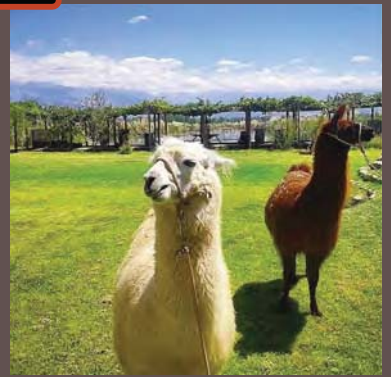




THE
ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

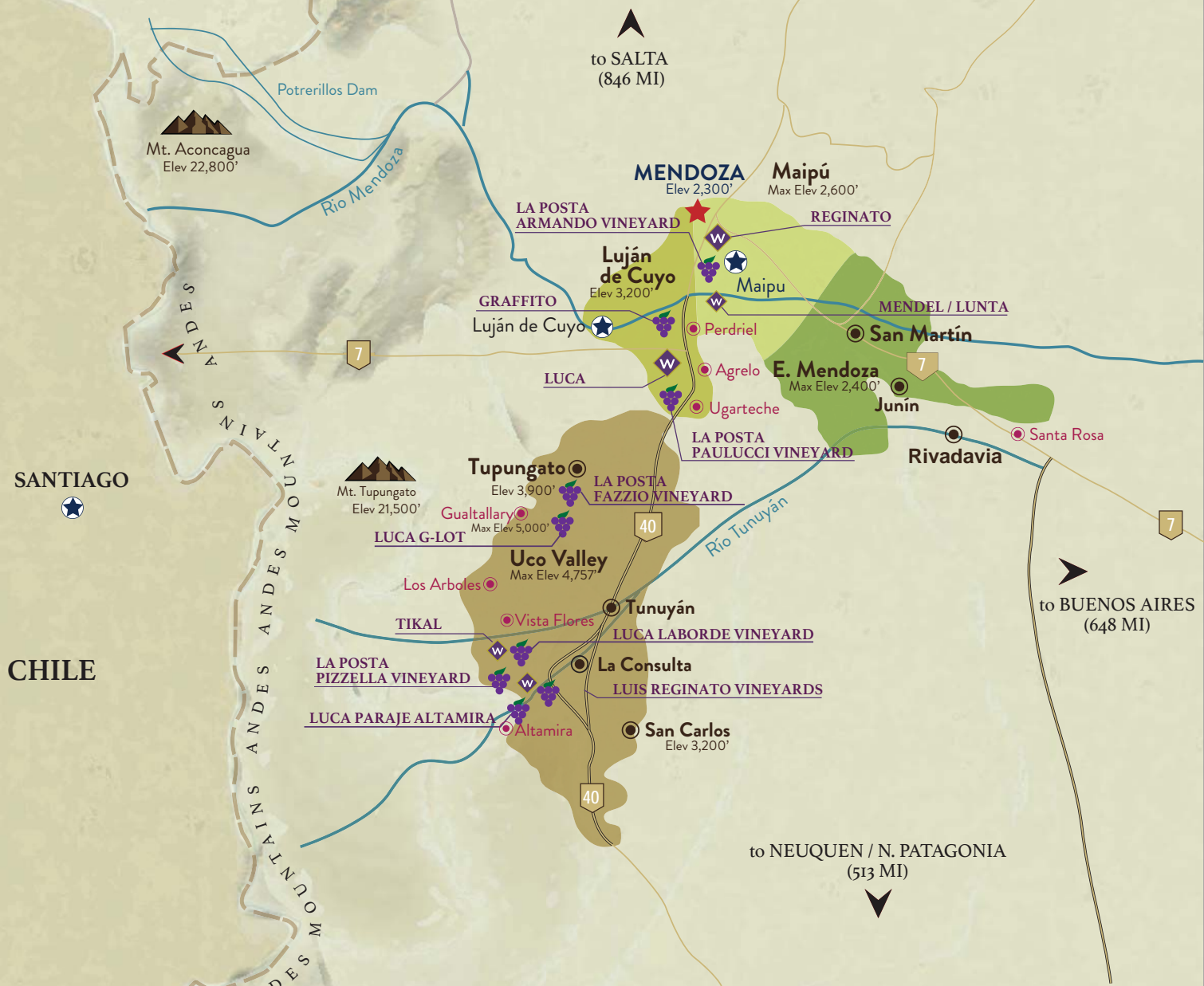
ARGENTINA

— VINE CONNECTIONS —
LEADING WINE PORTFOLIO





VINE CONNECTIONS Mendoza Wine Capital



Mendoza Map Key

- ★ Capital
- ★ City
- Large Town
- Small Town
- W Winery/Bodega
- V Vineyard
- H Highway
- R River



GET TO KNOW VINE CONNECTIONS

Leading Importer of Premium Argentine and Chilean Wine and Japanese Sake

- 1** In 1999, Vine Connections pioneered the first nationally imported portfolio of artisan wines from Argentina. Of the initial 5 brands and 12 wines released, the least expensive was \$24 retail.
- 2** In 2001, Vine Connections became the US' premier Japanese ginjo sake importer, offering sake from 11 family-run breweries spanning the length of the country from Hokkaido to Kyushu. Today, VC represents 16 family breweries and more than 30 different sake.
- 3** In March 2013, Vine Connections introduced the world to "The New Chile" with a portfolio of 9 family-run wineries with 11 brands from 12 different regions within Chile. The prices range from \$15 to \$200 retail.
- 4** In 2001, Food & Wine Magazine named Vine Connections one of three "Importers to Watch." The company was also recognized as an "Importer You Can Trust" by Slate Magazine (2009) and Details Magazine (2010). In 2014, Wine Enthusiast Magazine nominated Vine Connections for "Wine Importer of the Year."
- 5** When Ed y Nick started Vine Connections, they told themselves, "When people who represent us go into an account, we never want them to have to worry about the quality of the wine in the bottle." This mantra still drives their daily pursuit to represent the best wines at all prices.



VINE CONNECTIONS



MEET ED

MEET NICK

1. I have been a wine lover since college and have worked in the wine business since 1986. I am getting pretty good at it, but I still learn something new every day.

2. My wine career has been in retail sales, wholesale sales, national brand marketing, direct-to-consumer, and national importing.

3. My boss once told me, "Edward, you should spend more time drinking Mouton-Cadet and less time drinking Mouton-Rothschild." That was 1993, and I have been my own boss ever since.

4. I like wines that have the following three characteristics:
1) balance, 2) balance, 3) balance.

5. My favorite hangover quote: "You can never say, 'I drank too much wine last night.' You CAN say, 'I drank A LOT of wine last night!'"

1. At 16, I lived in Fixin, France as an exchange student. Every night I would enjoy a bottle of Burgundy with my host family, which was my first step into the world of wine.

2. While attending Berkeley, I needed a job and found an opening at the North Berkeley Wine Co. I have never worked outside of the wine industry since.

3. I started Vine Connections as a brokerage/distributor in 1995. My first client was Billington, the importer for Catena, and I grew California into a top-3 market.

4. I met Ed after hearing a KFOG radio ad for his direct mail company "Passport Wine Club" while driving over the Golden Gate Bridge.

5. I have been in the wine business for almost 30 years, but it feels like yesterday when I was driving cases of wine in my Nissan Sentra making sales calls and deliveries to Southern California.

Ed y Nick

MALBEC MADNESS

HISTORY

Malbec originally comes from Southwest France where it is called Cot and features a hard, tannic style.

1852 Year that Malbec was brought to Argentina by Michel A. Pouget, a French agronomist who was hired by the Argentine government.

75,000 Acres of vines planted across the country. Argentina is currently the main producer of Malbec in the world.

 Argentine Malbec has seen vast growth over the last decade, rising from 1.3 million cases exported in 2003 to 9.1 million cases shipped worldwide in 2013.

ARGENTINE MALBEC VS FRENCH MALBEC

GRAPES: Arg has smaller grapes and tighter bunches



FRUITS: Arg has more lush, fruity notes and French has more rustic, tannic characteristics



ELEVATION: Arg is from a higher elevation, leading to more balanced acidity and riper tannins



MALBEC REGIONS

Malbec grapes are grown all over Argentina, but the best are produced in regions with broad daily temperature ranges and calcareous, clay, or sandy soils.

Luján de Cuyo

Malbec from here has an intense, dark cherry red color, which may look almost black. It shows mineral expressions with black fruit and sweet spice notes.

Uco Valley

Malbec from Uco Valley's subregions Tupungato, Tunuyán, and San Carlos are elegant and display distinctive spicy and floral notes.

Salta

Malbecs from this high-altitude region have a more mineral mouth-feel, with a red fruit profile and high acidity.

RULES OF TASTE



Young unoaked Malbecs should be consumed young; those aged for a few months in oak may be kept for 2 to 3 years; "big" Malbecs can age well in the bottle for a decade.

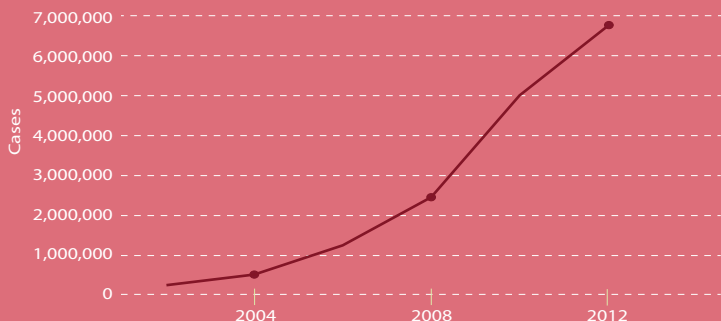


Argentine grapes have the longest "hang time" in the world, which creates balanced wines with ripe fruit flavors and smooth tannins.



Wines like Malbec from Argentina have the highest polyphenol counts of any wines in the world.

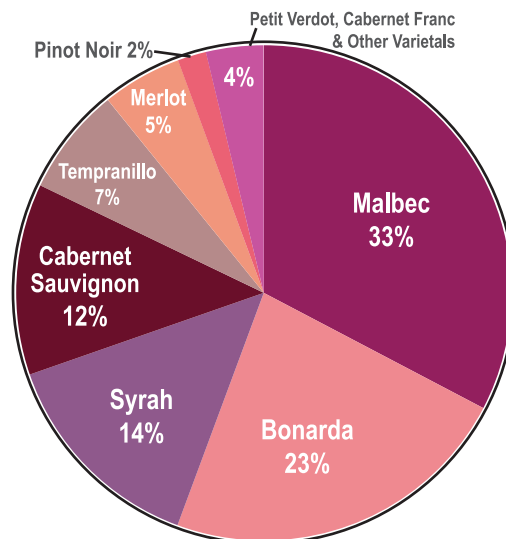
MALBECS OVER \$10 ARE SELLING THE FASTEST



ARGENTINA'S TOP 10 "MUST-KNOW" WINE FACTS

- 1. PRODUCTION:** Argentina is the world's 5th largest wine producer (behind France, Italy, Spain and the US).
- 2. HIGH ELEVATION:** Argentina's vineyard elevations range from 2,300-9,000 ft. Intense sunshine and cool air temperatures create optimal grape ripening conditions and the longest hang-time of any region in the world.
- 3. TEMPERATURE SHIFT:** Wide diurnal temperature shifts (hot days and cold nights) help grapes maintain their natural acidity and achieve well-balanced wines with full flavors.
- 4. SUN INTENSITY:** Argentina's 300 days of sun yield grapes with excellent physiological ripeness and thick skins. This creates intensely aromatic wines with concentrated color and smooth tannins.
- 5. IRRIGATION:** While receiving less than 10 inches of rain per year, Mendoza has plenty of irrigation water from year-round snowmelt in the Andes. The pure mountain water is channeled down to the vineyards through a series of dam and canal systems originally built by the Huarpe Indians.
- 6. SOIL:** Vineyard soils vary from sand to clay, but are predominantly loamy with excellent drainage. Most soils are low in organic material due to elevation and climate, creating desirable vine stress.
- 7. REGIONS:** 80% of Argentina's wine comes from Mendoza. The region is divided into 4 distinct grape-growing areas: Lujan de Cuyo, Maipu, Uco Valley, and Eastern Mendoza. Argentina's other well-known regions include Salta (north) and Neuquén (south).
- 8. ECO-FRIENDLY:** Due to high altitude and a desert climate, vineyards rarely face the problems of insects, fungi, molds, phylloxera, and other diseases that affect grapes in other countries. Pesticides and herbicides are barely needed and are used sparingly.
- 9. MALBEC:** Malbec arrived from France in the 1850's when Michel A. Pouget, a French agronomist, was hired by the Argentine government to bring the Bordeaux varietal across the Atlantic. It is now Argentina's flagship grape. (See below for Argentina's other star reds.)
- 10. WHITES, TOO!:** Argentina is known for its impressive reds but also shines with its whites. Cooler temperatures at higher elevations produce varietals like Chardonnay, Torrontés and Semillon with outstanding character.

PREMIUM RED WINE PRODUCTION IN ARGENTINA BY VARIETAL



CRITICS APPLAUD VINE CONNECTIONS' ARGENTINA PORTFOLIO

22 WINES SCORE 90+ POINTS

Chaman

Red Blend

Cabernet Franc

"Attractive, well-defined, very composed."
- Wine Advocate

2014 **89** VIN
2013 **91** WA
2015 **88** VIN

graffito

Malbec

"Balanced, elegant, delicious."
- Wine Advocate

2013 **90** WA
2012 **90** WA

La Posta

"Value Brand of the Year, 2015"
- Wine & Spirits

Double Gold:
Packaging Design Award
-SF International Wine Competition

Pizzella Malbec

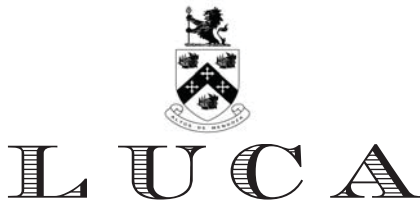
2014 **90** WA **89** VIN
2013 **90** VIN

Fazio Malbec

2012 **90** WA **90** IWC
2013 **90** W&S **90** WE

Armando Bonarda

2014 **90** WE



"Compelling...Impressive...Very Satisfying." - Tanzer

#19 of TOP 100 WINES, 2012 Malbec - Wine Spectator

Nico

2011 **93** WA **91** VIN
2010 **93** WA

Pinot Noir

2009 **94** WA **93** IWC **93** JS
2013 **91** WA **90** JS

Beso de Dante

2012 **92** WA **91** WS **91** JS
2013 **92** WA **91+** VIN

Malbec

2011 **92** WA **92** WS **91+** IWC
2014 **90** VIN

Chardonnay

2013 **93** JS **91** WA
2014 **91** VIN

Syrah

2013 **93** WA **90** VIN
2013 **91** JS **90** WA **90** VIN

Malbec Paraje Altamira

2012 **93** JS **91** IWC **91** WS
2013 **92** VIN



"These are splendid, intellectual Mendoza wines."
- Wine Advocate

Unus

2013 **91+** VIN
2012 **93** WA **93** WE

Malbec

2014 **90** VIN
2013 **93** JS **92** WA

Cabernet Sauvignon

2014 **91** VIN
2013 **93** WA **90+** VIN **90** JS

Finca Remota

2013 **93+** VIN
2012 **92** VIN

Semillon

2015 **90** VIN
2014 **91** WA **90** VIN **90** W&S

Lunta Malbec

2014 **89** VIN
2013 **92** W&S **90** JS

tikal

#45 of TOP 100 WINES, 2012 Patriota - Wine Spectator

"Great finesse & sophistication."
- Wine Advocate

Jubilo

2014 **91** VIN
2013 **90+** VIN
2012 **94** WS **90** WA

Natural

2014 **90** VIN
2012 **93** JS **91** WA **90** IWC

Patriota

2014 **90** VIN
2013 **90** VIN **90** W&S

Amorio

2012 **91** WS
2013 **90+** VIN
2012 **90+** IWC **90** WA

WA = The Wine Advocate VIN = Vinous reviewed by Stephen Tanzer IWC = Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar W&S = Wine & Spirits WS = Wine Spectator WE = Wine Enthusiast JS = James Suckling

APRIL 2016

IMPORTED BY VINE CONNECTIONS



VineConnections.com



Argentina's best small-family growers invite you to experience the passion of Argentina while sipping their distinctive, grower-specific Malbecs.

WHY DOES LA POSTA STAND OUT?

- 1) La Posta's 3 single-vineyard Malbecs, named after the grower families, demonstrate the wide range of Malbec flavor profiles provided by distinct Mendoza appellations.
- 2) Laura Catena and winemaker Estela Perinetti create complex and approachable wines that truly overdeliver in both presentation and quality.
- 3) La Posta's award-winning packaging offers an intimate connection to these family growers with an invitation to "*raise your glass*" and join their experiences.

WINES

- **Tinto Red Blend:** This complex table blend of Malbec, Syrah, and Bonarda is perfect by the glass, but you'll want it by the bottle.
- **Pizzella Malbec:** '*Enjoy the simpler times*' in La Consulta, Uco Valley with the Pizzella family and their rich Malbec full of dark fruit and spice.
- **Paulucci Malbec:** '*Find your passion*' with Angel Paulucci riding through his Ugarteche vineyards in his 1933 Model A. His Malbec boasts red fruits, violet aromas, and a soft caramel finish.
- **Fazio Malbec:** '*Never slow down*' and dance in Tupungato with Domingo Fazio with his Malbec full of supple tannins, red currant, and mocha notes.
- **Armando Bonarda:** '*Raise your glass*' to Estela Armando and her grandfather's half-century old Bonarda vineyard. This wine is fresh with notes of red raspberry and smoky oak.



Value Brand of the Year, 2015

- WINE & SPIRITS MAGAZINE



IMPORTED BY

VINE CONNECTIONS

LUCA

Laura Catena's ultra-premium, boutique Luca wines make history with groundbreaking work in cultivating small-grower relations, sourcing premier old-vine Malbec, and mastering non-Malbec varietals.

WHY DOES LUCA STAND OUT?

- 1) As a wine industry icon, mother of three, author, and ER doctor, Laura's relentless determination to excel at all aspects of her life is embodied in her Luca wines.
- 2) Laura pioneered the fostering of small-family grower relations, allowing her to gain access to some of Argentina's best old-vine, low-yield, high elevation Malbec vineyards.
- 3) Luca made history as the first to plant Pinot Noir and Chardonnay at over 4,500 feet—the highest elevations in Mendoza for these varietals. Located in Gualtallary, they called the vineyard the G-Lot.

WINES

- **Malbec:** This Malbec has made Wine Spectator's Top 100 List twice for a reason —it is quintessentially expressive of Mendoza and impossible to replicate.
- **Chardonnay:** The perfect balance between a Burgundian and California-style Chardonnay from the high altitude "G Lot" in Gualtallary at 4,900 feet above sea level.
- **Pinot Noir:** This wine's Burgundian style makes it one of Argentina's leading and highest-regarded Pinots.
- **Laborde 'Double Select' Syrah:** Over 50 years ago, viticulturist Luis Laborde created one of the world's only double massal selection vineyards by taking cuttings from the Rhone valley and doing a second selection in their new home in the Uco Valley.
- **Beso de Dante:** An homage to the original Bordeaux blend of Malbec and Cabernet, this powerful wine has gripping tannins and great freshness and length.
- **Nico:** An iconic 100% old-vine Malbec from the 80-year old Rosas Vineyard in the Uco Valley.



Luca Malbec 2012 is #19 on the Top 100 List.

Highest Rated Argentine Wine

- Top 100 List 2014, WINE SPECTATOR



IMPORTED BY

VINE CONNECTIONS

tikal

Ernesto Catena's creative, artistic passion to always think outside the box is embodied in Tikal's top-rated Malbec blends.

WHY DOES TIKAL STAND OUT?

- 1) Ernesto Catena gives a rebellious edge to Tikal's outstanding quality with his artistic, free-spirited approach to winemaking.
- 2) Tikal uses biodynamic viticulture including grazing llamas between the vines and following the moon cycle for harvest, leading to a purer expression of the vineyard in the wines.
- 3) Each Tikal wine blends Malbec with a unique varietal to show Malbec's adaptability and is named with a Spanish word that reflects the spirit of Mendoza's pride, love, and celebration.

WINES

- **Patriota:** As #45 on Wine Spectator's 'Top 100 List,' this 'Patriotic' old-vine Bonarda and Malbec is blended to perfection.
- **Natural:** An 'earth-friendly' biodynamic blend of Malbec and Syrah made with certified organic grapes.
- **Amorio:** A rich and passionate 'Love Affair' between Argentina's beloved Malbec & Cabernet Franc.
- **Jubilo:** Cabernet lovers will 'Rejoice' when realizing their favorite varietal gets even better with the soft touch of Malbec.



Tikal Patriota 2012 is #45 on the Top 100 List.

- Top 100 List 2014, WINE SPECTATOR



IMPORTED BY

VINE CONNECTIONS

MENDEL

Mendel wines are classic and timeless, combining Roberto de la Mota's prestigious winemaking skills and tremendously old vineyards to make Mendoza's most elegant wines.

WHY DOES MENDEL STAND OUT?

- 1) Using his French winemaking experience, Roberto de la Mota has led Argentina's winemaking movement toward world-class wine production.
- 2) Mendel has solidified Argentina's place as a premier world wine producer with seamless, consistent, and polished wines.
- 3) Anabelle Sielecki partnered with Roberto de La Mota to transform her family's historic 1928 vineyard into the respected estate it is today, naming it after her father, Mendel.

WINES

- **Lunta Malbec:** This vineyard faces the Lunlunta Hills and gives a refreshing, approachable style to Malbec.
- **Semillon:** One of Argentina's oldest varietals, this rare barrel-fermented white is harvested from 60+ year-old vines and has fresh, clean citrus aromas with a hint of oak.
- **Malbec:** This timeless Malbec aged in Taransaud Burgundy barrels has incredible depth and stature. A wine you can drink now or cellar.
- **Cabernet Sauvignon:** Perdriel terroir and precision winemaking make this one of Argentina's best Cabs.
- **Unus:** Blended from the best lots of the 1928 estate vineyards, this iconic small-batch blend of Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Petit Verdot is powerful yet smooth.
- **Finca Remota:** From 60+ year-old vineyards at the 'Faraway Ranch' in Altamira (Uco Valley), this dense Malbec is full-bodied with thick tannins.



"Mendel is 'The Best of the Best' for Roberto de la Mota's brilliant talent and spirit."

- ROBERT PARKER'S THE WINE ADVOCATE



IMPORTED BY
VINE CONNECTIONS

Chaman

Revolutionary winemaker Luis Reginato brings Argentine winemaking to the next level with terroir-focused, original varietal wines that speak to the future of Mendoza.

WHY DOES CHAMAN STAND OUT?

- 1) Chaman is Luis Reginato's homage to the vineyard wisdom handed down by his father and wine mentor, or 'chaman,' José Reginato.
- 2) Luis is a winemaker who has risen to the top of the Argentine wine scene and is exploring its outer boundaries, starting in his home district of La Consulta in the southern Uco Valley.
- 3) Less common varietals like Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot make Chaman stand out in a Malbec-dominated category.

WINES

- **Red Blend:** A lush and juicy Petit Verdot-based blend that consistently overdelivers.
- **Cabernet Franc:** Aromatic, savory, and vivid. Luis' Cabernet Franc is one of the best in Argentina.
- **Petit Verdot:** Luis transforms the powerful Petit Verdot into a supple, elegant wine with depth and grace.



Luis Reginato is one of the "Top 10 Argentine Winemakers to Watch."
- The DRINKS BUSINESS



IMPORTED BY

VINE CONNECTIONS

graffito

Brilliant and meticulous winemaker Jimena Lopez shows her talents with a beautifully crafted Malbec from a century-old vineyard.

WHY DOES GRAFFITO STAND OUT?

- 1) Winemaker Jimena Lopez handles all aspects of Graffito from vine selection to the final blend with a precise attention to detail.
- 2) Jimena believes so deeply in her wine quality that she puts her fingerprint stamp of approval right on the label.
- 3) After being a consulting winemaker in 7 countries for 18 vintages, Graffito is Jimena's first personal project. Her breadth of talent and experience ensures a bright future.

WINES

- **Malbec:** Small-production Malbec from over 100-year-old vines with amazing concentration, aromatics, and earthy notes of smoke and espresso.



"This is a balanced, elegant, delicious and fresh Malbec at a great price."

- Luis Gutierrez, ROBERT PARKER'S THE WINE ADVOCATE



IMPORTED BY

VINE CONNECTIONS

REGINATO

As Argentina's most revered sparkling producers, the father-son Reginato team makes some of the world's only sparkling wines with classic Argentine varietals.

WHY DOES REGINATO STAND OUT?

- 1) Handcrafted from grape to bottle, Reginato wines' artisan quality makes them some of Mendoza's most sought-after sparkling wines.
- 2) From Rosé of Malbec to Torrontés-Chardonnay, José and Pepe go outside the box of traditional sparkling varietals to give an Argentine twist to the French classics.
- 3) Using both the Traditional Method (méthode champenoise) and the Charmat Method, the Reginatos showcase the breadth of their expertise in their sparkling wine production.

WINES

- **Celestina Rosé of Malbec:** A rare vintage and pink sparkling made using the méthode champenoise. It is named after the family's late matriarch, Celestina, whose name means "matchmaker" in Spanish.
- **Sparkling Torrontés-Chardonnay:** An intensely aromatic wine from a unique fusion of new and old world varietals.
- **Sparkling Rosé of Malbec:** A medium-bodied Rosé made using the Charmat Method that is perfect alone or paired with food.



"Flavorful sparklers with a nice sense of place."

- BEVERAGE TESTING INSTITUTE



IMPORTED BY
VINE CONNECTIONS

HERMANOS

Grown 850 miles north of Mendoza, Hermanos wines express the unique character of Salta's high desert with approachable flavors and unbeatable value.

WHY DOES HERMANOS STAND OUT?

- 1) Hermanos vines are nourished by the ultra-pure water that percolates from the Andes mountains towering above the vineyard. The consistent and extreme solar intensity above 6,000-foot altitude gives the wines intense aromas and soft tannins.
- 2) The Domingo brothers, or "hermanos," form a team of a second-generation winemaker (Rafael), a viticulturist (Osvaldo), and a businessman (Gabriel, who is also a cheese maker).
- 3) Hermanos is one of only two wineries located on the rocky, granitic slope of the Yacochuya district. This is considered one of Cafayate's premier growing areas.

WINES

- **Torrontés:** Argentina's most compelling Torrontés. Floral aromatics are followed by crisp, unoaked fruit and a dry finish. A staple to have year-round in the fridge for sipping, sushi, and cheese.
- **Malbec-Tannat:** Tannat, Argentina's unsung red hero, gives this blend its structure and complexity along with a core of dark fruit.
- **Cabernet Sauvignon:** Intense Salta terroir gives a new face to Cabernet, adding distinctive minerality to this well-known varietal.



"Shows what Torrontés can do in the right hands. Excellent."

- Neal Martin, ROBERT PARKER'S THE WINE ADVOCATE



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VINE CONNECTIONS

THE FACES OF ARGENTINA'S BEST



Laura Catena & Estela Perinetti, *Luca & La Posta*



Roberto de la Mota, *Mendel*



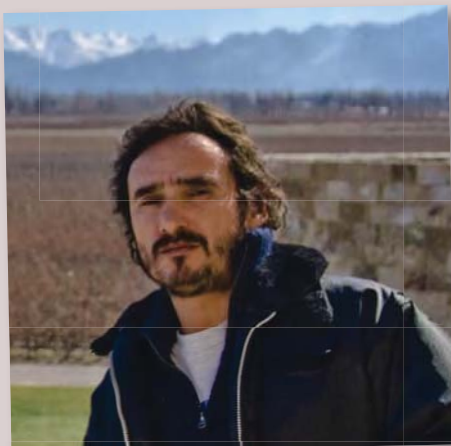
Angel Paulucci, *La Posta grower*



Domingo Fazio, *La Posta grower*



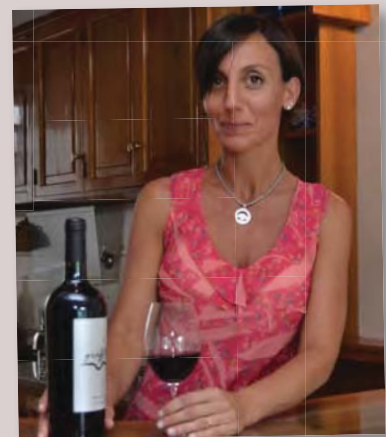
Pizzella Family, *La Posta growers*



Ernesto Catena, *Tikal*



Luis Reginato, *Chaman*



Jimena Lopez, *Graffito*



Jose & Pepe Reginato, *Reginato*



Oswaldo, Rafael, & Gabriel Domingo, *Hermanos*