart of the estate is the famous Sonnenuhr vineyard offering perfect growing conditions with its deep, weather beaten grey slate soil, good water support and an extreme steepness of 70%. The wines from here have excellent structure, ripe aromas and flavours, a fine minerality and great depth and length. They reach their best after many years of ageing and are considered some of the best Rieslings in Germany or even the world.



“ The wines, whether a modest Kabinett or an opulent Beerenauslese, are the epitome of filigree elegance: light in body but intense in flavour, exquisitely balanced and precisely tuned, and capable of the most extra-ordinary longevity. With the rise of so many excellent winemakers in the region, one might have supposed that J.J. Prüm, with its profound conservatism, might have been overtaken and left behind. Not a bit of it. The Estate remains where it has been for decades: at the summit. ”

Stephen Brook, The Wines of Germany, Mitchell Beazley



Wehlener Sonnenuhr Kabinett 2015

MOSEL-SAAR-RUVER

“ The 2015 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Kabinett is clear, intense and smoky on the nose, with ripe white and yellow-fleshed stone fruit and floral aromas. Intense and well structured, with a lovely mineral grip and lingering piquancy, this is a medium bodied, mouth filling and lush Riesling. It has a long and salty, perfectly structured finish. This is a classic form JJ Prüm that is both light and complex at the same time. ”

92 points
Stephan Reinhart
The Wine Advocate



EGON MÜLLER
MOSEL-SAAR-RUVER - GERMANY

The Rieslings from Egon Müller are recognised as some of the very best in the world, and in Germany the most expensive and defining. The vineyard is situated in the area of Saar in the Mosel Valley where the Romans established viticulture many centuries ago. It has been in the hands of the Müller family since 1797 and is now run by Egon Müller IV who continues to produce fine and elegant wines from the ancient vines.



Egon Müller's wines are all made using estate-grown fruit from two parcels: 8.3 hectares of Scharzhof and 4 hectares of Le Gallais. These produce wines at a range of ripeness levels, including Kabinett, Spätlese and Auslese, and Auslese Goldkapsel in the best years. If conditions allow, sweet Beerenauslese, Trockenbeerenauslese and Eiswein are also produced.



The Botrytis wines
(those that have been affected by Noble Rot)
are taut and racy with dazzling fruit.
They're severely mineral
and have an incredibly long finish.

Scharzhofberger
Riesling
Trokenbeerenauslese
2010

MOSEL-SAAR-RUVER

“ A harmony of quince, white peach and mirabelle preserves; white raisin; pistachio and almond cream; salted caramel; fresh citrus; herbal essences; and floral perfume, not to mention a balance of acidity and sweetness, viscosity and levity, such as is seldom witnessed even in the realm of great, ennobled Riesling. This is almost endlessly fascinating, seductive, and long-finishing; and probably nearly ageless, as well. I've had much more assertive, even shockingly intense young Egon Muller T.B.A.s, but none with such early harmony and self-assuredness – or any finer. ”

99 points
David Schildknecht
The Wine Advocate



ITALY



CA' DEL BOSCO

FRANCIACORTA - ITALY

Founded in 1968 by Maurizio Zanella, Ca' del Bosco is considered the benchmark producer in Franciacorta and produces sparkling wines which are considered to be some of the finest in the world. The wines have collectively earned 41 'Tre Bicchieri' awards by Italy's Gambero Rosso since 1998 making Ca' del Bosco the second highest awarded winery in the history of the publication.

The name derives from a little house on a hill, called locally 'Ca' del bosc', which was bought in the 1960s by Annamaria Clementi Zanella. Her son, Maurizio, transformed the house into a state of the art winery with large areas dedicated to art and sculpture. The link between art and wine is hugely important for Maurizio and is reflected in the wines which showcase the utmost balance and harmony.

1976 was the first vintage for Spumante wines, with Brut wines following in 1978 which have gone on to wine international acclaim for this iconic estate.



“ It opens with enticing aromas of spring flower, yellow stone fruit, brioche and a mineral, crushed-stone tone that all carry over to the elegantly structured palate, along with tangy nectarine and bright acidity. A refined perlage gives its weightless concentration, while a savoury mineral note lingers on the bone-dry finish. In a word, it's gorgeous. ”

The Wine Spectator

“ The sparkling wines of Ca' del Bosco aren't just top-notch for Franciacorta. They're top-notch for the world. Ca' del Bosco is virtually synonymous with fine sparkling wine in Italy. This is quite an achievement, considering that only 50 years ago this winery consisted of a small house — Ca' del Bosc — perched on a hill of dense woodland. Yet the owner, Maurizio Zanella, was stalwart from the beginning in his belief in Franciacorta, and it's now something of a truism to say these wines match (or often better!) the best of Champagne. ”

James Suckling

Cuvée Annamaria Clementi 2008

FRANCIACORTA

This is Ca' del Bosco's most prestigious Franciacorta which was first made in 1989 and disgorged in 1995. Dedicated to Maurizio's mother, Signora Annamaria Clementi, the winery also adopted an exclusive bottle format for this special cuvée. Only the finest grapes from the various crus go into the wine, with meticulous vilification and extended ageing on the lees of at least seven years.



ALOIS LAGEDER

ALTO-ADIGE - ITALY

Lageder practices biodynamics - a holistic approach to farming which teaches that only those who truly respect the land can expect to get the best from it. Avoiding all chemical and unnatural interventions, as well as using gravity to move the wine around the winery, recycling water and grass roofs to limit heating needs, everything at Lageder is done with the utmost respect for nature.



“Alois Lageder is one of the most erudite and gentlemanly winemakers in the world.”

Rod Smith MW

Lageder owns 50 hectares of vineyards, and also works with about 90 growers in Alto Adige, some of whom have been partners for decades. The wines reflect the diversity of Alto Adige and the portfolio consists of a large range of grape varieties - Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, some of the finest Gewuztraminers in the region and Rieslings which are some of the world's best and hardest-to-find. The domaine also makes Bordeaux-styled reds and wines from the local black grape, Lagrein, which produces full throttle reds to rival the best from the Rhône or Argentina.

“The wines truly sing. In this atypical part of northern Italy, which is an autonomous region of largely German speakers, the cool mountain climate and fresh mountain air create mainly white wines of rare precision and delicacy.”

Rod Smith MW



Alois Lageder Löwengang Chardonnay 2011

ALTO-ADIGE

Made in a Burgundian style with oak fermentation and maturation, this is just the definition of poise and balance. The fruit flavours are harmonious and elegant, the oak deftly judged and the freshness almost Chablis-esque.

“Bright, bright straw yellow, with subtle green highlights. Fresh and delicate aromas, reminiscent of yellow fruit, butter, vanilla and liquorice. Full-bodied, full and elegant on the palate, savoury, hearty and well-balanced, long persistence and pleasantly almond aftertaste.”

Alois Lageder



MARIO SCHIOPETTO

FRIULI-VENEZIA-GIULIA - ITALY

Mario Schiopetto was born in 1930 and began his career as a fireman and then a lorry driver. Guided only by his personal taste and his love for wine, he decided in 1963 to dedicate his time to the production of wine and in 1965 brought out his first 'Tocai'. This triggered a new era for the white wines of Italy, and transformed the conception of Italian white wine.



Mario soon became part of a group of producers (alongside the likes of Angelo Gaja and Nicolò Incisa della Rocchetta from Sassicaia) who worked in the 1960s and 70s to improve and modernise Italian winemaking techniques. Travelling to wine regions around the world they sought out new methods of production and vinification. His innovative nature led to a drastic improvement in the production methods for white wine, which spread throughout Italy thanks to the promotion, distribution and commercialisation of his wines.

Convinced by the uniqueness of his wines, Mario decided that they should be in a bottle unlike any other and so the Renana Schiopetto was born. Today the bottle is 22mm smaller to meet the demands of the modern market.

“ For me, wine is life. ”

Mario Schiopetto

Today the business continues to follow in Mario's footsteps, maintaining a strong focus on innovation in order to guarantee high quality products whilst respecting the environment.

“ A brilliant producer, Schiopetto is the reference point for just how flavorful, perfumed, and compelling dry whites from Friuli can be. Mario Schiopetto continues to satiate the olfactory senses and palate with his extraordinary offerings. Possessing abundant flavors that build incrementally in the mouth, they are dazzling wines that I can't recommend highly enough. ”

Robert Parker



Il Mario 2016

COLLIO DOC

This wine is known in our winery as "Il Mario". It is the best quality possible of Schiopetto wines. In Gorizia, in 1954, the local Curia planted Friulano vines and some Riesling ones. It did so in the best side of the vineyard: the southern. A representative, superb wine that can only be produced in stainless steel tanks in the best vintages.

“ This is a phenomenal new wine in memory of the late legendary winemaker of Friuli: Mario Schiopetto. Aromas of stone with hints of dried white peach. Full body, incredible texture and length. Layered, superb. Captivating wine. A blend of 95% friulano with 5% Riesling. ”

98 points

James Suckling



CASTELLO DELLA SALA

UMBRIA - ITALY

Castello della Sala has a history dating back to 1350 when it was built by Angelo Monaldeschi della Vipera. Since then it has passed through the hands of many different owners, until finally being purchased by Marquis Niccolò Antinori in 1940. Due to customer demand, he wanted to add a white wine to the family portfolio and so looked to the Umbrian Apennines near the wine producing region of Orvieto. His first challenge was to improve the soil which at the time included 52 hectares of olive groves and vineyards, as well as 29 individual farms and 483 hectares of woods and fields.



Cervaro della Sala 2015

UMBRIA IGT

The Cervaro name derives from the noble family which owned Castello della Sala during the 15th century, the Monaldeschi della Cervara.

“ Intense aromas of crushed lime and lemon as well as mineral and flint follow through to a medium body, ultra-precise acid and fruit balance. Long and linear finish. Just a hint of vanilla and cream. ”

95 points
James Suckling

In 1979 Niccolò's son, Piero Antinori, employed Renzo Cotarella, a young professional agronomist, and in less than 10 years he succeeded in creating the wines that were to become the symbol of the estate. His aim was to make white wines of a greater standing than anything currently produced in the Orvieto Classico appellation, and so he experimented with Chardonnay and focused on how to get the best out of the Grechetto grape. After a series of disappointing vintages he finally succeeded, and in 1985 the first true Cervaro della Sala was born - one of the most widely renowned and appreciated Italian white wines in the world.

Since then Cotarella has gone on to become the CEO and Chief Winemaker at Antinori.

“ The biggest change at Antinori is that we became producers. We realised that it was impossible to improve quality without having direct control of the vineyard. We decided to invest not just in vineyards and wineries but also in people, who could really identify with the place. ”

Renzo Cotarella

“ We have demonstrated, over the years that in Tuscany and in Umbria there was the possibility of producing excellent wines, widely recognised at an international level, which showed both class and breed while maintaining their original character. Our library contains many books, but for us it is not rich enough. ”

Piero Antinori, honorary president of Marchesi Antinori

“ I find Cervaro reminds me of a cross between a premier cru Puligny-Montrachet and a top Napa Valley Chardonnay. There is the richness and flamboyance of the Napa white and the raciness and minerality of the Burgundy. ”

James Suckling

An aerial photograph of a village in Piedmont, Italy. The village is built on a hillside, featuring a mix of traditional stone and brick buildings with red-tiled roofs. A prominent, larger building with a tower-like structure is visible on the left. The surrounding landscape is characterized by rolling green hills and terraced vineyards, with rows of grapevines following the contours of the land. The overall scene is lush and scenic, typical of the Piedmont region.

ITALY
PIEMONTE

BRUNO GIACOSA

PIEMONTE - ITALY

Known as ‘the maestro’ the world of wine lost a genius when Bruno Giacosa sadly passed away in January 2018 after a brief illness at the age of 88. Bruno followed his father and grandfather as a grape broker, honing his palate whilst tasting grapes and travelling to every corner of Barolo and Barbaresco to find the best fruit. His palate was famous in the industry and he knew every corner of the vineyards like the back of his hand.



“My father Aldo used to say that there was no better taster than Bruno Giacosa.”

Giacomo Conterno of Poderi Conterno

“He knew the vineyards in minute detail: every sori, every winding path, every ridge, every headland. He tasted the grapes everywhere.”

Angelo Gaja

Bruno was one of the first winemakers in the region to focus on the unique character of individual vineyards and whilst others were still blending different sites he bottled his first Barbaresco Santo Stefano from the 1964 vintage. A Barolo Colline Riona and Barbaresco Asili Riserva were to follow from the 1967 harvest. He finally bought his own vineyards in 1982, when he bought Falletto di Serralunga d’Alba followed by pieces of land in the Asili and Rabajà crus in Barbaresco in the 1990’s.

Bruno took a step back from the business following a stroke in 2006. The winery is now run by his daughter Bruna with Dante Scaglione as a consultant winemaker.

“Giacosa was the same generation as my father, who was born in 1926. They referred to themselves as the last of the Mohicans because although in some ways they were pioneers, they also had great respect for the traditions of the region, and the courage not to follow trends. That’s why the wines are, and will remain, a reference point for the young as well as the older generation.”

Maria Teresa Mascarello, daughter of Bartolo Mascarello

“In my experience, no one’s Nebbiolos have been more consistently wonderful over such a long period of time than those of this morose, introspective genius of Nieve.”

Nicolas Belfrage MW, Barolo to Valpolicella



Falletto Vigna Le Rocche Riserva

2011

BAROLO

“The Bruno Giacosa 2011 Barolo Riserva Falletto Vigne Le Rocche commands attention and respect. The wine successfully, and somewhat magically, turns the tables on the overdone exuberance of the warm vintage and the natural heft that is inherent to Serralunga d’Alba. It does a great job of reigning in all that power and transforming it into streamlined elegance instead. The wine opens to a dark and penetrating color and an immediately expressive bouquet. Thick layers of dark fruit, iron-rich earth, balsam herb, Darjeeling tea, dried ginger and cherry cola rise from the bouquet. The wine’s Falletto signature is very strong. This is a Grande Vino with the proverbial capital G and capital V.”

97 points

Monica Larner
The Wine Advocate



PAOLO MANZONE

PIEMONTE - ITALY

From a family that has made wine in Barolo for generations, Paolo Manzone is in some ways a 'new' winemaker in the very heart of the best of the region's vineyards. Paolo was working as a winemaker for a large producer in the region when he and his charming wife Luisella inherited an exquisite property in the Cru of Meriame. Paolo's aim was to turn these noble grapes into the best wines he could using a mixture of traditional and modern techniques.



The Serralunga holding is located between the hamlets of Baudana and Lazzarito in a small amphitheatre facing South and South-West of Castiglione Falletto. Each and every process that goes into making the wine is carried out by hand to ensure the best quality possible.

“ Nebbiolo is the most hauntingly ethereal and capricious grape variety. On the best sites Nebbiolo produces some of the very finest wines in the world, and nowhere else in the world does it grow more successfully than here. Paolo has captured all this in a series of utterly beguiling wines. ”

Rod Smith MW

Recently gaining Italy's highest possible vinous award, Tre Bicchieri, in the Gambero Rosso, the wines from Paolo Manzone are sure to grow in celebrity and value. At the pinnacle of the range is Barolo Meriame, from the vineyards around the property.



Barolo Meriame

2007

BAROLO

“ The 2007 Barolo Meriame shows more Serralunga village character than the regular bottling. The clarity and precision are both admirable. Roses, tar and licorice are some of the nuances that emerge over time. The Meriame acquires greater darkness and weight as it sits in the glass, while never abandoning its elegant, graceful personality. Tar, menthol, camphor and licorice leave a lasting impression on the finish. ”

92 points

Antonio Galloni,
The Wine Advocate



GAJA
PIEMONTE - ITALY

The Gaja family settled in Piedmont in the mid-seventeenth century. Five generations of Gaja's have been producing wines in the Langhe hills since 1989, the year Giovanni Gaja, a local grape grower, founded the Gaja winery in Barbaresco. Following years of dedication to uncompromising quality, the wines achieved a leadership position in Italy and the family was able to purchase vineyard holdings acquiring Sorì Tildìn, Costa Russi, Sorì San Lorenzo and Darmagi.



Costa Russi
2013

BARBARESCO

The word Costa indicates the side of a hill, while Russi was the nickname of the sharecropper who worked in the vineyard. Costa Russi has a particularly fascinating and intriguing bouquet. Elegant and smooth from its early age, it is a full-bodied wine, with a great tannin structure and length and high ageing potential.



Angelo Gaja took over the family business in 1961 and combined his respect for the traditions of the Langhe with bold innovations in the vineyards and cellars which changed the way that wines were produced all over Italy.

Angelo lives in Barbaresco with his wife Lucia and their three children, Gaia, Rossana and Giovanni who represent the fifth generation of the family and are all involved in the business.

Today the winery owns 96 ha of vineyards in Barbaresco and Barolo. In 1994, the Gajas acquired their first estate in Tuscany, Pieve Santa Restituta in Montalcino. In 1996 the family purchased their second Tuscan property, Ca' Marcanda in Bogheri.



“ In 1961, when young Gaja took the reins at his family winery, Italian wine was mostly cheap, often enjoyable, but rarely serious. He was at the forefront of a new generation of winemakers in Italy that both improved quality by questioning the old techniques and improved sales by convincing the world that these new Italian wines deserved respect. ”

Mitch Frank, The Wine Spectator

“ Angelo’s wines have made a great impact on Italy. Not an impact on style, but on complexity, on wines making a statement. Wine to make an impression on people’s minds. Angelo has given many of us that vision. ”

Lamberto Frescobaldi

Gaja & Rey 2015

LANGHE

Gaja & Rey was the first Chardonnay planted in Piemonte and the first Italian white wine to be aged in barriques. The wine is named after Angelo’s daughter, Gaia, and his grandmother Clotilde Rey and was first produced in 1983.



ITALY

TUSCANY



QUERCIABELLA

TUSCANY - ITALY

Querciabella was founded in 1974 by Giuseppe Castiglioni at the beginning of the Super Tuscan wine movement and is now in the hands of his son Sebastiano. A lover of fine wine, Sebastiano's passion for great winemaking combined with his uncompromising vision has meant that Querciabella has quickly established itself as one of the leading wineries in Italy, earning acclaim from the world's most discriminating critics.



Querciabella has vineyards located throughout Tuscany's Chianti Classico and Maremma regions. Sebastiano's strong commitment to the environment inspired him to convert the winery to biodynamics in 2000 and all of the wines are 100% vegan. Indeed, Querciabella has one of the largest biodynamic vineyard holdings in all of Italy. The full range consists of seven different wines, reflecting the diversity of Tuscan terroir.

Interview with Manfred Ing, Winemaker

What would you say have been the most important moments in the history of Querciabella?

Founded in 1974 by avid wine collector Giuseppe 'Pepito' Castiglioni at the beginning of what can be considered the 'Supertuscan revolution', Querciabella quickly rose to prominence with its elegant and beautifully crafted wines. Camartina (first vintage 1981) is still considered one of the benchmark Supertuscans, while our Batàr is deemed by many to be the first and still the definitive 'white Supertuscan'. Under the stewardship of Sebastiano Cossia Castiglioni, Pepito's son, it was one of the first wineries to become fully organic in 1988 and became biodynamic in 2000, well before this practice became fashionable. In 1995, Querciabella purchased 32 hectares in Tuscan Maremma, in addition to those owned in Chianti Classico.

How would you describe the 2014 vintage in Tuscany?

Given the challenges of the 2014 vintage, it was patience and experience that allowed our fruit to fully benefit from the perfect ripening conditions at the end of September right through until the middle of October. While most were picking, we waited and those few weeks turned out to be the difference between average and excellent quality fruit. This has resulted in some terrific wines with a fine balance of fruit depth, tension and finesse.



Batàr 2014 TOSCANA

How would you describe Batàr 2014?

Starting out shy, the 2014 Batàr has filled out beautifully while still retaining its bright, lifted citrus aromatics. Vibrant white flowers and lemon oil burst out of the glass with hints of chamomile, jasmine and mint. The palate is rich but with a lovely freshness that sets the platform for great ageing potential

SAN GUIDO SASSICAIA

TUSCANY - ITALY

In the 1920s Marchese Mario della Rocchetta dreamt of creating a ‘thoroughbred wine’ and for him, like for the aristocracy of the time, the ideal was Bordeaux. No one had ever dared to produce a Bordeaux blend on Italian soil before, and certainly not in an unknown area as far as viticulture was concerned. The innovative decision to do so was partly due to the similarity Mario Incisa noted between the soils in Bolgheri and that of Graves in Bordeaux.



Sassicaia

2015

BOLGHERI SASSICAIA

2015 is the latest release of Sassicaia, which is already being considered one of the best vintages of the last decades in terms of its quality.

“ This is certainly an exceptional Sassicaia, with a sumptuous nose of ripe, creamy black and red fruit with cedar and spice notes. This is a very confident wine with real authority and presence, beginning with a magnificent attack of rich cassis and ripe griotte cherry followed by cigar box and leather notes, and a long finish of savoury bay leaf and minerals. This 2015 exhibits everything that you’d want from Sassicaia. ”

98 Points
Decanter Magazine

Interview with Priscilla Incisa della Rocchetta, Brand Ambassador

What has been the most important moment in history for Sassicaia?

From the first planting of Cabernet Sauvignon during the Second World War Sassicaia was born. My grandfather Mario Incisa started experimenting with Cabernet Sauvignon grapes in the Bolgheri area during the Second World War, using some vines sourced from his friends the Dukes of Salviati, from their estate of Migliarino, near Pisa. Sassicaia 1968 was the first commercial vintage released on the market in 1972. However it wasn’t until 1978, during a blind tasting of Cabernet Sauvignon wines from around the world with Hugh Johnson and Decanter magazine, that the wine attracted great attention amongst international wine press. As the only Italian wine in the line up amongst French wines, Sassicaia 1972 received high praises and was acknowledged the best wine in the tasting.

Following this success, the 1985 vintage was given 100 points by Robert Parker in 1992. This made international markets and press very curious about this wine coming from the region of Bolgheri, on the coast, which was back then basically unknown and uncovered as a wine producing region.

As the first Super Tuscan wine, what was the Italian reaction when the wine was first released?

Sassicaia was for over 20 years a ‘family wine’, to be enjoyed by family and close friends. The initial reaction to the first commercial vintage was rather weak. People were probably not ready for such a new style. Thanks to the international recognition however the brand grew stronger and stronger. For Italians today, Sassicaia has become something that gives them pride. It is one of the Italian brands in the wine world that really identifies you as Italian.

Other than wine, what else is important for the family?

Horses are also a great passion in the family, especially for my father Nicolò, and his father before him. Breeding and training English thoroughbred horses for flat racing is another important activity at Tenuta San Guido. The stud is called Razza Dormello Olgiata and there have been several successful horses over the years. The most important of which was called Ribot, who is still unbeaten having won all 16 races he ran, including winning the Arc de Triomphe twice in Longchamp-Paris.

“ None can say with certainty why the same vine will produce a great wine in one field and a less impressive wine in another field nearby. That’s the Genius Loci, the best defender of our Cabernet Sauvignon. We are in nature’s hands and we want to stay that way. ”

Nicolò Incisa della Rocchetta



ORNELLAIA

TUSCANY - ITALY

One of Italy's most iconic producers, Ornellaia is located in Bolgheri which is widely considered to be one of the most exciting wine producing regions in the country. This part of the Tuscan coast benefits from a mild maritime climate and a unique terroir, which combined with great care taken in both the vineyard and winery, are key in the production of these modern and elegant wines.



Ornellaia is a blend of Cabernet and Merlot and every vintage offers an expression of the unique terroir developed in harmony with nature.



Ornellaia 'Il Carisma' 2015

BOLGHERI

“ The 2015 vintage perfectly expresses this behavioural trait. Born during a particularly balanced harvest season, 2015 is certainly one of the great Ornellaia vintages. The usual intense colour indicates a wine of great texture and intensity, followed by a fruity scent that is ripe and fresh at the same time, emphasized by classic balsamic and spicy hints. On the palate it is rich, dense, and full-bodied, with an exceptional tannic texture, dense and velvety, of great refinement, that extends throughout the mouth. The long finish concludes with a feeling of firmness and finely spiced hints. ”

Axel Heinz, Winemaker

For the last ten years, Ornellaia has collaborated with a contemporary artist in its Vendemmia d'Artista project. Each year the artist creates a work of art and a series of limited edition labels drawing inspiration from the single word chosen by the winemaker to describe the character of the new vintage. A series of limited edition bottles are then auctioned for charity.

Interview with Axel Heinz, Estate Director and Winemaker

How did you find the 2015 vintage?

After the unusual 2014, the 2015 vintage proved to be very regular, almost 'textbook' like. After a normal, rainy, mild winter, spring was characterized by dry and sunny weather. July will be remembered as particularly scorching and dry. Luckily rain came around the 10th of August. The abundant precipitation allowed the grapes to continue ripening, also bringing a much cooler weather during the final stages. This cool yet sunny weather persisted throughout the harvest, allowing us to pick very slowly, combining a fresh and lively aromatic quality with a perfect phenolic maturation with abundant yet silky and soft tannins.

How do you go about choosing a word to describe each vintage for the Vendemmia d'Artista project, including 2015's 'Il Carisma'?

It is an interesting exercise, but very simple for the 2015 vintage. Like people of great 'Carisma' (Charisma), wines of great vintages know how to impose themselves naturally, without force, their balance allowing them to shine without having to flaunt themselves.

How much money have you raised for charity since the project was started in May 2009?

Almost 2 Million Euros to the best museums in the world.



TENUTA DI BISERNO

TUSCANY - ITALY

The site for Tenuta di Biserno was discovered by Lodovico Antinori in 1995, whilst he was researching land suitable for extending Ornellaia. He realised that whilst the geology and geography were remarkably different from those at Ornellaia given that they were much hillier and stonier, the site was indeed something to get excited about and should be a separate project. As it stood, Lodovico was freed from Ornellaia with an historic change in ownership and he entered into a technical relationship with his brother Marchese Piero Antinori and landowner Umberto Mannoni. Together, they decided to breathe life into the potentially fabulous Biserno Estate.



Tenuta di Biserno is a 49 hectare estate, situated in Alta Maremma, coastal, western Tuscany, nestling amongst the hills of Bibbona. It borders the historic village of Bolgheri and enjoys beautiful views towards the Tyrrhenian Sea. Given the terroir, and the range of soils, Lodovico planted exclusively Bordeaux varietals, principally Cabernet Franc, followed by Merlot, some Cabernet Sauvignon and surprisingly high proportions of Petit Verdot. The range consists of the top wine Lodovico, Biserno and Il Pino di Biserno.

Interview with Lodovico Antinori, Owner and Winemaker

What for you has been the most important moment since you started the Biserno project?

When I realised that Cabernet Franc was the right choice for this terroir and microclimate.

How do you feel that the wines have been received by the international wine trade?

Very well in Europe and Italy, we are happy about the performances in the Eurozone. We are still working on growing the USA and Asian markets.

As the flagship wine, Lodovico rivals other Super Tuscans including Ornellaia which was another of your successes. How does it compare?

Lodovico is produced in the same area as Ornellaia called 'Bellaria' located between Bolgheri and Bibbona, the same area as Masseto.

That land is special. The North exposure of the Lodovico's plot gives the best climate conditions for Cabernet Franc. The production of Lodovico is very limited, only 10,000 bottles are made and only in the best vintages. It's hard to compare with the others especially because of its rare blend: 95% Cab Franc and 5% Petit Verdot.

Cabernet Franc is the most important grape here - what would you say are the big differences in terroir between Bibbona and Bolgheri?

The areas of Bibbona and Bolgheri have the same soil called Conglomerato di Bolgheri. There are different microzones in all the area, and in particular Biserno and Macchiolle for me are the most successful areas for Cabernet Franc.



Lodovico

2013

TOSCANA

Within the estate there is a very individual parcel, set apart, which was found to produce wines of a very particular, unique character and personality. Like Masseto in the past, Vigna Lodovico, provides the Biserno estate's jewel in the crown. Lodovico is an extraordinary wine, produced in tiny amounts and only in vintages where all the elements come together to create the very best possible translation of this site. The vineyard is managed, throughout the year, with passion and rigorous attention to detail. To date, the Marchese's perfectionism has only allowed five vintages to be released, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012 and 2013 averaging 6000 bottles per vintage.



FATTORIA LE PUPILLE

TUSCANY - ITALY

Le Pupille takes its name from two colonial houses in Maremma which look like the pupils of two eyes from up above. When Fredi (Alfredo) inherited the farmhouses he transformed them into a typical Tuscan farm, ensuring that he also had a couple of hectares of land to grow vines for his own enjoyment. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to use the wine to pay tribute to his most important customers in Pisa, and eventually in the USA.



Fredi sadly passed away in 1985 leaving the winery in the very capable hands of his daughter Elisabetta Geppetti, a young art student at the time, who decided to pursue her father's dream. Elisabetta worked alongside Giacomo Tachis (the famous Italian oenologist who helped to create Sassicaia, Solaia and Tignanello) for eleven years during which time the winery changed a lot, transforming from a family farm into a modern wine estate.

Originally only 5 hectares, the estate today boasts 75 hectares of vineyards and accounts for an annual production of 500,000 bottles. Elisabetta has worked with the likes of Riccardo Cotarella, Christian Le Sommer (former Winemaker of Château Latour) and recently the well-known enologist Luca d'Attoma. Luca is one of the world's leading experts of biodynamic and biological products which are currently being trialled at Le Pupille.

Elisabetta's intuition, passion and continued research have made her known worldwide as the 'Lady of Morellino' having spent three decades tirelessly promoting the Morellino di Scansano region. She was the first woman to become president of the consortium of Morellino di Scansano and has won numerous awards and recognition. In addition to these achievements, she is the mother of 5 children the eldest of which, Clara, works within the estate representing Le Pupille around the world.



Saffredi

2015

TOSCANA

Saffredi, a Cabernet based blend, was the Maremma's first ever Super Tuscan launched in 1989. The vineyard is 6 hectares and lies at 280 metres above sea level.

“ The 2015 Saffredi is a sultry and velvety wine from the Tuscan Coast. The blend is 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot and 10% Petit Verdot that sees 18 months in new and neutral oak. The textural richness is of the highest caliber, and the bouquet produces a long succession of black fruit, exotic spice and savoury tobacco flavours. There's a touch of mocha chocolate and toasted espresso bean as well. The wine delivers great length and power. It promises not only to age but to improve as it spends more years in the cellar. ”

96 points
Monica Lerner,
The Wine Advocate

“ Thanks to the hard work of Elisabetta Geppetti, this property has put Tuscany's coastal region of Maremma on the fine-wine map. The estate produces a number of beautiful wines, from a juicy, reasonably priced Morellino di Scansano to a majestic Super Tuscan called Saffredi. The cabernet sauvignon blend is legendary amongst Tuscan-wine cognoscenti. We rated the 2012 Saffredi a perfect 100 points and the 2015 Saffredi 99 points. ”

James Suckling



TUA RITA TUSCANY- ITALY

In 1984, Rita Tua and Virgilio Bisti purchased what was to become the Tua Rita estate in the Notri sub-zone of the town of Suverto, located in Tuscany's province of Livorno. The name of the estate is the simple inversion of the maiden name of Rita Tua Bisti. Chosen for its beauty, the couple acquired the property with the goal of having somewhere peaceful that they could pass their lives. However their passion for wine quickly became a dominating force.



They initially started making wine for their own family needs and pleasure, making a sort of 'garage wine' working with the micro-production of a mere 2ha of vines, cultivated with a near-obsessive care and attention and unbounded enthusiasm. The main variety in the area was traditionally Sangiovese but Rita and Vigil wished to experiment with international varieties and planted their first Cabernet and Merlot vineyard in 1988 with grapes from these plantings initially making their way into Sassicaia. They had no idea that this would be the start of the second generation of Super Tuscans.

From the very beginning Tua Rita began to make a name for itself and the winery burst into international fame with the 1994 vintage of Redigaffi, a Merlot aged in small oak barrels, which was a major critical success. Since then James Suckling awarded the 1997 100 points, Robert Parker called the 1999 Redigaffi 'as close to perfection as a wine can get'.

The property is still family run by Rita, her daughter Simena and her husband Stefano.

Interview with Rita Tua, Owner

What has been the biggest challenge for you since you started making wine?

Our wines are like our children, children born from a grand passion. The challenge was that of making great wine, and I believe that, over time, we have received that ample approval and assent which confirm that we have done things the right way. We did not begin making wine in order to win prizes but rather to create something truly unique, something which could be understood, appreciated, and loved and which express this part of Tuscany.

Having followed your dream, how have you found the reality?

Every day gives us a reason to wake up with a smile. This is a countryside which gives us great satisfaction.



“Tua Rita's Redigaffi is one of Italy's best Merlots.”

James Suckling



Redigaffi
2015

TOSCANA

“ This is an extremely intense and dense Redigaffi yet it remains lively and agile. Full body and powerful tannins that are polished and long. It goes on for minutes. So compacted and structured but always reserved. Acid balance is just right.

”
100 points,
James Suckling

BIBI GRAETZ

TUSCANY - ITALY

Bibi is a self-taught winemaker, and epitomises wine being an art form as he is also a passionate artist with his paintings adorning all the labels of the wine that he produces. Bibi lives and works in his childhood home, Castello di Vincigliata, a Tuscan castle looking down on Firenze.



Unlike a lot of Chianti estates which are surrounded by vines, Bibi started out with just two hectares of vines from his parents, which he farmed organically. The rest of his grapes he has gone on to source from growers with exceptional sites and old vines, working alongside them to produce the best quality fruit possible. This assortment of old vines is located all around Chianti Classico, including 37 acres of vineyards at his property in Fiesole, where he works with his cellar master, Luigi Temperini.

Bibi's wines unceremoniously gatecrashed the Tuscan wine scene when he launched his first vintage of Testamatta in 2000. This was the birth of one of Italy's great cult wines, along with his Colore, which are both among the country's most collectable bottles. These notorious wines have won over fans around the world with their flavour, complexity and elegance.

“Bibi Graetz has been making wine in Tuscany for 13 years. Like a botanist in a remote jungle, searching for that undiscovered gem, Bibi restlessly searches for every possible unexplored patch of old vines in Tuscany. Bibi's flagship wine Testamatta is a blend of old vineyards he acquired around Tuscany and newer vines from his property in Fiesole, Florence.”

“It's very cool to taste with Testamatta owner Bibi Graetz. The man is so straight and honest; he just tells you what he thinks. His pure Sangiovese is one of my 12 Best Collectible Wines of Tuscany. Bibi thinks differently. I really appreciate iconoclastic winemakers like him.”

“Bibi looks for richness, yet finesse, and great length and depth. His wines age really well, even though the first vintage of Testamatta was 2000.”

James Suckling

Testamatta

2007

TOSCANA

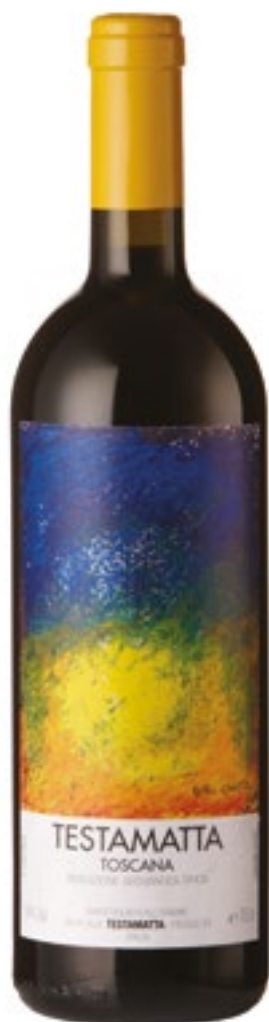
“Graetz's 2007 Testamatta is soft and seamless as it flows onto the palate, revealing a silky, luxurious expression of fruit. The tannins are remarkably soft and well balanced, which makes the 2007 one of the most accessible young Testamattas I can recall tasting. Floral tones on the finish add a touch of brightness and lift on the close. While the 2007 isn't overly complex or powerful, it does offer superb balance and delivers plenty of pleasure, even at this early stage. This is first-class juice. I continue to be impressed with the beautiful wines of Bibi Graetz. These are highly singular, expressive wines that merit serious consideration.”

Antonio Galloni, The Wine Advocate

“This is very concentrated with a beautiful balance and freshness. Lots of blackberry, mushroom and wet earth character. Full and dense with firm tannins, yet energetic and lively. Intense.”

96 Points

James Suckling



TENUTA TIGNANELLO

TUSCANY - ITALY

Tenuta Tignanello is owned by the Antinori family who have been making wine for over 600 years, since Giovanni di Piero Antinori became part of the Arte Fiorentina Dei Vinattieri in 1385. The Chianti estate consists of 319 hectares of land, of which 127 are planted with vines. Within this there are two special vineyard parcels which enjoy a number of unique characteristics - Solaia and Tignanello.



Solaia was first produced in 1978 from a parcel of vines within the larger Tignanello vineyard due to the exceptional quality of the Cabernet Sauvignon that vintage. This would normally have gone into the pioneering Super Tuscan, Tignanello, but instead Marquis Piero Antinori decided to ferment and age a pure Cabernet, producing 3,600 bottles. The Solaia vineyard today consists of 20 hectares of vines which benefit from high altitude, rocky soil, a unique micro climate and most importantly exposure to the sun (which accounts for the name of the parcel and the wine - 'Solaia' derives from sole, the Italian word for sun).

The initial blend was 80% Cabernet Sauvignon and 20% Cabernet Franc which was repeated in 1979. In following years, 20% Sangiovese was introduced.

Solaia is only produced in superior vintages and was not produced in 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984 and 1992.

“ What would the wine world be like without the Antinori family? The patriarch of the clan, Piero Antinori, forever changed the way the world views Tuscan wines with the invention in the 1970s of Tignanello, followed by Solaia. ”

James Suckling



Solaia 2013 TOSCANA

“ Marchesi Antinori's 2013 Solaia is a profound and meaningful wine that is based mostly on Cabernet Sauvignon with Sangiovese and Cabernet Franc in supporting roles. It sports a dark and thick texture with plump fruit and spice, grilled herb and black pepper. The bouquet is intense and layered with the kind of complexity that is best admired as the wine shifts and evolves in the glass. The textural impact is also impressive—you feel the inherent power and the structure, but these elements are never overdone. ”

97+ points

Monica Larner
The Wine Advocate



NEW ZEALAND



KUMEU RIVER

AUCKLAND – NEW ZEALAND

Kumeu River is a true old world meets new world wine story. The Brajkovich family brought winemaking knowledge from Croatia to New Zealand's capital and became a founding family of the country's wine industry.



Their son, Michael, really developed the true potential of the vineyard when he took over in 1982. Michael was the first New Zealander to become a Master of Wine and he used his skills and knowledge to improve the quality of the fruit through better drainage systems and introducing the Lyre trellis system (training the vines to grow upwards, rather than hanging down). The Chardonnay wines of Kumeu River are regarded as some of the best in the world and the vineyard has become the benchmark for non-Burgundy produced Chardonnay.

Interview with Paul Brajkovich, Owner

What do you think will be the future for wines of the region?

In our opinion, Chardonnay is the best variety we have in the Kumeu region, therefore the future for Kumeu is Chardonnay. There are other varieties we grow but Chardonnay is the standout. We have re-planted many of our vineyards with Chardonnay in the past 25 years and as the vine age increases in these vineyards we are seeing the quality get even better.

What makes the Estate Chardonnay 2015 stand out to you?

The 2015 Estate Chardonnay is a selection of six of the better sites we have in Kumeu. 2015 was a very good year with crisp acidity which has given the wine a very tight structure. The vintage was also a low yielding year, which has given the wine a lovely concentration and complexity.



Estate Chardonnay 2015

AUCKLAND

“The 2015 Estate Chardonnay is more open knit and less taut than the single vineyard wines, with an expressive nose of ripe nectarines, pink grapefruit and guava, plus underlying notes of baking bread and ginger. Medium bodied, it offers richness and good depth in the mouth with an approachable, refreshing backbone and great harmony.”

92 points

Lisa Perrotti Brown
The Wine Advocate



DOG POINT VINEYARD

MARLBOROUGH – NEW ZEALAND

Marlborough is blessed with one of the sunniest and driest climates in New Zealand. With easterly sea breezes and a long autumn, this region provides the perfect conditions for long slow ripening fruit. Home to New Zealand's best Sauvignon Blanc and home to Dog Point.



Ivan Sutherland and James Healy, the former chief viticulturist and head winemaker of Cloudy Bay, began Dog point in 2002. As owners they have an incredible hands on approach to their wines - from in the vineyard, handpicking the grapes, to carrying out all the winery work. They apply old world philosophies and new world technology to produce wines true to their region.

“ Our philosophy is to produce regionally distinctive wines that will drink well now and age gracefully for many years. ”

James Healy, Winemaker



Section 94 2014

MARLBOROUGH

A fuller bodied, textural style of Sauvignon Blanc. This single vineyard parcel is situated within the Dog Point Vineyard, using the same low cropping level from vines planted in 1992. Fruit is handpicked, whole bunch pressed and fermented and aged in older French oak barrels for 18 months.

“ The palate is wonderfully intense with a gorgeous, creamy texture and tons of flavour layers, finishing long. Wow...this vintage is firing on all cylinders and should age beautifully over the next 5-7 years. ”

94 points

Lisa Perrotti Brown,
The Wine Advocate

Interview with Ivan Sutherland, Owner

What has been the most important moment in the history of Dog Point Vineyards?

It has to be when we decided to make wine under our own label in 2002. The vineyard was already there as Dog Point.

What is your favourite food pairing with Section 94?

Enjoyed with a huge range of cuisine... seafood, Asian dishes, white meats, pasta. Most memorable probably an entrée with lunch that had fresh asparagus picked that morning infused with goats cheese matched to 2008 Section 94.



CRAGGY RANGE

HAWKE'S BAY - NEW ZEALAND



Craggy Range is a family owned winery established in 1997 and situated in the shadow of the spectacular Te Mata Peak in the premium wine growing area of Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. Craggy Range produces a collection of iconic wines from multiple regions throughout the country. Owner Terry Peabody and his family pursued the single vineyard approach to winemaking, planting on green fields and bare land ensuring a focus on quality from the very beginning.

New Zealand, with its diversity of soil types offered the perfect location to plant the vines. From the stony, warm soils of the Gimblett Gravels in Hawke's Bay to the volcanic, clay soils of Te Muna Road in Martinborough these exceptional vineyards produce wines with amazing aromatics, purity and complexity.

The wines, produced for the Prestige and Family Collections are pure expressions of the unique terroir in which they were grown.



Interview with Terry Peabody, Owner

As a yacht owner yourself, where is your favourite place to cruise?

My favourite place is Hayman Island and the Great Barrier Reef, although I also have a soft spot for sailing to Kidnappers Bay near Napier in New Zealand as this is the closest port to our winery.

What has been your favourite moment at sea?

My favourite moments are when I have my grandsons onboard and we go fishing for Pacific Ocean game fish.

What is your favourite wine to drink onboard?

The yacht has a full cellar of Craggy Range wines with some museum vintages, however the majority of the time we drink aromatic whites and rosé from our Martinborough vineyard, Te Muna.



Le Sol Syrah 2013

GIMBLETT GRAVELS

“ ‘Le Sol’, French for ‘the soil’, is born of the renowned Gimblett Gravels viticultural appellation. The importance of the soil in the creation of this wine and the respect for the Rhône Valley were the leading elements for defining its name. Intensely hand managed, the grapes reveal a deep and dark Syrah with purple hues which represents the very best of the style for that year. ‘Le Sol’ is always aromatically pure with a luscious yet elegant mid-palate and a distinctive fine tannin finish we call ‘Gimblett dust’. ”

Matt Stafford, Head Winemaker



BELL HILL

NORTH CANTERBURY - NEW ZEALAND

In 1997 an old lime quarry in Weka Pass, North Canterbury, was transformed into the now internationally recognized vineyard, Bell Hill. Marcel Giesen and Sherwyn Veldhuizen established the property by planting two hectares of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay in the unique limestone soil and on north facing hillsides. This was the perfect environment to create sophisticated, elegant wines of a unique character.



“We seek to reflect the characteristic expression of our site and soil in the wines we make, looking for consistent quality, fruit concentration and expression of terroir.”

Bell Hill



Interview with Sherwyn Veldhuizen, Owner

What's the story behind the name Bell Hill?

Bell Hill comes from its earlier life as a lime quarry and we chose to keep it when we purchase the property 21 years ago as from the southern side, the hill takes the shape of a bell/bell curve. The road we are on is the Old Weka Pass Road which was superseded by the Weka Pass Road in the 1930's. When travellers were coming through the Weka Pass on the old road into the Waikari Valley, this shape gave the hill its name.

What do you like to pair with Bell Hill Pinot Noir?

For food pairing, Pinot Noir is open to many options and the rules are less rigid than they used to be. The 2013 vintage is quite structured and although not a 'big' wine it is savoury and mineral with chalky undertones, we tend to pair with chicken and truffle, duck with hoisin flavours, hot or cold smoked salmon.



Pinot Noir 2013

NORTH CANTERBURY

Dark, slightly brooding fruit, quietly revealing its aromas, hinting at dark berry, spice, flowers and perfume with protein and iron notes. Showing a lively palate with a vibrant structural core of acidity and even tannins providing the platform for the fruit to reveal itself over time. Quite tightly bound but also speaking of elegance with a mouth filling mineral finish.

PORTUGAL



TAYLOR'S PORT

DOURO - PORTUGAL

Taylor's is one of the oldest of the founding Port houses, and has been making Port Wine since 1692. Regarded as the benchmark for Vintage Port, Taylor's has been entirely dedicated to the production of Port wine and in particular to its finest styles since it was founded over three centuries ago.



Taylor's Vintage Ports are blended from the finest wines of the firm's own quintas or estates, Vargellas, Terra Feita and Junco. These three iconic properties each have their own unique character and are the cornerstone of the company's success.

Taylor's is an independent company in which some family members play a leading role in all areas of the firm's activity. This long and unbroken family tradition has allowed the skills and knowledge required to produce the finest ports to be refined and added to as they are passed down from one generation to the next.

Interview with Adrian Bridge, Managing Director

What was special about the 2011 vintage?

The 2011 harvest was exceptional and, clearly, the Ports made at the main Taylor property of Quinta de Vargellas stand out. The old vines are an important part of the property and despite making a selection to do a Vargellas Vinha Velha (old vine selection) we still have plenty left to go into the main blend. You may recall that Jancis Robinson said that the Vargellas Vinha Velha was, in her opinion, the best wine made anywhere in the world in 2011. The vintage produced textbook Vintage Ports, classics in every sense.

What can you share with us that people might not know about Taylor's?

Peter Bearsley, son of the founder, was the first member of the English wine trade to make the daunting journey to the inhospitable Douro Valley himself in the 1720's, other merchants bought the wines of the Douro through intermediaries. Bartholomew Bearsley, grandson of the founder, became the first British wine shipper to buy a property in the Douro in 1744, allowing him to build relationships with the farmers and secure the first pick of their wines.

Taylor's was also the pioneer of many Port styles including: the first dry white Port 'Chip Dry' in 1934; the first 'single quinta vintage' Quinta de Vargellas in 1958 and the originator of Late Bottled Vintage, a style that the firm pioneered in 1970 and of which it remains the leading producer.

Quinta de Vargellas was named one of the '25 great vineyards of the world' by Wine & Spirits magazine. The property is an extraordinary place, remote and beautiful yet with its own railway station. The property got electricity in 1977 and makes some outstanding olive oil – what we used to use in the lamps for light prior to electricity arriving.

Often seen as a winter drink, which is your favourite Port for summer drinking?

Taylor's is one of the few remaining houses which still produces a 40 Year Old Aged Tawny Port. This is a very rare old tawny blend, produced in limited quantities. It takes 4 litres today to have one litre in 40 years time. The 40 years of ageing in seasoned wood have concentrated this wine almost to an essence, producing intense and complex nutty and spicy aromas and a dense and concentrated palate full of rich mellow flavour. Bottled for immediate drinking, the Taylor's 40 Year Old Tawny Port is naturally refreshing; served cool or lightly chilled. It is an excellent way to end the meal, relaxing on your deck with great friends and family.



Taylor's Vintage Port

2011

DOURO

“Taylor's Vintage 2011 has a multifaceted, Pandora's Box of a nose that is mercurial in the glass: cassis at first before blackberry and raspberry politely ask it to move aside, followed by wilted rose petals and Dorset plum. The palate is sweet and sensual on the entry, plush and opulent, with copious black cherries, boysenberry and cassis fruit, curiously more reminiscent of Fonseca! It just glides across the palate with a mouth-coating, glycerine-tinged finish that has a wonderful lightness of touch, demonstrating how Vintage Port is so much more accessible in its youth nowadays. But don't let that fool you into dismissing the seriousness or magnitude of this outstanding Taylor's.”

98 points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

BLANDY'S MADEIRA - PORTUGAL

Since the 17th century, Madeira has been recognised as one of the greatest wines in the entire world. The Blandy family is unique in being the only family of all the founders of the Madeira wine trade to still own and manage their original wine company. Whilst the words 'progressive' and 'Madeira' do not really go together, the 200-year old seventh generation run Blandy's is definitely a progressive company, constantly searching for new ways to make and market this most exquisite of the world's wine gems. Today the company is run by Chris Blandy and it is still the world's leading producer of premium quality Maderia wine.



“ I have found that Madeira wine as a whole is experiencing an exciting growth and with the right team in place, I hope to help reinvent the Madeira market and to set the base for future generations to come. ”

Chris Blandy, Managing Director

“ Fashions come and go, but if you were to demand of many wine lovers that they choose their single favourite wine, you would get the answer 'Madeira' as often as not. The wine is made in a particular way. They are allowed gently to oxidise – imparting deep and complex flavours of nuts, spices and caramel – and gently warm and cool according to the undulating climate of this near-tropical island. This subtle 'cooking' process adds further layers of flavours of molasses, burnt orange, marmalade, baked fruits and sweet spices. ”

Rod Smith MW



“ The nose is mellow at first, but rapidly gains momentum with scents of molasses, smoke, hazelnut and an antique bureau. The palate is lively and fresh on the entry with a killer line of acidity that lends this Bual more than enough tension and nervosite. Marmalade, quince, touches of tobacco and even a touch of chili oil inform this vivacious Bual. This is a real treat. ”

94 points

Neal Martin
The Wine Advocate

“ It's an intimidating thought to a Madeira-lover who contemplates how small the production and stocks of these wines are – far rarer than first growth Bordeaux or even DRC. ”

James Suckling

Blandy's Vintage Bual 1969 MADEIRA

Blandy's Colheita Bual 1969 is a single harvest Madeira. This wine was aged for 43 years in seasoned American oak casks in the traditional 'Canteiro' system, whereby the wine is gently heated by the natural temperature in the lofts of the company's south-facing lodge in Funchal. Over the years the wine is transferred from the top floor to the middle floor and eventually to the ground floor where it is cooler. The wine is regularly racked during the ageing process and is finally bottled when the desired balance of maturity is reached.



SOUTH AFRICA



ATARAXIA

HEMEL-EN-AARDE - SOUTH AFRICA

2005 was the maiden vintage for Ataraxia, which produces four wines from this unique terroir - Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and a red blend called Serenity. All fully express the terroir from which they are born and have gone on to receive international acclaim.

After successive vintages where Kevin worked tirelessly to help establish the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley at the forefront of quality Chardonnay and Pinot Noir production in South Africa, he decided that it was time for him to set out on his own. After months of searching, soil testing and detailed analysis of potential sites, Kevin found the perfect 47-hectare plot, which he bought together with his wife Hanil and a group of friends.

Interview with Kevin Grant, Owner & Winemaker

What is unique about the terroir and vineyard site at Ataraxia?

Hemel-en-Aarde is Afrikaans for 'heaven and earth' and the claim is justified. Our estate sits on a particularly heavenly stretch of land beneath the Babylon's Tower mountain range and is home to some of the most spectacular terroir that South Africa has to offer. There are 14 different soil types derived from the deposits of Table Mountain Sandstone, Cape Granite and Bokkeveld Shale which can be traced back more than 1000 million years. This means that we have the privilege of cultivating some of the most ancient soils on earth. Our vineyards lie on the most elevated section of the Hemel-en-Aarde area, making our convoluted landscape unique. We plant on these elevated, predominantly south-facing slopes and our wines are a pure expression of the soils in which they grow.

What is the story behind the name and the label?

Ataraxia is Greek for 'a serene state of mind, free from worry and preoccupation' (hence the label). Ataraxia lives up to the hype. Aptly called the Skyfields, Ataraxia Wines is perfectly positioned on a commanding rise in the beautiful Hemel-en-Aarde wine growing area.

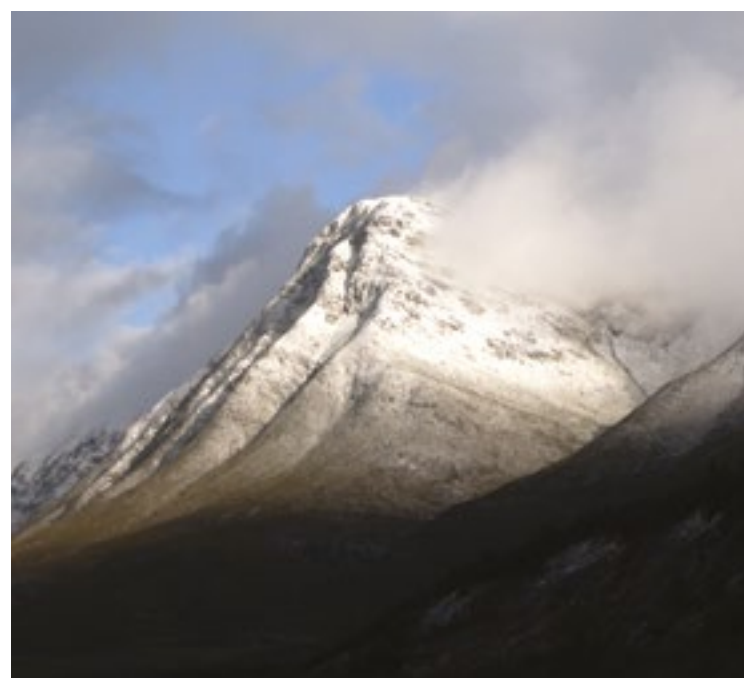
What has been the most memorable moment for you since starting Ataraxia?

There is not one single moment and not a lot of people can still say after 27 years that they are still as excited as the first time they started the same job. However some memorable moments would be when my Chardonnay 2007 became the Tri-Nation champion in 2008 (a competition between Australia, New-Zealand and South Africa), or when my 2013 Chardonnay was nominated by Decanter as one of the best 11 Chardonnays in the world outside of Burgundy who also named my 2015 Chardonnay as the best in South Africa.



“It has been a long time coming and if fear were the basis on which decisions were made, then Ataraxia would never have been born.”

Kevin Grant, Wine Maker & Owner



Ataraxia Chardonnay 2016

HEMEL-EN-AARDE

Made using uncomplicated (not simple) winemaking techniques, this is an athletic, chiseled and precise wine. It embraces the very adult tastes of salinity, brininess and minerality, all of which are the hallmarks of the great and classic white wines of the world.



RAATS FAMILY WINES STELLENBOSCH - SOUTH AFRICA

Voted winery of the year in The Platter Guide 2018, with an unprecedented eight wines receiving the coveted 5 star rating, Bruwer Raats is considered to be one of the leading New World producers of Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc.

Raats Family Wines is a boutique winery situated in the Polkadraai Hills area of Stellenbosch and the only Cabernet Franc specialist in South Africa. Established in 2000, Raats was originally a partnership between brothers Bruwer and Jasper Raats, with their father Jasper Snr as viticulturist. Jasper Snr passed away in 2009 which saw Bruwer's cousin, Gavin Bruwer Slabbert joining the team as Winemaker and Viticulturist.

Bruwer (also known as the Chenin King) spent time at esteemed Blaauwklippen, Delaire and Zorgvliet estates before his commitment to build the Raats Family brand full time. His intense and personal devotion has seen Raats Family Wines earn a stellar reputation internationally, consistently producing Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc of outstanding quality, which are considered benchmarks for these varieties around the world. Indeed during a tasting in Europe, Bruwer's Cabernet Sauvignon 2001 was declared better than Cheval Blanc 2001 and was lauded by Jancis Robinson OBE MW as one of the greatest Cabernet Francs in the world.

A great deal of effort has gone into sourcing specific soil types and old low-yielding vineyards located in the Stellenbosch, Paarl, Durbanville Hills and the Paardeberg area. All the grapes are handpicked and the wines are made with his extensive knowledge and attention to detail. The result is a truly distinctive showcase for South African wine and soil.



Interview with Bruwer Raats, Owner & Winemaker

What do you see as the future for the South African Wine Industry?

I believe the way forward for the South African wine industry is not quality by default, but quality by design. We must go out there and create Grand Cru vineyards by doing everything right and so create our own future.

What is different in the way that you produce Chenin Blanc & Cabernet Franc compared to other producers?

The difference for us is that in everything we do we try to resonate the quality in our wine and that eventually becomes our marketing angle. We do it small, we do it fantastically and we do it so differently to anybody else. The end result is rare, unique, small and different to anyone else.

“Bruwer Raats may well be the most exciting and forward-thinking winemaker in Stellenbosch at the moment. No...make that IS the most exciting and forward-thinking winemaker”

Neal Martin, The Wine Advocate



Mvemve Raats MR de Compostella 2015

STELLENBOSCH

Amongst the Raats portfolio, Bruwer makes a wine called Mvemve Raats (MR) de Compostella, a collaborative venture with his friend Mzokhona Mvemve that began with the 2004 vintage. Just one wine is made each year: a Bordeaux blend.

Deep, dark intense ruby colour. Blackcurrant and black cherry fruit with hints of violets, cedar and cinnamon. Rich and complex with mineral, black berry fruit and dark chocolate on the finish. Harmoniously composed of sufficient of each of the five Bordeaux varieties to ensure none dominates. This wine shows a consistent, linear flavour profile with a polished finish.



KLEIN CONSTANTIA

CONSTANTIA – SOUTH AFRICA

Founded in 1685, Klein Constantia is situated on the upper foothills of Constantiberg, Cape Town. It was the first vineyard in South Africa and has always been famous for its elegant sweet wine, Vin de Constance.



The Estate has had the most interesting history being prized by leaders and aristocracy throughout the 18th century. A staple product in the home of Napoleon, referenced in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, **"it's healing powers on a disappointed heart"** and Charles Dickens' *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, **"the blooming old lady made all haste to the dining-room closet, to produce from it the support embodied in a glass of Constantia and a home-made biscuit."** American Presidents sipped Constantia while in power and Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette filled their cellars with the luxurious sweet wine.

Unfortunately a vine disease hit South Africa in 1898 causing wine production to come to a halt and the vineyards fell dormant. It wasn't until 1986, that Klein Constantia was revived and put back on the international map as one of the best vineyards in the world.

Almost 100 years later talented winemaker, Matthew Day, has resurrected the magnificent vineyard to all its previous glory and more. Vin de Constance has consistently appeared in lists of the world's top wines and has been rated South Africa's best wine.

Interview with Hans Astorn, Managing Director & Partner

**Whats on the horizon for Klein Constantia?
Are you releasing any other wines?**

We have been co-producing with a French producer by the name Pascal Joilvet a wonderful Sauvignon Blanc, Metis. We are also the proprietors of a fabulous red wine estate in Stellenbosch where we have some great influence from some wine nobility from Bordeaux, Bruno Prats (former Cos d'Estournel) and Hubert de Boüard from Château Angélus.

**Can you describe the perfect setting
for drinking Klein Constantia Vin de Constance?**

It is the perfect wine for a sunset drink on a luxury yacht. Serve it with fresh figs, jamon Iberico, almonds and some lovely hard cheese like parmigiano, pecorino or manchego.



Vin de Constance Natural Sweet Wine

2013

CONSTANTIA

Bright and gold in appearance with aromas of citrus marmalade and frangipani abundant on the nose. The palate is full bodied and complex. A good sugar to fruit ratio combined with a great acidity ensures the wine is in balance. The wine concludes with a long, spicy and grippy finish.



SPAIN



PAZO DE SEÑORANS

RÍAS BAIXAS - SPAIN

Pazo de Señorans was bought in the 1970s by husband and wife team Marisol Bueno and Javier Mareque. They started making wine in 1989 and were the driving force behind the creation of the Rías Baixas DO. Seen as the best winery in Galicia, and widely regarded as the best white wine produced in Spain, the winery is now in the hands of their four children, Marisol, Vicky, Javier and Santiago.



Interview with Javier Izurieta Romero, Brand Ambassador

As one of the leading producers in Rías Baixas, what for you are the most important factors in producing quality wines?

We try to create wines that reflect the characteristics of the area and the peculiarities of Albariño. Every year we look at how we can improve our vineyard management and harvest techniques, taking special care throughout the process. We work constantly with diverse projects of research and development, and are currently studying how to improve growing Albariño using models based on both remote satellite monitoring of vineyards together with a system of site based sensors.

How would you describe your wines?

We make honest wines, that give in the mouth what they promise on the nose and that express the maximum quality of each vintage.

What would you say is the best way to enjoy your wines?

The best size to enjoy Señorans for two people is in magnum, if the other one doesn't drink too much!



Selección Añada 2009

RÍAS BAIXAS

A unique single vineyard Albariño which is aged on the lees in small stainless steel tanks for up to 36 months, with even more time in bottle, demonstrating the ageing power of Albariño.

Straw yellow with greenish hues, vivid and brilliant. Intense and very expressive, this wine is full-bodied with a contrast of great delicacy. Perfect to be enjoyed right away or it can be aged for a further 10 years.

LA RIOJA ALTA S.A.

RIOJA - SPAIN

La Rioja Alta S.A. was founded in 1890 by five Riojan and Basque families who shared the same passion for wine. A quality orientated producer, the company remains true to the traditional method of making Rioja - using American oak barrels which are made in their own cooperage, racking by candlelight and only releasing the wines onto the market when they are ready to drink.



The company has 300 hectares of vineyards in the best zones of Rioja. With more than 50,000 casks and 6.4 million bottles stored at any one time, the equivalent of about 8 years sales, La Rioja Alta S.A. is unique in its ability to supply large quantities of fully mature wines of world class quality.

Gran Reserva 890 sits at the top of a range of Rioja including the wineries flagship brand, Viña Ardanza, which since its creation in 1941 is the wine that has earned La Rioja Alta S.A. the most fame and renown.

Interview with Julio Sáenz, Winemaker

La Rioja Alta S.A. celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2015. What do you see as the future for Rioja?

We think that Riojan wines have gradually adapted to modern customers. At La Rioja Alta S.A we have also adapted little by little - we were born in the 19th century, grew up in the 20th century and feel a great passion for the 21st century! We have not abandoned our philosophy of making classic Rioja wines, but I also believe that we have adapted our wines to today's consumer tastes. We seek fresher, more lively wines, with increased ageing capability, but we continue to offer that texture and elegance in the mouth that we have always had. We want our wines to be up to date without giving up the very philosophy which has taken us to where we are today.

Given that you only make it in the best years, is there a lot of pressure when you decide to launch a new vintage of Gran Reserva 890?

The decision to launch a new vintage of GR 890 is the most difficult of all because it is our top quality wine, and our consumers not only want to enjoy a stupendous wine when it comes out, they also expect it to improve over the next few years. It is not easy to make this wine, but many years of experience helps us. When La Rioja Alta S.A. brings out a new vintage of GR 890, we are sure that it will overwhelmingly meet our clients' expectations.



Gran Reserva 890 2005

RIOJA

Considered to be one of Spain's greatest and most age-worthy wines, Gran Reserva 890 was first made in 1890 by Albert Vigier, the firm's first winemaker, and since then has only been made in the very best vintages.

The 2005 release has been labelled 'Selección Especial' by the winery due to the extraordinary quality of the grapes. Said to rival 1964, which is widely recognised as the top vintage in Rioja, 2005 will be a vintage to go down in history and the winery waited 13 years for this to be ready to drink before releasing it onto the market at the beginning of 2018.

GR 890 2005 has a classic and intense aroma with notes of cured leather, stewed plums and raisins, tobacco and sweet spices along with vanilla and dark chocolate. The palate is elegant, mature and complex with outstanding structure and well-balanced acidity with silky tannins. Its classic Rioja bouquet stands out, big, complex and round, with an elegant finish.





BODEGAS LÓPEZ DE HEREDIA

RIOJA - SPAIN

López de Heredia has more than 141 years of history. It all began when the phylloxera epidemic wiped out all of the vineyards in Bordeaux, leading French négociants to search for other sources of quality grapes elsewhere. The founder of López de Heredia, Don Rafael López de Heredia y Landeta followed closely in their footsteps.

Don Rafael fell in love with the region, especially the area around Haro in Rioja Alta, observing that there was a magical combination of soil and climate that would offer the perfect environment for producing world class wines. In 1877 he began to build the López de Heredia bodega, which is the oldest in Haro and one of the first three houses in the Rioja region. The cellars are 200 metres long with a depth of 15 metres and are home to 12,900 Bordeaux oak barrels as well as 72 large oak vats.



Bodegas López de Heredia is one of the few family-run bodegas regulated by the Denominación de Origen Calificada Rioja - D.O.C.a. Today, Mercedes López de Heredia is the fourth generation winemaker who runs the winery with her sister.

Interview with Mercedes López de Heredia, Winemaker and Owner

López de Heredia winery is one of the most iconic buildings in the world of wine, what additions have been made in recent years?

In 2002, Zaha Hadid built a super modern structure to contain and protect a classic pavilion made of noble woods that we used in the Exposition de Bruxelles in 1910. Past and present together in perfect harmony!

What is the most important moment in the history of Lopez de Heredia?

Every single moment since its foundation in 1877 has had its relevance. Time does not forgive what is done without it.

“ And then there are the other-worldly wines of López de Heredia. Even by Rioja standards, this producer is the keeper of an ancient flame like no other. ”

Matt Kramer
The Wine Spectator

Viña Tondonia Reserva

2005

RIOJA

“ The 2005 vintage was rated as excellent by the regulating body in Rioja. Viña Tondonia Reserva is made with the four traditional red Rioja grapes Tempranillo, Garnacha, Mazuelo and Graciano coming from our most emblematic vineyard: Viña Tondonia. The wine is aged for 6 years in old barriques. The 2005 is very expressive with aromas of dried berries and spices. Medium bodied, with rounded tannins and a pronounced acidity and an ageing potential of over 20 years. ”

Mercedes López de Heredia
Winemaker

“ Lovely depth of fruit to this mature red with chocolate, dark tea and bark. Purple flowers and violets. Full and very silky and refined. A beautiful traditional wine to get to know. Drink now. ”

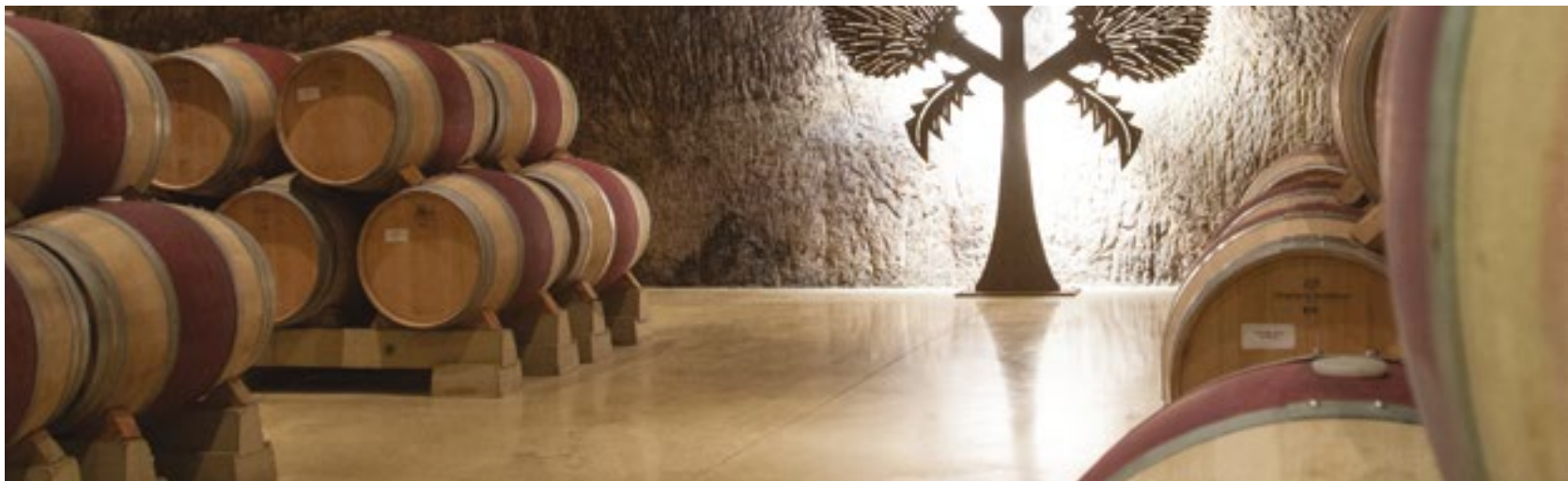
94 points
James Suckling



BODEGAS RODA

RIOJA - SPAIN

Bodegas Roda was established in 1987 by Mario Rotllant and Carmen Daurella, the name being made up of the first two initials of their surnames. This was part of a new wave of winemakers arriving in Spain in the 1980s and Roda was founded with the passionate commitment to bring something new to the wine world. Bodegas Roda produces modern Riojas which have a worldwide following.



Roda has twenty blocks of vines which are spread out among the best ecosystems in the area, of which the best seventeen are vinified each year. Old vines are the focus, guaranteeing the best quality Tempranillo and Garnacha grapes. For Roda, each grape should capture, down to the last detail, the landscape in which it is grown so that each vintage is clearly expressed.

This exciting new (by Rioja standards) winery is also committed to research and development, heading international projects which allows for the Bodega's continual improvement.

“ Wine is the only dynamic way to bottle time. ”

Agustín Santolaya, General Director



“ Long, silky and elegant. With a great future. We are sure that it will be a chameleon, changing with the time and showing unknown facets. The Graciano has left its mark and pushes from within to come to the surface with its fresh and personal redness. ”

Bodegas Roda

“ There are plenty of notes of cocoa, espresso coffee and roasted wood that might need some time to integrate in the wine and give way to those aromas of damp earth, violets and small blackberries. The ripeness and style of the oak reminded me of the style of the late 1990s. The palate is ripe and lush, and it does not transmit any heat. ”

94 points

Luis Gutiérrez
The Wine Advocate

**Cirsion
2012**

RIOJA

The different research done on the ripening of Tempranillo led to Bodegas Roda realising that some vines were producing grapes with a flavour that was very different to that of other surrounding vines. Each year, during the harvest, this curious natural rarity is sought out, with grapes on one vine in a thousand being picked to make Cirsion.



VEGA SICILIA

RIBERA DEL DUERO - SPAIN

Known as a mythical winery, and regarded as Spain's one and only 'first growth', Vega Sicilia is Spain's most prestigious wine estate located in Ribera del Duero. Founded in 1864 by Don Eloy Lecanda who came from Bordeaux armed with cuttings of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec and planted them with Spain's signature grape, Tempranillo. The winery changed hands several times before the current owners, the Alvarez family, took over in 1982. Over the years, Vega Sicilia has built an international and formidable reputation for itself.



Vega Sicilia has founded its success on meticulous wine producing practices. The winery's philosophy incorporates low yields, painstaking grape selection and prolonged barrel ageing (1970 Unico has over 16 years). The resulting wines are delicate and complex, with great personality and which have a capacity for ageing which can only be matched by some of the greats from Bordeaux.

Unico is the flagship of Vega Sicilia. Produced only in top vintages, it has the one of the world's longest wine ageing processes running for at least 10 years from barrel to bottle, in French and American oak, both new and old. Taken from some of the oldest vines in the region, the wine is mostly Tempranillo with a small percentage of Cabernet Sauvignon.



Unico 2008

RIBERA DEL DUERO

“ Unico remains true to a clear and well-defined style, with an inimitable character, elegance and strength. It offers an infinite complexity that is gradually revealed, in every sip, the palate immensely silky and elegant, and has an ageing capacity that only a handful of wines in the world can claim. ”

Vega Sicilia

“ It's a fresher, more mineral version of Vega, and very much Vega in character. It has a certain aroma that I cannot define that I also found in the 2011 Valbuena. The palate is surprisingly polished; the wine is quite accessible from now on, with fine tannins and a subtle thread of acidity going through the core. This is a lighter version of Unico, but one style I like very much; it's a wine that should drink well throughout its life. A triumph for the vintage conditions. ”

96 points
Luis Gutiérrez
The Wine Advocate



DOMINIO DE PINGUS

RIBERA DEL DUERO – SPAIN



Pingus was founded by Denmark born Peter Sisseck. His fascination for wine began at home with his parents and at the age of 14 he was further inspired by visiting his uncle, the renowned winemaker Peter Vinding, in Bordeaux. This visit ignited what would become a life-long passion.

In 1995 the first Pingus was bottled. His aim was to produce “an unmistakably Spanish, terroir-driven wine...a garage wine.” This was a huge success and for the first time a Spanish wine was lifted to the podium of the world’s best wines, awarded with 98 points by the respected Wine Advocate.

“One of the greatest young red wines I ever tasted.”

Robert Parker

Pingus is the result of 2 complementary and exceptionally well-balanced old vine Tempranillo vineyards - ‘Barroso’ from the gravel-sandy Duero River and ‘San Cristobal’ sitting on west facing clay slopes.

Interview with Peter Sisseck, Owner

What makes Pingus 2014 stand out and what makes the structure so unique? Do you feel the older vines are a big part in this?

The structure of Pingus 2014 of course has to do with the age of the vines, also from the fact that it suffered a strong hail storm. The 2014 is like a modern version of the 1995 vintage, the vintage we made one of the best wines we have produced ever. The first to share the same complex tannic structure, but in a modern version.

What was the greatest moment in the winery’s history to you?

We have many great moments in mind, but it was maybe, the feeling we had when Robert Parker gave the Pingus 1995 (barrel sample) 96 to 100 points, a totally unknown wine, that have never been made before, still stands as ground breaking.



Pingus 2014

RIBERA DEL DUERO

“It’s precisely on the palate where you find that texture that is almost unique to Ribera del Duero when it’s as perfect as this. It’s very different from other zones, a velvety mouth feel and a surrounding sensation of comfort, incredibly long. The tannins are ultra fine and with that subtle chalkiness of the limestone soils, which also added to the tastiness and supple aftertaste.

In short, I cannot think of a way of improving this Pingus other, than getting a magnum instead of a regular bottle! Congratulations, Peter Sisseck! ”

100 points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



ALVARO PALACIOS

PRIORAT – SPAIN

Alvaro Palacios is one of nine sons of the owners of the world famous Rioja winery, Palacios Remondo, and many thought that his future was set to work in the family winery. However, after his oenology studies in Bordeaux under Jean-Pierre Moueix at Pétrus, he decided to make his own way.



In the 1980s he was drawn to the abandoned, ancient vineyards of Priorat. Located 60 miles from Barcelona, Priorat had been one of Spain's important pre-Phylloxera wine regions and with its unique terroir of steep hills and terraces; Alvaro believed he could make wines that rivalled the best of Europe.

“If anyone embodies the promise and spirit of ‘The New Spain,’ it’s Alvaro Palacios. His L’Ermita is widely considered—along with Peter Sisseck’s Dominio de Pingus—to be the most important Spanish wine of the modern era.”

Rare Wine Corp

He acquired his first vineyard, Finca Dofí, in 1990. Then in 1993, he located the ‘crown jewel’ of the property in Priorat, which he called L’Ermita. A steep, northeast facing slope of pale, greenish slate, which has been planted with Garnacha since the 1940’s.

L’Ermita is certainly the cream of the crop. A blend of 80% Garnacha, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Cariñena L’Ermita is aged in new French barriques for up to 20 months. With intense concentration and enormous depth these wines are iconic and considered the most expensive in Spain. Alvaro has certainly matched the quality to some of the best Grand Cru’s and he continues to aspire and reach for perfection.

“I taste the greatest wines in the world every year. I need to taste them, to enjoy them, to feel them. It’s a crazy, magical sensation. How can you aspire to that if you don’t taste them?”

Alvaro Palacios



L’Ermita

2014

PRIORAT

“The wine is ultra clean, floral and subtle, and despite not being light, the high acidity makes it feel a lot more ethereal than it really is. This time I really felt a descriptor Palacios often uses for this wine, pink grapefruit. Its acidity makes you salivate, but there is silkiness in the texture like no other wine in the collection. Pit fruit, cherry and peach, pomegranate, dried roses, pink peppercorns, wet slate and acid berries. This is a L’Ermita for the long haul and at the helm with the very best vintages, flirting with perfection. Sheer class.”

98 points

Luis Gutiérrez
The Wine Advocate



EQUIPO NAVAZOS

JEREZ - SPAIN

Equipo Navazos was set up by a group of sherry aficionados who realised that there were a lot of sleeping treasures buried in the cellars of Jerez, Sanlúcar and El Puerto, as well as in and around Montilla. In 2005, led by wine writer Jesús Barquín and Eduardo Ojeda, technical director of Grupo Estévezin, they started to select specific butts (barrels) of special finesse and complexity and to bottle them in very limited series.



Interview with Jesús Barquín, Co-Founder

What gave you the inspiration to create Equipo Navazos?

It all began in December of 2005 during a visit to a small and antique bodega in Sanlúcar, when we “discovered” several dozen butts of an exceptionally fine old amontillado that had spent twenty years without running, unsold. We selected the equivalent volume of a butt and bottled it privately under a brand name that evokes Edgar A. Poe’s popular story “The Cask of Amontillado”: La Bota de Amontillado “Navazos”. These scarce 600 bottles triggered the hunting activities of Equipo Navazos (‘Navazos Team’). We bottled another two selections in 2006, still exclusively intended for private circulation. The results aroused great enthusiasm among our circle of partners, and limited releases of later selections appeared in the market through several important distributors that had participated in the venture from the beginning.

Over the years what is the most extraordinary or memorable barrel that you have come across?

A cask of old Manzanilla Pasada in our favorite bodega of Sanlúcar de Barrameda.

If you could only drink one wine for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Amontillado.



Bota Manzanilla 71

SANLÚCAR DE BARRAMEDA

“ So dry, so Manzanilla. Wild grasses, chamomile, so salty, lively and fresh. Amazing length. Stunning – packed with character and yet refined. Goes on and on. And this will stay fresh in the bottle if earlier releases are anything to go by. ”

17.5/20

Jancis Robinson



USA
CALIFORNIA



PAUL HOBBS WINERY

NAPA VALLEY - USA

Dubbed the 'Steve Jobs of wine' by Forbes magazine, Paul Hobbs is a renowned winemaker and consultant. Highly regarded not only for his ability to identify exceptional vineyards, but also for his pioneering spirit in working innovatively with new and historical sites and regions.



Hired by Robert Mondavi for his advanced understanding of oak ageing, he went on to become winemaker for Opus One and Simi wineries. He founded Paul Hobbs Winery in 1991 and Viña Cobos in Argentina in 1999.

“Terroir-driven Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Sauvignon are the focus at Paul Hobbs Winery.”

Paul Hobbs

Paul Hobbs Winery bought its first estate property in the Russian River Valley naming it Lindsay Vineyard in honour of Paul's great grandmother and planted it with five clones of Pinot Noir. Two neighbouring estate properties have since been planted with Chardonnay. The winery also works closely with growers of some of Napa and Sonoma's most compelling and historical properties.



“I strive to create exuberant, intensely flavored, richly textured wines of structure and balance that reflect the specific personality of each vineyard site. You might describe our winemaking as modern classic. Making wine, like living well, is a balance of experience and intuition, discipline and discovery. We believe we can make the best wines by keeping our roots firmly planted in traditional winemaking principles while availing ourselves of modern techniques. This approach allows us to constantly improve the quality of our wines.”

Paul Hobbs

Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer To Kalon

2013

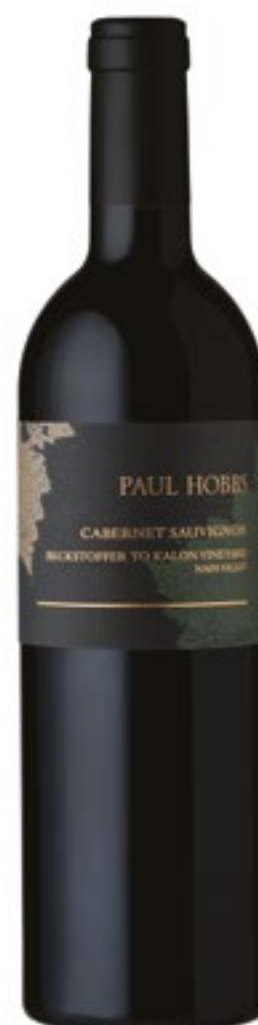
NAPA VALLEY

2013 was a phenomenal growing season in just about every way. A warm, dry spring led to early bud break, limited canopy vigor and berry size, and created ideal conditions through bloom and fruit set. An abundance of long sunny days, with only one heat spike in early July, resulted in even ripening and an early harvest with exceptional flavor development. The 2013 vintage offers very high quality wines that are striking in their balance and expression.

“The second perfect score I have given to a Hobbs Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2013 is as spectacular as his 2002 was. Lead pencil shavings, cedar wood, blueberry and blackberry liqueur as well as hints of forest floor and tobacco leaf are all present in this fragrant, sumptuously textured, full-bodied, massively rich yet sensationally well-balanced Cabernet Sauvignon. It has a finish of well over 55 seconds. This is amazing work, and interestingly, I believe Hobbs was the first to offer a Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard designated Cabernet Sauvignon.”

100 points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



DIAMOND CREEK

NAPA VALLEY - USA

Founded in 1968, Diamond Creek Cabernet Sauvignon is one of Napa Valley's iconic wines and was California's first vineyard planted exclusively with Cabernet Sauvignon. Founder Al Brounstein was a visionary pioneer who defied modern conventions and planted Bordeaux varietals on the secluded Diamond Mountain. The three vineyards produce a small amount of long lived wines that are elegant with great depth and richness.



Al was a successful pharmaceuticals salesman in the 1950s before deciding to purchase a parcel of land in the mid 1960s on Diamond Mountain to satisfy his passion for wine. Before he was able to buy the land he smuggled vine cuttings in from two First Growth properties in Bordeaux, personally flying them up from Mexico.

Once he purchased the land he identified three vineyard blocks by the differences in soil structure and exposition and named them due to their geographical forms - Red Rock Terrace, Gravelly Meadow and Volcanic Hill. Due to the quality of the wines, these Cabernets regularly sell out at prices pulling most cult wines to shame. Indeed, one of the forerunners in the Californian cult wine scene, it can be said a lot of Napa's top producers looked to him for inspiration.

Al passed away in 2006 at the age of 86 due to complications with Parkinson's disease. His wife, Boots Brounstein runs the winery today.

“ I never met anyone more upbeat and optimistic than Al. He was a force of nature. Even after he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at age 64, Al stayed positive and kept working. ”

Boots Brounstein



Red Rock Terrace

2010

NAPA VALLEY

“ Some of my vines were, from the beginning, considered to be very much like the Château Margaux. That was what we called Red Rock Terrace. ”

Al Brounstein



“ The Red Rock Terrace Vineyard consists of seven acres of iron-rich, red soils. The 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Rock Terrace reveals intense, ripe, impressive crème de cassis and boysenberry fruit notes. Fuller-bodied, richer and more muscular than the Gravelly Meadow, it is stunningly powerful and pure with multiple layers, abundant tannin and structure, and extravagant amounts of fruit and glycerin. ”

95+ points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

OPUS ONE

NAPA VALLEY - USA

When two iconic winemakers get together to produce something of their own, there is no hesitation it will be nothing short of incredible. Baron Philippe de Rothschild of Château Mouton Rothschild in Bordeaux and Napa Valley vintner Robert Mondavi combined their knowledge and skills and created Opus One, one of California's most high profile wines.



“Wine to me is passion.
It's family and friends.
It's warmth of heart
and generosity of spirit.”

Robert Mondavi

They set out to create a single wine dedicated to the pursuit of uncompromising quality. Opus One is a blend of 95% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Merlot and is aged for 18 months in French barrels (100% new) and then another 18 months in bottle before it is released. The first vintage was in 1979.

“The standard is not to be excellent here, it is to be perfect.”
Former Winemaker, Tim Mondavi

In 2004, David Pearson was named CEO of Opus One, and Michael Silacci was the first to assume full responsibility for viticulture and winemaking.

“Opus One is, in fact, a special place where we continue to feel the passion, drive and inspiration of our founders, Robert Mondavi and Baron Philippe de Rothschild. What makes it so special are the people – cliché to be sure, but in this case the absolute truth. I am most proud of having the chance to work with them.”

David Pearson, CEO



“The Opus One 2013 offers splendid aromas of blueberry, cassis, and blackberries with highlights of rose, anise and baking spices. A creamy entry gives way to layers of complexity which unfold in the mid-palate with velvety tannins enrobing a center of concentrated black fruit with juicy freshness. Elegantly balanced, the acidity and core structure deliver a persistent finish with hints of dark chocolate. The Opus One 2013 promises enjoyment for decades to come.”

97 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate

Opus One 2013

NAPA VALLEY

“Our Wine of the Year — Opus One Napa Valley 2013 — is a point of reference for America's greatest reds... Beyond its impressive availability, the 2013 Opus One is of superb quality and character. The balance and density of the wine harkens back to classics like Heitz Martha's Vineyard 1974 and Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 1958. The Opus One 2013 is a shining star for Napa Valley and proves why this place is one of the most exciting winemaking regions in the world. No longer is the region obsessed with crude power and muscular wines. Napa has instead turned towards a new classicism of vibrant fruit and tension. Opus has all that and more.”

100 Points
James Suckling



JOSEPH PHELPS

NAPA VALLEY - USA

In 1973, Joseph Phelps turned a 600-acre cattle ranch in Napa Valley into the famous wine estate it is today. He wasted no time and planted 100 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Riesling and Gewurztraminer.



Joseph had the idea of making a separate cuvée each year, one that would represent the finest wine made from each vintage. Whether it is a Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Riesling, Insignia is the result of the very best fruit that Joseph Phelps Vineyard produces every year.

Joseph sadly passed away in 2015 and the estate is now run by his son, Bill Phelps.

“ He was one of the Valley’s pioneers. Together with Robert Mondavi and others at the time, they put their hands in the soil and their souls in the wine, creating what we have today. ”

Margrit Mondavi

Today, Insignia is recognised as one of the most iconic wines in the world. In 2002 The Wine Spectator awarded the vintage with the prestigious ‘Wine of the Year’ title and Robert Parker has awarded the 1991, 1997 and 2002 vintages of Insignia with perfect 100 scores.



Insignia 2013

NAPA VALLEY

“ The wine offers a stunning inky blue/purple colour, a gorgeous nose of blueberry and blackberry liqueur, pen ink, graphite, new saddle leather and barrique. The wine has fabulous concentration, a full-bodied, multi-layered mouthfeel, and tremendous finish with moderate tannin. It’s interesting to note that the Phelps winemaking staff had been gradually reducing the amount of Merlot in this wine over recent vintages. The 2013 should hit its peak in 5-7 years and last for 35-50. ”

98+ points,
Robert Parker,
The Wine Advocate

“ The story of Insignia is a reflection of my grandfather’s character. He was a pioneer and an original who didn’t want to do what had already been done. He saw an opportunity to create something very special. With Insignia, he created California’s first proprietary red Bordeaux-style blend. ”

Elizabeth Neuman, grand-daughter of Joseph Phelps and the winery’s Director of Business Development & Marketing



DOMINUS

NAPA VALLEY - USA

Christian Moueix fell in love with the Napa Valley while at university in the late 1960s. He returned to France to manage the family vineyards, including the famous Pétrus, but made his return to California in 1982 to start a partnership in the renowned Napanook vineyard. By 1995 he was the sole owner of Dominus and was producing one of the finest Bordeaux style wines in California.

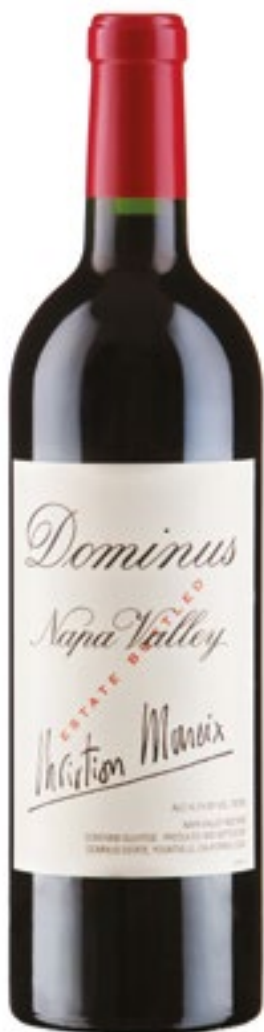


Moueix chose the name 'Dominus', or 'Lord of the Estate' in Latin, to underscore his longstanding commitment to the land and a vision of producing distinctive wines that express the essence of the Napanook vineyard.

“ At Dominus Estate, we combine centuries old traditions of grape growing and winemaking with innovative practices to transform the highest quality grapes into fine wines with great potential for aging. ”

Christian Moueix

One of the most impressive wineries in the world, the 44,000-square-foot rock structure is naturally temperature controlled, with stones that serve as a thermoregulation unit for the entire building.



Dominus 2013

NAPANOOK

“ The 2013 Dominus is, to my way of thinking, one of the most profound wines Christian Moueix has yet made in his rather brilliant winemaking history, both in France and in Napa Valley. This wine, with very low yields of only 3,500 cases and a final blend of 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Petit Verdot and 4% Cabernet Franc, offers up notes of cedar wood, forest floor, loamy soil and oodles of blackberry and blackcurrant fruit. ”

100 points
Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



HARLAN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY - USA

Inspired by many trips to Europe, Bill Harlan wanted to own a vineyard in his native California and so he founded Napa Valley's Harlan Estate in 1984.



One particular visit with Robert Mondavi to taste the First Growths of Bordeaux and the Grand Crus of Burgundy opened his eyes to the level of wine that could be produced. He called this 'a transformation experience'. He was determined to recreate what he had tasted in France - he wanted a Napa Valley First Growth.



Harlan found what he needed on the rocky, forested lower slopes of the Mayacamas Mountains on the valley's western side. He planted Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot and got to work, although the quality he was hoping for was not there immediately. 1987, 1988 and 1989 were never released. With Michel Rolland, the famous French consulting oenologist, techniques were refined and grapes were picked earlier until finally the first vintage, 1990, was released.

The perfection of Harlan Estate wine comes from a dedicated team, who have worked for many years and on many projects together. Chief winemaker, Bob Levy, and estate manager and president, Don Weaver, work with meticulous care. Incredible attention to the smallest detail whether it is in the vineyard, cellar or marketing has led to them producing California's Grand Cru.

“ We want to capture the power of the hillside, which means supple, soft textures and mouth filling tannins. ”

Paul Levy

“ Without question, this is a California 'grand cru.' It's hard to imagine another California wine of any stripe that has provided so many fireworks over the past two decades. ”

International Wine Cellar

“ I was in awe.

It gave me a different time perspective, a vision of wine as place and permanence, family and history, the heritage that is the art of wine, the expression of land. ”

Bill Harlan

Harlan Estate 2013

NAPA VALLEY

“ As I predicted last year, the 2013 Harlan Estate is one of their all time greats. This first growth property, with aspirations to produce the finest Cabernet Sauvignon based wine made in the New World, has given us a wine that has it all in 2013. Dense purple to the rim, with notes of espresso, white chocolate, mocha, blackberry, cassis and cedar wood, the wine is full-bodied, opulent but also structured, pure and incredibly long. ”

100 points

Robert Parker
The Wine Advocate



ONSHORE CELLARS

A COLLECTIVE

A team of dedicated wine specialists who take great pride in being able to supply some of the world's finest wines to our clients across the globe. Behind our team are the countless wine producers whose passion shines through their wines. Without these amazing, dedicated and skilled artisans, the world would be a less interesting place and we want to thank those that have taken part in this book.



The next step is drinking these masterpieces so please contact us for details of purchasing these 100 iconic wines and many more.

“Wine is one of the most civilised things in the world and one of the most natural things of the world that has been brought to the greatest perfection, and it offers a greater range for enjoyment and appreciation than, possibly, any other purely sensory thing.”

Ernest Hemmingway



Onshore Cellars offers a range of services:

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Onshore Cellars makes the process as simple as possible. Select your wines from our website, alternatively email or call through your requirements. We also supply spirits, beers, waters and soft drinks. Delivery is worldwide, fast, efficient and safe. For tax-free orders, please contact us directly as requirements change inside and outside the EU.

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This book was written by Onshore Cellar owners, Edward and Jessica Dunnett, wine expert, Rosie Clarkson and Master of Wine, Rod Smith.

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