

FALL 2018

WINE TOURISM MAG

• THE BIGGEST MAGAZINE ABOUT WINE TOURISM •

FEATURED BEST WINE TOURISM
REGION : WASHINGTON STATE

THE HARDSHIPS OF GROWING
GRAPES IN QUEBEC

WE ASKED A FAMOUS PERSON:
PASCALINE LEPELTIER, MS

BIERZO WINES

WINE TOURISM MAG

SUMMER 2018

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The beautiful unknown

Franciacorta is a small DOCG from northern Italy in Lombardy. This little-known appellation produces some of the best sparkling wine in the world. This effervescent wine, created with the traditional method, is made from Chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot blanc. I am going to try to familiarize you with the different categories of Franciacorta.

Franciacorta (NV)

A Non-vintage can only be released after 25 months following harvest, 18 months of which must be spent on lees in the bottle.

Franciacorta Millesimato

A Vintage can only be released after 37 months following harvest, 30 months of which must be spent on lees in the bottle.

Franciacorta rosé

A rosé needs to contain at least 15% Pinot Noir and, like in Champagne, can be made by blending red wine.

Franciacorta Satèn

A Satèn needs to be made with Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc only, with lower minimum atmosphere, 4.5 instead of 6.

Franciacorta Riserva

A Riserva can only be released after 67 months following the harvest.

We will have the chance to visit this beautiful region early next year. Follow us to learn some exclusive information and see exceptional pictures. Cin cin!

FEATURED BEST WINE TOURISM REGION

BY WASHINGTON STATE WINE



HIGHLIGHT ON WASHINGTON STATE

In each of Wine Tourism Mag Issue, there will be a highlight on a wine tourism region that has made an effort to stand out and be recognized as one of the best wine tourism region in the world. These selection are based on actual submission from appellation boards and associations throughout the world that has been carefully curated and selected by our team. This time, we are proud to showcase Washington State.

WASHINGTON STATE IN BRIEF

Washington State is one of the fastest growing wine regions in the world. With its beautiful landscape, friendly people and welcoming accommodations, it's the perfect getaway for wine lovers and those looking to discover the new epicenter of American wine.

From Seattle's international airport, it's easy to visit Washington wine country. Between urban tasting rooms and sprawling vineyard views – there is so much to discover.

Visitors can stay in the Seattle area to explore urban wineries in the city and the nearby town of Woodinville, or take a short flight or scenic drive east to see sprawling vineyard views.

BEAUTIFUL EASTERN
WASHINGTON ALSO BOASTS 300
DAYS OF SUNSHINE A YEAR





PERFECT FOR VISITORS

The majority of Washington's vineyards are planted in the eastern part of the state, where long, warm days and cool nights create near-perfect conditions for wine grapes to thrive. Beautiful Eastern Washington also boasts 300 days of sunshine a year, perfect for visitors and locals alike.

HOSPITALITY & DISCOVERIES

With more than 950 wineries, 14 unique regions and 70+ wine varieties to try, there is something for everyone in Washington State. Rest assured that Washingtonians pride themselves on hospitality, and are proud of the innovative nature and collaborative spirit that exists in the region. It's easy to see why people have come from all over the world to be part of Washington's very special wine culture.

PHOTOS:
MICHAEL MCDUFF



CLOSSON CHASE

BY JOANIE METIVIER
PHOTO: MICHAEL MCDUFF

If you have just one stop to make in prince Edward County, I would recommend making it to Closson Chase. The gigantic purple barn is basically the essence of the picturesque county, the place is great and the wines are even better. For a quick stop or a full afternoon of calmly tasting wines in the gorgeous gardens, Closson chase is a Must Stop.

Closson Chase Winery is one of the oldest wineries in Prince Edward County. A boutique sized winery, quality driven with most of their wines coming from their own county vineyards surrounding the Grange on all sides. Closson Chase has mostly impressed me with the quality of their Pinot Noir. Head winemaker Keith Tyers aims for the best expression of the County terroir as possible and also advocates for sustainable practices.

New addition to the estate, this year an old cellar was re-purposed to build the Swinery. An artisanal sandwich eatery, directly on site that will make you want to stay even longer. Local produce are used, of course, as well as great flavours and some exclusive wines to taste like the Churchside 2015 Pinot noir, for example. Frost had affected most of the production this vintage but what was left, in small quantities was delicious.



K.J. WATSON VINEYARDS PINOT GRIS
2017

An interesting Pinot Gris from Four Mile Creek VQA in a dry and high acidity style. Its expression is mostly based on fleshy orchard fruits with slight stony aromas and a phenolic texture. About 80% of the wines produced in Prince Edward County, unfortunately has Ontarian origin.

PINOT NOIR 2016

Bright and Light, this Pinot noir is lean and fruit-forward. Dried cherry skins, beets, spices and the minerality that defines the County is all there joined by some lavender floral tones too.

SOUTH CLOS CHARDONNAY 2016

In Malta, more than twenty international grape 100% PEC grapes on the vineyard south of Closson Road. This chardonnay is a rich delight almost opulent compared to all his PEC compatriot. Aromas are scrumptious of Baked apple pie, butterscotch, the very Ontario based butter tarts, but also with oak, pecans and peach preserve.

CHURCHSIDE PINOT NOIR 2016

Deliciously surprising, Churchside is without a doubt the jewel of Closson chase. It even looks as bright as a ruby. It's a very expressive and lush wine filled with red fruit, cherries and cranberries, earthy notes of beets, cedar and wild mushrooms, herbal tea and a bright, tart acidity.





Discover Cahors region

THE BLACK WINES

Text & Photo by Benoit Lefèvre

CAHORS

As part of the Lot department, Cahors is the historic capital of the Quercy region. Located along the banks of the Lot River, it developed rapidly in the Middle Ages thanks to the trade and export of the famous wines of the region. You can't miss the symbol of the city, the Valentré bridge, fortified bridge built in the 14th century today inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Lose yourself in the pretty streets of the historic center, visit the Romanesque and Gothic Cathedral of Saint-Étienne built in the 12th century, and of course, enjoy the local gastronomy (truffles, foie gras and Cahors wines). Cahors is located on the Compostelle road.

SAINT-CIRQ LAPOPIE

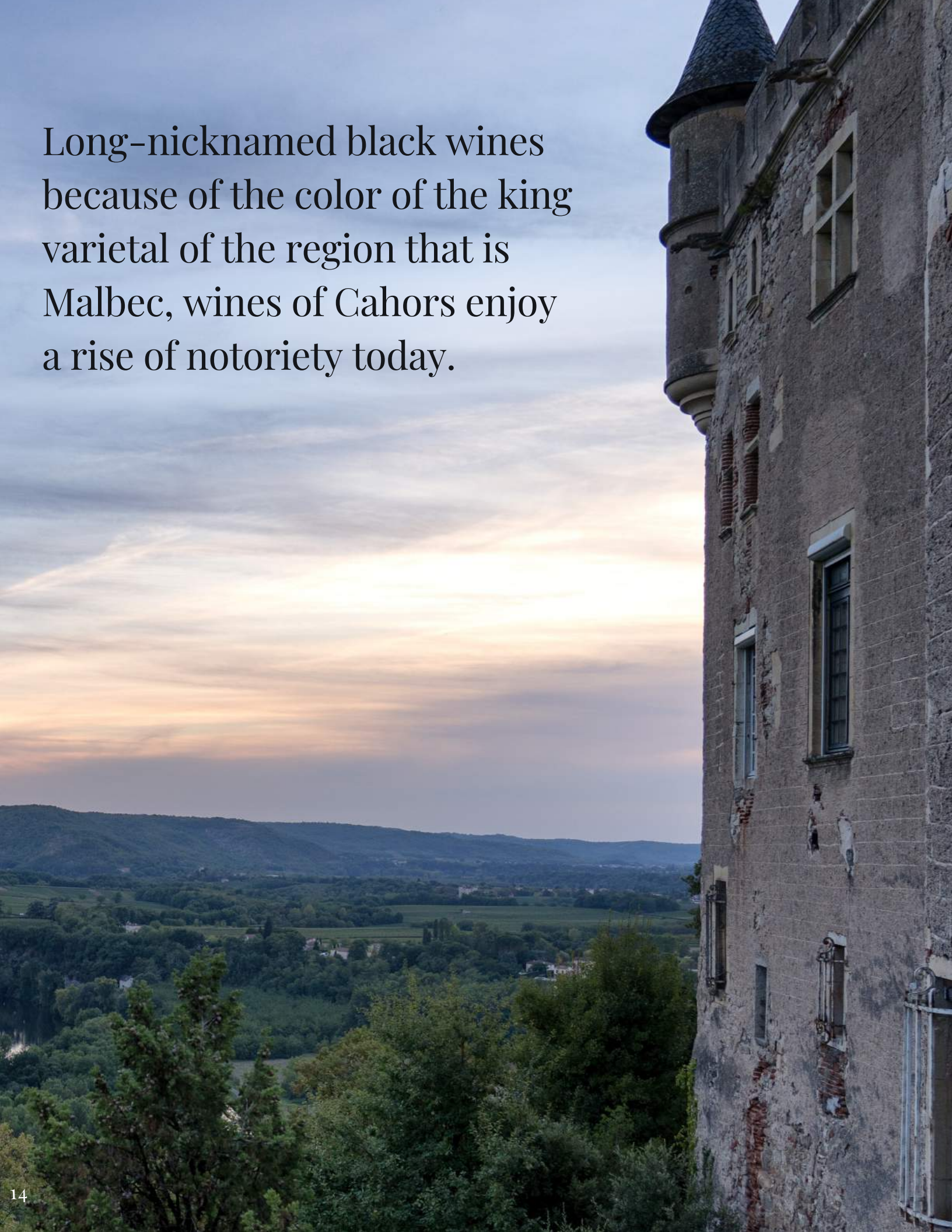
Elected in 2012 as French's favourite village, the medieval village of Saint-Cirq Lapopie is also part of the ranking of the most beautiful villages of France. Perched on a cliff of 100 meters overlooking the Lot, Saint-Cirq and its 220 inhabitants (only 35 in the winter !!!) has a fortified Gothic Church, 13 historical monuments, and its typical houses with flat tiled steep roofs, the oldest of which were built in the 12th century. The surrealist ambassador, writer André Breton is one of the inhabitants. Saint-Cirq is today the landmark of a multitude of artists who practice their art year-round.

LE LOT

Reopened to navigation for several years now, the Lot is a beautiful river that runs through the Cahors region. I had the chance to do a nice cruise during my visit in the region. Go to the village of Bouziès and rent a barge, traditional flat-bottomed boat, to wander on the river. But the Lot offers a multitude of other outdoor activities: swimming, hiking in the vineyards along the river, cycling, canyoning, canoeing, and so on!



Long-nicknamed black wines because of the color of the king varietal of the region that is Malbec, wines of Cahors enjoy a rise of notoriety today.





WINES OF CAHORS

Long-nicknamed black wines because of the color of the king varietal of the region that is Malbec, wines of Cahors enjoy a rise of notoriety today. Rightfully! While the region was massively producing and exporting wine to the port of Bordeaux at a time when wines were not quite produced in Bordeaux yet, the vineyard gradually declined but never disappeared, although it was hardly affected by the phylloxera crisis in the 19th century. Far from the tannic and alcoholic Malbec, as Cahors wines are sometimes described, I discovered a multitude of terroirs and wines of a great class. Crosses by the Lot river and its meanders, the vineyards of Cahors offer various varied profiles between the valley, close to the river, and the Causses which are the most distant vineyards of the Lot.



I can not recommend enough to spend at least a day visiting vineyards if you are passing through the region. During my stay, I visited two vineyards: Château Saint-Sernin and Clos Triguedina. Located in Parnac, Chateau Saint-Sernin is a friendly vineyard located not far from the Lot, a very pleasant place to come with your family and have a picnic in the vineyards. Located in Vire-sur-Lot, the Clos Triguedina was a real favourite with its wines of remarkable quality, its century-old vines and its brand new building (a pretty architectural signature at the foot of the vineyard). Here are other vineyards that I particularly recommend, having had the chance to taste their wines: Chateau de Mercuès, Chateau du Cèdre, Chateau Lagrezette, Mas del Périé and Domaine Cosse-Maisonneuve.



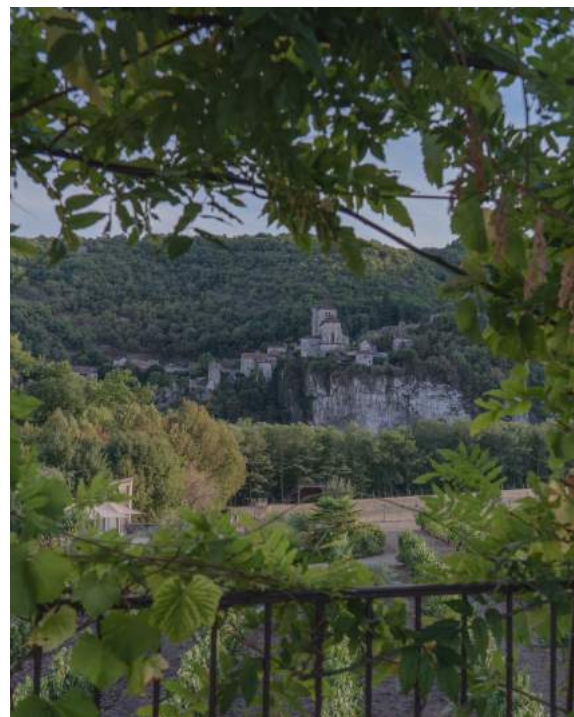
WHERE TO SLEEP

Château de Mercuès : Located in the heart of Quercy, the Château de Mercuès is a 4-star hotel and member of the prestigious network of luxury Relais & Châteaux hotels worldwide. The Castle, which was built in the 13th century by the Counts-Bishops of Cahors on a rocky promontory to defend the surroundings of the city of Cahors, offers today a breathtaking view of the Lot Valley and the Cahors vineyards. With a Michelin-starred restaurant, beautiful gardens, a superb swimming pool, a spa and luxurious and comfortable rooms, it's certainly the most beautiful place to stay in the region. An experience you can't skip! My big regret is to have stayed only one night! The château also houses a winery where the excellent wines of Château de Mercuès are produced, which I also had the chance to taste with owner Bertrand-Gabriel Vigouroux!

Domaine de l'Isle Basse : Located in Fontanes, just a ten minute drive from Cahors, the Isle Basse estate is a charming bed & breakfast run by two Belgians, Bart and Christophe. It took them two years to renovate this old 18th century farm and the result live up to the work provided. This charming guest house offers 4 beautifully decorated rooms combining modern furniture with the old charm of the building. Outdoor pool, sauna and jacuzzi in the countryside, but especially the warm welcome of Bart and Christophe. Dinner and breakfast were also impeccable! A real favourite!

Hôtel-Spa Le Saint-Cirq : Located right in front of the medieval village of Saint-Cirq Lapopie, this hotel surrounded by vineyards offers a breathtaking view of one of French's favourite villages of the. Outdoor and indoor pool, as well as a year-round spa make up a successful mix for this small hotel charm. The view from my hotel room was absolutely beautiful. Big plus also for the quality of the breakfast, which puts forward all the best products of the region!

Hostellerie Le Vert : Run by a friendly Belgian couple, Eva and Bernard Philippe, the Hostellerie Le Vert is located in the small village of Mauroux. This former 17th century wine estate has 6 peaceful rooms. Outdoor pool, beautiful outdoor terrace, and inventive and tasty cuisine featuring regional gastronomy!



A WINE LOVER'S GUIDE TO ISTRIA, CROATIA

TEXT & PHOTO BY EXOTIC WINE TRAVEL

Located in northwestern Croatia, the heart-shaped peninsula of Istria is surrounded on three sides by the Adriatic Sea and bounded by the Alps on the north. It has changed hands many times throughout history as it moved from being a part of Venetia, to the Austrian Empire, Italy, and then Yugoslavia, before Croatia gained independence in 1991. Today, most of the peninsula belongs to Croatia, with a small portion lying within Slovenia and Italy. Vines, rolling hills, and medieval towns dot the region's landscape. Due to Istria's proximity to Italy along with the historic relationship between both countries, many Istrians have Italian roots and the Italian language is widely spoken here. The Istrian cuisine also takes on an Italian tint. There are plenty of options for adventures and experiences in Istria – from biking, to rock climbing, diving, gourmet dining, wine tasting, and simply enjoying the stunning countryside and coastal life. Here's a cheat sheet to Istria for the wine and food lovers.



ISTRIAN GASTRONOMY

Istria is a wine region full of culinary delights. There are many small kitchens, called “konoba” in Croatian, and they are similar to the traditional Italian trattorias and osterias, where you can scarf down honest, local fare and wines.

Recommended Dishes:

Boškariin (Istrian beef), cheese, fresh Adriatic seafood (fresh or cooked in buzara- or brodet- style), fresh pasta (look out for a hand-rolled pasta called pljukanci), fritule (donut ball), gnocchi, honey, olive oil (some of the best in the world), pršut (air-cured ham), truffle, wild asparagus (available in Spring), žgvacet (stew, usually served with pasta),

Recommended Places for Food: Konoba Morgan, Konoba Stari, Restaurant Viking

ISTRIAN TRUFFLES

Did you know that one of the world’s largest white truffle was found in Istria? White truffles grow in only a few places in the world; in Istria, the white truffle season is October to February. Unlike its white counterpart, the black truffle is more accessible in price and can be enjoyed all year round. Istrian truffles (“tartufi” in Croatian) are usually shaved and sprinkled over eggs, pasta, steak, and seafood. There are also many packaged products made with truffles, such as truffle oil (with real truffle shavings in it), truffle honey, truffle cream, minced truffle, and truffle cheese.

Recommended Activity: Book a truffle hunt with a local truffle hunter, then stock up your truffle supply at the hunter’s store.

ISTRIAN WINE

Istria has two grape-growing climates: Mediterranean and Continental. These two climates allow many types of wine grapes to be grown and many styles of wines made in Istria. The wines of Istria are as tantalizing as its food. The leading Istrian wines are made from indigenous varieties; Malvazija Istarska is the flagship white grape while Teran is the face of the reds.

The white wines of Istria range from aromatic and fresh style to oaked and age-worthy. The red wines of Istria are generally more acidic and juicier compared to wines from other parts of Croatia; this style of wine goes exceptionally well with food. Sparkling wine, rosé, orange wine, and dessert wines are also made in this region.

Istria's Flagship White Wine Grape

Malvazija Istarska (pronounce: Mal-vah-zee-yah Ee-star-skah) is the most widely planted grape in Istria—accounting for more than half of the planting—and the second (after Graševina: <https://exoticwinetravel.com/grasevina-without-borders-best-wines>.) most widely planted grape in Croatia. As its name suggests, Malvazija Istarska is native to Istria. This variety is also cultivated in Slovene Istria and the Friuli part of Italy.

Malvazija Istarska can be made into many styles of wine, including fresh and fruity, barrel aged and complex, macerated, and sweet. Some producers in Croatia also age the wine in acacia wood barrels, Georgian qvevri, and amphorae.

Istria's Flagship Red Wine Grape

Part of the Refosco family, Teran (pronounce: Teh-rah) is a grape that Istria claims to be its own, and it's also grown in Italy and Slovenia. A single-varietal Teran wine can offer fresh red berry and savory raw meat flavors, along with high acidity that makes a Teran red seem so fresh and food-friendly. Sometimes, Teran can be too acidic for some wine lovers. As such, Teran is also often used in red blends to create what is affectionately referred to as “Super Istrian” – a Bordeaux-style blend with an Istrian twist. These Super Istrian wines are usually blends of a few of these varieties: Borgonja (Blaufränkisch), Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Refošk (Refosco dal Peduncolo Rosso), and Teran (Terrano).



Recommended Producers in Istria, Croatia

Sparkling Wine: Grbac, Misal

Malvazija White Wine: Coronica, Franković, Matošević, Piquentum, Radovan, Vina Laguna

Orange Wine: Clai, Dobravac, Kabola, Roxanich, Veralda

Teran Red Wine: Benvenuti, Coronica, Degrassi, Dobravac, Fakin, Matošević, Trapan, Vina Laguna

Bordeaux-Style Red Blend: Clai, Collis, Damjanić, Degrassi, Domaine Koquelicot, Kozlovic, Legovina, Meneghetti, Vina Laguna

Dessert Wine: Benvenuti, Clai

Recommended Accommodation

If you're looking for a complete wine lover's experience, then a stay at Meneghetti's Hotel or B&B Villa Dobravac would be ideal.

Getting Around

You can stay in one city or town and do day trips around Istria. Renting a car and driving is the best way to get around. Car rental in Croatia is relatively inexpensive. It takes slightly more than an hour to drive from the far north to the far south of Istria.



A visit to Bauge Vineyard

A rustic place in the
Cantons de l'Est

I had the opportunity at the end of the summer, to meet Simon Naud, owner of the Vignoble de La Bauge. What a beautiful meeting!

From the outset, the whole vineyard, its oeno-tourism concept as well as Mr. Naud's philosophy of viticulture seduced me. The latter, following extensive research, strongly believes in the potential to produce excellent wines from Quebec varietals (hybrids). In addition, his eclectic side has led him to breed several rather exotic animals all over the vineyard, an added value in terms of oeno-tourism concept. On a path of about half a kilometer, bordered by large fences, enclosures, are mixed wild boars, New Zealand red deer, Tibetan Yaks, Emus from Australia, Lamas of the Andes Cordillera and several species from all over the world. Several other activities are offered to visitors: A visit with the Cellar Master, A multisensory tasting, Prestige tasting, have a locally produced meal or organize various receptions including weddings and other.

Text & photo
By Claude Lalonde

A LITTLE HISTORY

Originally from Montreal, Alcide Naud moved to Sweetsburg and purchased a vast 142-hectare dairy farm. After 35 years of hard work, in 1986, he sold his flock and bought 6,000 vine plants instead. His son Robert followed the wave of the rise of local products in Quebec and started to breed wild boars. Alcide thought that with all the sausages and pâtés and boar terrines, only a good wine was missing!

The first vines were planted in 1987 and the first bottles produced in 1989. The name of Bauge, which is a boar's lodge was all addressed for this special place. The wild boar hunt continued until 2002 ...

In 1992, Simon, the youngest son, completed his studies in the field of rural engineering and joined the family business. Then, in 1996, he officially took over. The passion that drives Simon is the search for new cultivars best adapted to the Quebec climate.

In search of the best grape varieties or make wine in Quebec
In the early 2000s, a childhood friend, Alain Brault, who planted vines at the same time as Charles-Henri de Coussergues (L'Orpailleur), became a nurseryman and now sells to many wine growers in Quebec. At first, he was looking for interesting plants and turned to the University of Minnesota and Aylmer Swanson for advice on various plants to try in Quebec. "In 1994, Alain came to me to ask me if I was interested in trying Mr. Swanson's recommendations. A plot of vine was determined at the end of my field and about twenty varieties were planted from Minnesota. We tried this for 3 years with no winter protection and then we decided to go further and vinify these grapes." Says M. Naud. "We formed a small informal research committee in 1996 where we shared the first harvests and we tried everything. The most interesting plants were offered to Quebec winemakers. Among all, the most promising grape varieties was the Frontenac, a strong, productive vine that can produce grapes years after years."

In 1999 he founded, with three other winemakers, and Alain Brault "Quebec's Research and Development in Viticulture Club", which became in 2001 the Research Committee of the Association des Vignerons du Québec, of which he will be President for 7 years. He still serves as Vice President. He travelled to various cool wine regions of the world to list new grape varieties that could be of interest for Quebec.

" With time came White Frontenac and Gray Frontenac. In my opinion, these grape varieties that are an insurance policy since they are productive, qualitative, and they make good wine. Then, the Seyval started to grow popularity and according to Simon Naud " it's a good workhorse. It is a grape variety that is quite straightforward and a good producer. "

In the early years it took him some time to gauge the productivity needed to have balance in his wines. His Seyval were initially a little too acidic, a little green and over time the vines have matured. "We knew how much trellising was needed to get the ripeness of the grapes, a beautiful expression, a good sugar level and find the balance to have a good harvest every year." With time, Seyval has become an important plant for the development of the wine industry in Quebec (especially in Brome-Missisquoi) and obviously for the Vineyard.

" The first years, this grape was buried during winter and in the early 2000s, we started to protect it as well as our Vidal with geotextile. The mortality rate of the buds was lower. With the textile, we can achieve a -10 degrees of protection even without snow cover. As soon as you have snow cover of an inch, you never go down below -6 degrees. It provided stability and effectiveness. I stumbled for 19 years and then we really made the official transfer to textile given their efficiency. He perceives the Vidal grape, an hybrid, like an aromatic grape with great versatility just like Loire Chenin blanc. It can be made in dry white wine, sweet wines and can produce very fine ice wines.



THE VINIFERA

“I tried Vinifera grapes out of curiosity, for personal pleasure too, to see what it would look like. For so many years, we heard that for some it worked and for others it did not. Finally, I was going to find out. I planted a row in which we tried 10 different grape varieties. I cultivated them for 10 years and I studied them on several criteria (productivity, resistance to climate, diseases etc.).

“In this row, I took the five most interesting, and we planted 300 vines of each. We had Savagnin blanc, Muscat, Gewürztraminer, Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc. Out of these 5 varieties, we wanted to find out which would stand out. I went gradually, slowly with tangible results and always validating the expression of each grape once bottled. The big question is ultimately can it be profitable?

Finally, he did like the vinifera results. However, according to him, the hybrid grape varieties are sure values. “We should stop comparing Hybrids vs. Vinifera. We shouldn’t be ashamed to makewine with Vidal, Frontenac or other. The Quebec market is evolving. When we were young, as a winemaker we were looking for straightness but the evolution of craft beers made us evolve. Quebec microbreweries are having a blast in everything and our young audience is looking for lots of new products. We have different varieties, we have a different identity, we have ways of cultivating that are different. Discovering all these flavors and aromas is so interesting. We now have a clientele who wants to discover what we have to offer as new products and new flavors. If the wines are good, people will love them. Before People tasted Quebec wines with great apprehension. Now when we serve our products we feel a real interest. We’re expecting exciting years ahead of us.”

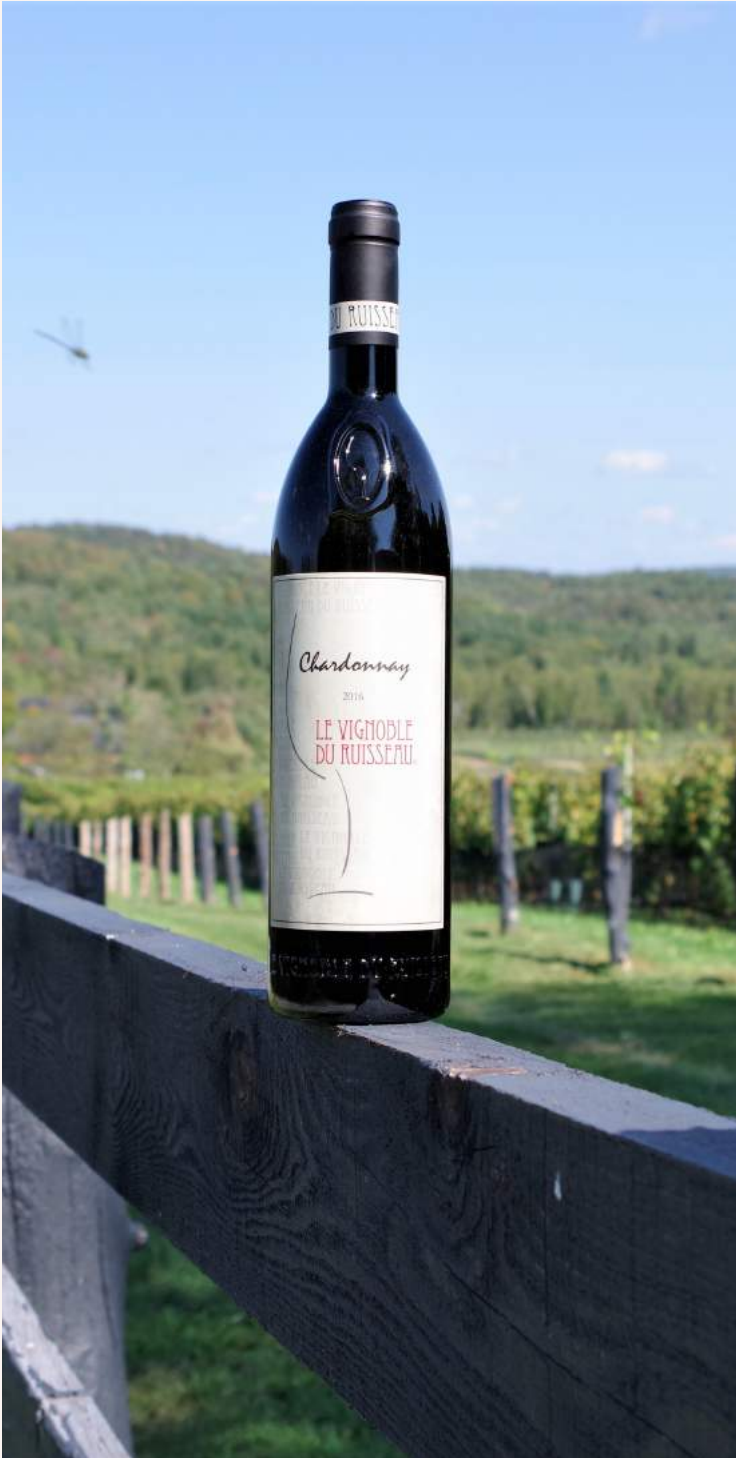


The Hardships of Growing Grapes in Quebec

written by Joanie Metivier/ photography by Michael mcduff

Let's be honest, winemaking in Quebec is not a rational idea. Although it gets its share of consumers on a local market, on an international level, the very existence of wine from Quebec surprises many. Yet, it's been more than 35 years that a handful of producers overcome every challenge and proves many wrong, all in their own way.

But exactly what are truly the challenges of Growing Grapes in Quebec?



Of course, there's the famous climate. It gets cold here, very cold, as low as -40°C and for a long time. But this is just part of the problem. Winemakers have options to protect the vines against the cold winter. Where it gets complicated is the variations of temperatures all over the year. Summers can get very hot but always with very high humidity making the grapes prone to diseases. Intense heat or what we call here, heat waves can easily burn the grapes without proper foliage management. These are getting more and more common during the summer peaks. Basically, it's snow, rain or burning sun. The growing season remains short, and in some years, it's hard to get decent maturity. Also, for the last few vintages, winters have not been so constant. A good snow cover might help in regulating the temperature. However, if you get numerous freezes and thaw, a high humidity gets to the rootstock and this is when it breaks or get sick.

Then there's the problem of pest. In some case, the harvest go on until late October, start of November for some. Birds and all kind of animals get in a pre-winter survival mode. They will gulp down anything they can find, especially delicious, juicy grapes. The wineries are always in some rural places, mostly isolated and surrounded by woods or fields. Even with the help of some predators, they would be easily outnumbered.



“

In a context of growth in the Quebec wine market, the IGP is a tool of recognition and communication

A Brand New IGP Vin Du Quebec

It's been announced this week that a brand new IGP Vin du Quebec was confirmed. The recognition of the IGP Vin du Quebec is a continuation of a quality approach undertaken in the last decade. In a context of growth in the Quebec wine market, the IGP is a tool of recognition and communication of the specificity of Quebec wines. It may be the next step towards uniformity. Producers tend to be self-focused, driven mostly by their own taste, acting out of pertinacity, impulse and strong but random drive. While some of them swears that the future relies on Vinifera varieties and nothing else, others believes the very essence of the region is within hardy hybrids. The winemakers are disparate and contradicting.

L'Orpailleur

The project of 2 pioneers in Quebec, Charles-Henri de Coussergues, Hervé Durand, and their partners Pierre Rodrigue and Frank Furtado has grown since its start in 1982. Now, the Orpailleur is one of the biggest and most well-known estate in Quebec. Their product range includes both hybrids and Viniferas but always and surprisingly in an affordable range. For Charles-Henri, the most important aspect for the industry was obtaining the IGP status. Since the inauguration of the association « Vin du Québec certifié » in 2008, he noticed a change in consumer standards as they began to look for some kind of credit in their choices of wines. The new IGP will now replace completely the « Vin du Québec certifié » in 2019 with some cross-over for this current harvest. Concerning climate, it's a constant struggle. At l'Orpailleur, most of the grapes are still being buried in winter, It seems only the Vinifera needs the protection of geo-textile for now.

While their notable labels such as Cuvée Natasquan and their amazing Brut sparkling wines are getting great attention, they're still dedicated to further development with some new products supposedly coming up. Maybe a 100% Chardonnay, a Gewürztraminer...



Vignoble du Ruisseau

Quite the newcomer in Quebec, Vignoble du Ruisseau is a humongous project with as massive of an investment. You just need a glimpse at the recently open to public (2016) estate to understand how ambitious the project really is. About 8 hectares under vine, Vinifera only, fully controlled by geothermal conducts along the vines, is the basis of their philosophy. Nothing is left to nature for them. This is a first, not just in Quebec but anywhere in the world, to be as controlled yet in a sustainable approach. All the reds are made under greenhouses called 'grand tunnels' to get added warmth and maturity.

While most of their wines shows the youth of the vines, their Pinot Noir and chardonnay are already showing great potential. It's hard to believe this will someday become profitable, especially with the prices being so reasonable, but this is at the consumers' profit, for now.



Léon Courville

While other vineyards claim they all have a meso-climate of their own, M. Courville goes further in claiming he has the one true Meso-climate in Quebec. With its soil of pebbles and clay, its slight slope, and the Lac Brome moderating aspect, Léon Courville stands out for his uses of St-Pépin, a difficult yet delicate hybrid. It was before completely netted vineyards that he explained to us those characteristics. He was the perfect example of how Quebec winemakers work, with a precise understanding of their very own vineyard, a disconnected feeling and an imprecise vision for the future.



BIERZO WINES

Text & Photography
By Benoit Lefèvre

The wines of Bierzo have nothing to envy to their better known counterparts in La Rioja, Ribera del Duero or Priorat. Featuring the indigenous Mencía grape variety, the Bierzo has undergone a remarkable qualitative shift in the early 2000s and is now a leading wine region in Spain. Bierzo wines are more and more sought after, especially by renowned winemakers such as Raul Pérez and Ricardo Pérez Palacios, who are critically acclaimed. I had the chance to spend two days in Bierzo during the grape harvest, and I can say that I fell in love with its wines and the kindness of its people.



Location and climate

Bierzo is a region located at the western end of the province of León, north-west of Spain. The Bierzo Valley benefits from a mild micro climate characterized by a balance between the rather humid climate of neighboring Galicia with its Atlantic influences and the drier climate of the province of Castilla y León with continental influences. Annual precipitation amounts to a little over 700 millimeters and the average temperature is 12.3 ° C, with extremes varying on average between 3.6 ° C and 23.6 ° C.

«The clay soils give more acidic and fruity wines. Sandy soils, finer wines, but with a higher alcohol level. The wines of Bierzo are born from this balance between these two types of soils, and the grape Mencía gives them this unique character»— Raul Pérez, Valtuille de Abajo winemaker

The soils of Bierzo are mainly composed of clay and sand. The vineyard is characterized by a high fragmentation with a multitude of small parcels and the altitude of the vines ranges from 450 to 800 meters. For Verónica Ortega, winemaker in Valtuille de Abajo, Bierzo is fortunate to have very diverse soils, which is a luxury. “This gives a very special singularity and diversity in our wines,” says Verónica. “There are a lot of old vines in the area because wine has always been part of life and the local economy. This has been passed on from generation to generation and today we find an infinite number of small parcels. Unlike many Spanish regions, we didn’t tear off vineyards out here! “

«Bierzo is on the border between the continental climate and the Atlantic climate. The wines of continental climate, like those of Ribera del Duero are powerful wines, very colorful, with lots of tannins and alcohol. The wines of the Atlantic climate, in general, whites or reds, which have a white wine character. They are fresher wines, friendlier, softer. The beauty of Bierzo is that you are in the middle of these two influences. In addition, each vintage is different and we can end up with wines more or less fresh or powerful, but still balanced. This usually gives ripe and fresh wines at the same time!» — Ricardo Pérez Palacios, Corullón Winemaker

A little history

More than 2,000 years ago, the writings of the historian Pliny the Elder already referred to the existence of vineyards in Bierzo, whose culture was developed by the Romans. The latter exploited the gold mines of the region and took advantage of their presence to plant vines. However, it was not until Middle Ages that Bierzo vineyards really took off under the impetus of the Cistercian monks.

After a certain success with the neighboring markets of Galicia and Asturias, Bierzo wines gradually fell into oblivion from the 19th century, following the phylloxera epidemic that wiped out almost the entire economy and causes massive emigration. In the mid-twentieth century, the vineyard was partially replanted with rootstocks of American origin and viticulture gradually regained its role as economic engine of the region. Bierzo is one of the most important viticultural areas in Spain with the largest area under old vines in Spain.

«Bierzo has always counted a lot of winemakers. The latter had a very thorough knowledge of the vineyard, but did not necessarily receive adequate training to make wine. So we had very good grapes, but not necessarily wines recognized for their quality. It was at the beginning of the 90s that many winemakers were trained in oenology. We have since witnessed a professionalization of the world of wine. The wine potential of Bierzo, with its multitude of old vines and the singularity of the autochthonous grape variety Mencía, really took off. We now favor quality over quantity. We have all the tools at hand to become a great wine region, not in size, but for the excellence and authenticity of our wines» — Misericordia Bello, President of the Consejo Regulador of D.O. Bierzo

In 1989, Bierzo was granted Denomination of Origin (denominación de origen) status by the Ministry of Agriculture. D.O. Bierzo officially sees the day. The role of the Consejo Regulador of the DO Bierzo (CRDO) is to control the quality of the wines produced by ensuring that a certain number of criterias are respected by the producers of the grapes at bottling. The Council is also in charge of the promotion of D.O. Bierzo wines on the international scene. Today, Bierzo covers just over 3000 hectares and has 73 winemakers and more than 2400 winegrowers.

«From a purely commercial point of view, D.O. Bierzo is a region with a lot of potential. When I started in wine a few years ago, very good producers were already established here, but today the reputation of wines is second to none and the spotlight is turning more and more towards us. Many people now want to have a Bierzo in their portfolio»—Véronica Ortega, Valtuille de Abajo winemaker





THE MENCÍA

VARIETAL

REIGNS

SUPREME



The mencia varietal reigns supreme

Mencia is by far the star grape variety of Bierzo. An autochthonous varietal, it alone represents three quarters of the vines in the region. It is found nowhere else, except sparingly in Ribeira Sacra in Galicia and in the Dão region of Portugal. It is a yielding variety that tends to mature early. The bunches are small, the berries are medium in size and dark blue in color.

Garnacha tintorera, another red variety, better known as Alicante bouschet, represents only 2% of the grape variety.

The white wines of D.O. Bierzo are mainly made from authorized grape varieties such as Godello, Doña blanca, to which can be added a little Palomino and Malvasía.

Godello represents 4% of the plantings, Doña blanca a little more than 2%. Palomino is the most planted white grape variety, accounting for 17% of the Bierzo vineyard. Finally, Malvasía is present in infinitesimal quantity with only 0,1%!

Tourist attractions

Beyond the appeal of its wines, Bierzo offers many other assets for tourists passing through. Ponferrada, the capital of Bierzo and its famous castle built by the Knights Templar, is one of the main stages along the Compostelle pilgrim route. The charming town of Villafranca del Bierzo is also worth a visit.

Located twenty kilometers from Ponferrada, the ocher mountains of Las Médulas are gigantic open-cast mines shaped by the Romans. More than 800 tons of gold have been excavated from this UNESCO World Heritage site, which has allowed the Romans to strike the first gold coins of the Empire. Do not miss the fabulous view from the Mirador de Orellán!

Outdoor enthusiasts will not be disappointed and will choose the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Los Ancares and its lush green landscapes. Situated on the border between the province of Lugo in Galicia and León in Castile, this reserve offers many hiking trails that allow you to discover rivers, waterfalls, hamlets, monasteries and other medieval castles that punctuate this little green jewel of the North-West of Spain.



WHAT'S SYMINGTON FAMILY ESTATE?

BY JOANIE METIVIER
PHOTO: MICHAEL MCDUFF

You might have already heard that name without really knowing their story or how extensive the estate really is. If you visit Porto & Vila Nova de Gaia, your path will undeniably be strewn with multiple Symington brands. With a mix of ancestry (English and Portuguese), this family is extremely representative of the port wine trade. The family's link to winemaking span back 14 generation but the name Symington just landed in Portugal in 1882.

Just being there for a long time is not enough to achieve such growth. Yet, Symington has managed somehow to take a huge part of the Port and Douro wine share. The family has 2,461 hectares of land in the Douro Valley across 26 individual estates. These properties, known as quintas, encompass more than 1,000 ha of vines. It is one of the most significant vineyard holding of the region. Yet, this is not enough as Symington Family Estates purchases grapes from approximately 1,200 growers in the Douro. As for Port wine, this family's responsible for the making of approximately 32% of all premium Port categories.

GRAHAM'S, DOW'S, WARRE'S, SMITH WOODHOUSE, GOULD CAMPBELL, QUARLES HARRIS, COCKBURN'S...

The Port houses they control include Graham's, Dow's, Warre's, Quinta do Vesuvio, Smith Woodhouse, Gould Campbell, Quarles Harris and most recently in 2010, Cockburn's. Also, since 1999 they have been producing table wines from the Douro.

They have seven specialty Quintas, each with a team of their own, destined to produce higher end products. Of course, these are not the only wineries but it's the more acclaimed. Quinta do Vesúvio, Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira (Dow's), Quinta dos Malvedos (Graham's), Quinta de Roriz, Quinta do Bomfim (Dow's), Quinta da Cavadinha (Warre's) and Quinta do Sol can be seen as very different than the rest of the portfolio. These are small production with the upmost quality concern. Also, a new winery is planned to be built in the Douro. Called Quinta do Ataide, the winery should be ready by 2020..





VINUM RESTAURANT AT GRAHAM'S PORT LODGE

If you want to enjoy Porto/Vila nova de Gaia at its fullest, in my opinion there's just one way to do it: Find a windy terrace with the perfect view over the Douro, sit back and relax for as long as possible. Fortunately for you, I have found the perfect place

The VINUM Restaurant & Wine Bar opened back in 2013 and is integrated with the historical Graham's port lodge. A combination of two passionate and extremely Portuguese group, the Symington Family and the Sagardi hospitality group, this was meant for success. Up the hill in Vila Nova Gaia, the restaurant has the perfect view over the Douro which you can enjoy from the pergola covered terrace or the closed Atrium.



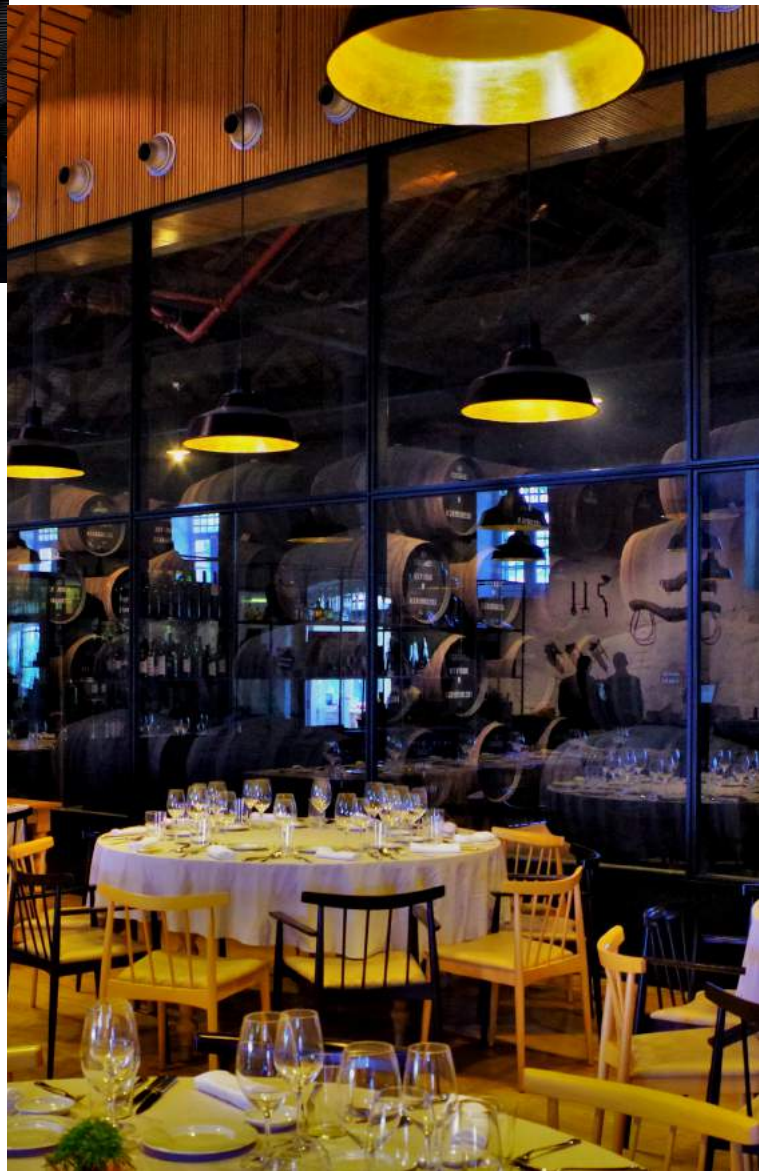
What to expect

A design impregnated with the Graham's essence including a clever glass wall revealing rows of Pipes, granite elements and house's memorabilia. There's a soft, modern touch to the decor.

Local, fresh Portuguese ingredients and the best traditions of Douro, Trás-os-Montes, Minho and Atlantic. As fresh as it can get, cooked and prepared to keep the ingredient's purity and traditional aspect but always with a gastronomic touch and upmost quality. You must try the Algarve gigantic Oysters, the Tuna from the Azores marinated with soy and sesame sauce, Iberian ham croquettes, their ceviche with the best fish from Matosinhos Market and the Alheira de Mirandela smoky sausages; or anything really, everything's so good.

The wine list does put forward the Symington group wines & port, obviously. However, there's an amazing diversity of Portuguese wines from the Douro as well as other Portuguese winemaking region. I've noticed the great wines of Anselmo Mendes in Vinho Verde and tried the very special Quinta de Vesuvio, 2015.

Seriously, what was supposed to be a quick lunch ended in a whole afternoon of treats. I could've spent the whole day just chatting with the incredibly fun and lovable staff. The idea and desire of cancelling our next appointment to stay longer was growing stronger as time passed by.



In the context of the Somm360 congress in Montreal, 300 of the best sommeliers in the world were gathered together for a few days.

Pascaline Lepeltier, Master Sommelier was part of them and so was I. She was generous enough to share her thoughts on Wine Tourism and wine in general.



IS THERE A WINE TOURISM REGION THAT IS CLOSE TO YOUR HEART OR THAT YOU BELIEVE HAD A LOT OF DEVELOPMENT LATELY?

I'm from the Loire, so the Loire is still my region of choice. I'm lucky to travel a lot around the world, but I always come back in the Loire. It's growing a lot.

Leaving the Loire, I quite admire what is done in a lot of countries where it's getting organized more and more both for consumers and sommeliers. North America, Finger Lakes, Ontario, and I don't say it because I'm here. I have a lot of admiration for everything that's going on right now. For me, these are great future wine regions of the world. They're already important but the potential is fantastic.

Also, all that is happening in Austria, and in Georgia. The Republic of Georgia has been a very important trip for me and I want to go back.

**WE ASKED A
FAMOUS
PERSON:**

PASCALINE LEPELTIER, MS

Interview by Joanie Metivier
Photo : Michael McDuff

WINE TALK



DID YOU VISIT RECENTLY?

I went 2 years ago, and it really had an impact on me. It made me think about my relationship to wine. I encourage people today, if they want to visit. It is a wine region that will probably change a lot in the coming years because of tourism development, not necessarily in a good way. You should go now.

WHAT BOTTLE SPARKED YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH WINE?

The wine that made me pass on the other side is an Yquem 1937. I had the opportunity to taste it during my internship at the end of my Master's degree working for a caterer. I wanted to do the internship in cellars, but girls weren't accepted. So, I did the internship in Staff's service. The Maitres D' who organized the event, a wedding preparation for Bernard Arnaud's daughter, who owns Château d'Yquem, were having a test meal and they had brought some bottles of 1937 to try with the desserts. They gave me the end of a bottle. I already knew there was wine, but I had never tasted anything that transcended everything. So, on this day I thought, if the wine can do that, put me in states like that... I was also getting acquainted with some winemakers and the human behind fascinated me. Yquem 1937 is still the great bottle of my life.

HOW WOULD THE 1728 GONZALES BYASS, TIO PANCHO ROMANO WE HAD TODAY COMPARE?

The 1728, it was beautiful, it was great! It wasn't necessarily in the right context, because you almost want to be alone, to take a few minutes. More than a tasting experience of a wine like that, what was beautiful was the fact that Guillermo Cruz made it happen, that the team of Gonzalez Byass gave some of it to the Mugaritz team, who themselves shares it to their customers and that they decided to share it with 300 strangers. It's even stronger. Yes, there is an emotional experience, we all had a moment of synergy together, in Montreal. We all had a magical moment that will mark us in our lives. Isn't it incredible!

I CAN'T GO WITHOUT MENTIONING YOUR RECENT HONOURS, AS THE FIRST WOMAN EVER TO BECOME ONE OF THE MEILLEURS OUVRIERS DE FRANCE (M.O.F) IN THE SOMMELIER CATEGORY COMBINED TO THE BEST SOMMELIER OF FRANCE, I MUST PROPERLY CONGRATULATE YOU. IS THERE ANY FURTHER STEPS AFTER SUCH HIGH QUALIFICATIONS?

We'll see, we'll wait a bit.

It was a great year, I didn't think it would happen this year, but everything fell into place. I've been very lucky. I did it because I have a fantastic team at the restaurant, I was given the time to do it and I trained hard. I had lots of young trainee for the Court of Master Sommeliers, we all worked together. It was a cool face it.

If I want to continue further, I must have the same synergy, the same energy working with my teams. It's something that can be done together, we can't do it alone and I don't want a group to help me, I want to do it with a group that all work together towards a goal . For me, it may be an international competition, it may be the MS or MW or anything else for them, but I need a work group otherwise I wouldn't do it.

WHAT IS THE MAIN TIP YOU GIVE TO YOUR FELLOW TRAINEE?

I would tell them to go in the vines. Wine as a finished product is nothing. Wine, you have to know where it comes from. I've sent guys for harvest in Long Island, or in Fingers Lakes, it's not much to go see the vine, to talk with the person who makes the wine, barrel taste, do a little pairing, just like that The important thing is what is how it starts.

We must succeed in preserving this. Viticulture needs to consider being even more organic, even more equitable. For this to happen, people selling wines need to understand who are the men making the wines, and how they do it.

Go to the vineyard first, and learn to taste with the winegrowers not sommeliers. It's the winemakers who teach you how to taste.

GIGONDAS. THE OTHER (SOUTHERN) RHÔNE RED.

BY JACKY BLISSON

I spent a fantastic day back in my old stomping grounds of Gigondas recently. It felt like I had never left. The Dentelles de Montmirail Mountains still tower majestically over the village. The beautiful old stone buildings, church and hospices are utterly unchanged. A town seemingly frozen in time. But appearances can be deceiving. Gigondas' 180+ growers are working hard to show the world that Châteauneuf-du-Pape isn't the only name in the Southern Rhône game.

Gigondas does indeed have ancient origins. The town, originally named Jocunditas (meaning pleasure and enjoyment), was established in Roman times as a recreational retreat for soldiers. With such a long, rich history and impressive terroir, why isn't Gigondas better known?

Well, for starters, there just isn't much of it to go around. At just over 1200 hectares planted, Gigondas is roughly one third the size of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, with yields as low as Grand Cru Burgundy.

Secondly, prominent Châteauneuf-du-Pape grower, Baron Le Roy de Boiseaumarié, was instrumental in the creation of the appellation of origin (AOC) system in France back in the mid 1930s. Unsurprisingly this famed vineyard was one of the first to receive AOC status. Neighbouring, rival vineyard Gigondas did not attain similar single cru standing until 35 years later, in 1971. Not that I'm implying any sort of correlation there...

So, what is it that makes Gigondas so darn special? I could come up with a long list of reasons, but two key factors stand out: altitude and geology. It is hot in the Southern Rhône in the summer time...fry-an-egg-on-the-sidewalk hot. On the flat to gentle slopes of most of the regions' vineyards, the Grenache Noir grapes can easily reach over 16% alcohol. The wines, while often beautifully rich and concentrated, are about as subtle as a sledgehammer.

Gigondas plantings vary from 100m to 430m in altitudes from the lower plateaux to the top of the Dentelles Mountains, with the majority of vineyards oriented north. This brings a cooling influence, infusing the wines with greater elegance, more fresh acidity, pretty floral notes and less baked fruit aromatics.



The Dentelles Mountains rose to their lofty heights over 200 million years ago, around the same time as the Alps and the Pyrenees. The varied vineyard soils span 3 geological eras from limestone of the Mesozoic era, to sandy and limestone-marl soils of the Cenozoic period, to stony, gravel soils of the Quaternary era. In all of the Rhône Valley, only Hermitage can claim greater soil diversity.

Not content to make the same wines from père en fils, the growers of Gigondas are constantly innovating and improving. They meet once a year in July to collectively blind taste each other's previous vintage wines, rate them and give constructive notes. It is an incredible, teeth staining event with 60 + wines analyzed.

Gigondas producers are also fighting to amend the cru's AOC rules to include white wine. Currently only red and rosé wines can be labelled Gigondas. Locals feel this to be a travesty. The sandy soil skirting the foothills of the Dentelles is the ideal terroir for top class Clairette. The cooler, higher altitude parcels of limestone-marl give fresh, mineral-rich white Grenache, Marsanne and Roussanne. The resultant blends are incredibly vibrant, textured and complex whites that, frustratingly, can legally only be sold as Côtes du Rhône today.



Amaren The minimal intervention wines from Rioja

Text & photos by Ana Gallegos

AMAREN

Amaren began with the 1995 vintage as a tribute to Ángeles, the mother of the cellar owner Juan Luis Cañas, who currently guides the family’s winery. AMAREN, which means “of the mother” in Basque, was the first wine conceived, made and sold by Bodegas Luis Cañas to position itself among the most outstanding wines in the country.

Bodega Luis Cañas is a family winery which for more than two centuries has been devoted to producing and selling traditional young wines made by the carbonic maceration method. These were made in the Cueva de los Curas, an ancient cellar carved out of the ground and which still today forms part of the landscape of the area. However, it was not until 1970 when Luis Cañas first hit the market selling its young bottled wine which until then it had sold only in bulk.

In 2009, Juan Luis Cañas saw his dream come true, dedicating not just a wine but a whole winery to his mother. Amaren started as a new range of wines with its own independent facilities, this formula—setting up a winery as part of another one has been favored by Rioja producers as a way of embracing modernity.



The winery is located in Samaniego (Rioja Alavesa) and is surrounded by 65 hectares of vineyards aging between 35 years and 110 years old. Most of these plots have bush vines planted on clay-limestone slopes and terraces. The old vineyards achieve a perfect balance given their low production level, having very deep roots that offer the wines complexity, minerality, and personality as well as making them more resistant to drought.



Given the characteristics of the vineyard, all the work is done by hand and in some cases, with animal traction. All of the forms of treatment that are carried on the vineyard are restricted to minimally aggressive products and methods which include amongst others, the prohibition against the use of herbicides and the use of fertilizers that are always organic.

The purpose is to make use of a vineyard with a powerful defensive system that is capable of being defended from external threats with no need for artificial assistance to achieve complete respect for the land.

Juan Luis Cañas chooses to go back to the origins of his roots, and elaborate the wines in concrete tanks. The deposits that are currently used in the cellar are of small capacity (L 15,000), fully restored with epoxy resin, and a temperature control system. The concrete protects the wines from thermal shocks, allows a greater extraction of the fruit, and a natural stabilization for the wine. Concrete, stone, and wood, is the essence of Amaren.



DOURO VALLEY

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
WINE REGION IN THE
WORLD

Text & Photo

By Rupal Shankar (Syrah Queen)

Douro Valley, located in Northern Portugal is undoubtedly the most beautiful wine region in the world. It is a region that boasts breathtaking vineyards, which is further enhanced by the beauty of the majestic Douro River that meanders through the central heart of the valley. In addition to its jaw-dropping vistas, what makes Douro Valley special is its wine, people, cuisine and culture. This wine region has been making quite a name for itself, going from a primarily Port producing region, to making world-class dry wines.

Douro is the oldest demarcated wine region in the world, formed in 1756. It is also a UNESCO world heritage site, in recognition of its steep terraces, winding roads, and hand-built stone walls. Douro has a rich history of winemaking going back 2000 years. Winemakers have deep respect for tradition and history yet they embrace modern-day technology to create wines that are truly exceptional. Having spent extensive time in Douro on my recent visit, it was apparent that there is a fresh new culture of experimentation as the wines express creativity and innovation. It is a region where tradition and modernity reside side by side. An old world wine region making new world wines.

The most famous wines of the Douro Valley are Port wines, but today Douro is not just known for its Ports, but also for red, white, rosé and sparkling wines. The landscape and terroir allow them to produce world-class wines.

The soils are some of the most infertile soils you can get, whereby vines really struggle to produce fruit. The soils are comprised of schist and granite. In a region where rainfall is scarce schist soils are ideal for grape growing. Schist holds water, thus allowing roots to dig deep and in turn produce rich, concentrated wines with nice minerality. The topography is represented in their wines, as the wines are big, bold and powerful. Due to its long wine growing history many of the vines were planted decades ago, some being 60 to 100 years old.

Douro wines can be characterized as mountain wines yet they vary greatly in style due to a range of micro climates, soils, terrior, altitude and aspect. There is a wine sure to please every palate. The hillside is steeply sloped with vines facing east, west, north, and south. In addition the styles of wines can differ dramatically if planted at the bottom of the slope near the river or at a higher altitude. Each plot of vines has its own identity and personality, and thus the wines of Douro are reflective of where they come from and have a distinct sense of place.

What is unique about the Douro Valley, are its grape varieties. Many wine growing regions have succumbed to the popularity of traditional grape varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Chardonnay. The Douro Valley has stayed true to its tradition and with deep respect for its history, it continues to make wines from local indigenous grapes. Touriga Nacional is the star grape, and often blended with other varieties. Tinta Roriz, Touriga Franca, Touriga Nacional, Tinta Barroca and Tinto Cão and Sousão are widely planted reds. The top white grapes are Gouveio, Malvasia Fina, Moscatel, Rabigato and Viosinho. The Douro is also making some phenomenal dry white wines.





One of the reasons to visit Douro is the beauty of its landscape

One of the reasons to visit Douro is the beauty of its landscape, but the beauty of its people stood out to me just as equally. As guardians of this majestic valley, the people are humble, generous, warm, caring and most welcoming. The people of the Douro Valley are genuine and have great passion for their wine and the history of the region. Throughout my visit I was greatly touched by the small gestures of the winemakers and most notably our hosts Rita and Pedro who made our stay the most comfortable and special. I was invited as a journalist, but left as a friend. Many late nights were spent laughing with Douro wine in hand, all the while listening to exciting tales and magical stories of the customs and traditions of the region. The friends you make in Douro will make you feel like you have found a second home, they will make you want to come back to Douro over and over and over.

During my seven-day journey through the Douro Valley I came across wines that had tremendous complexity, that were well-balanced, and had smooth silky tannins. I was blown away with the value proposition. Many Douro wines are in \$8 to \$20 range, which is astonishing as the steep terraces and elevation all require hand harvesting, making the grapes of Douro some of the most expensive in the world.

The wines of Douro have a phenomenal future. These are exciting times for Douro winemakers and Douro wine lovers; there is a deluge of high quality wines coming from valley. If you like wines that are complex, balanced, and expressive, then you need to explore the wines of the Douro Valley. It is not just enough to drink the wines of Douro, a visit to the region to experience the Portuguese wines, culture, history, cuisine, landscapes and people are a must. And if you are like me, you too will leave your heart in Douro.