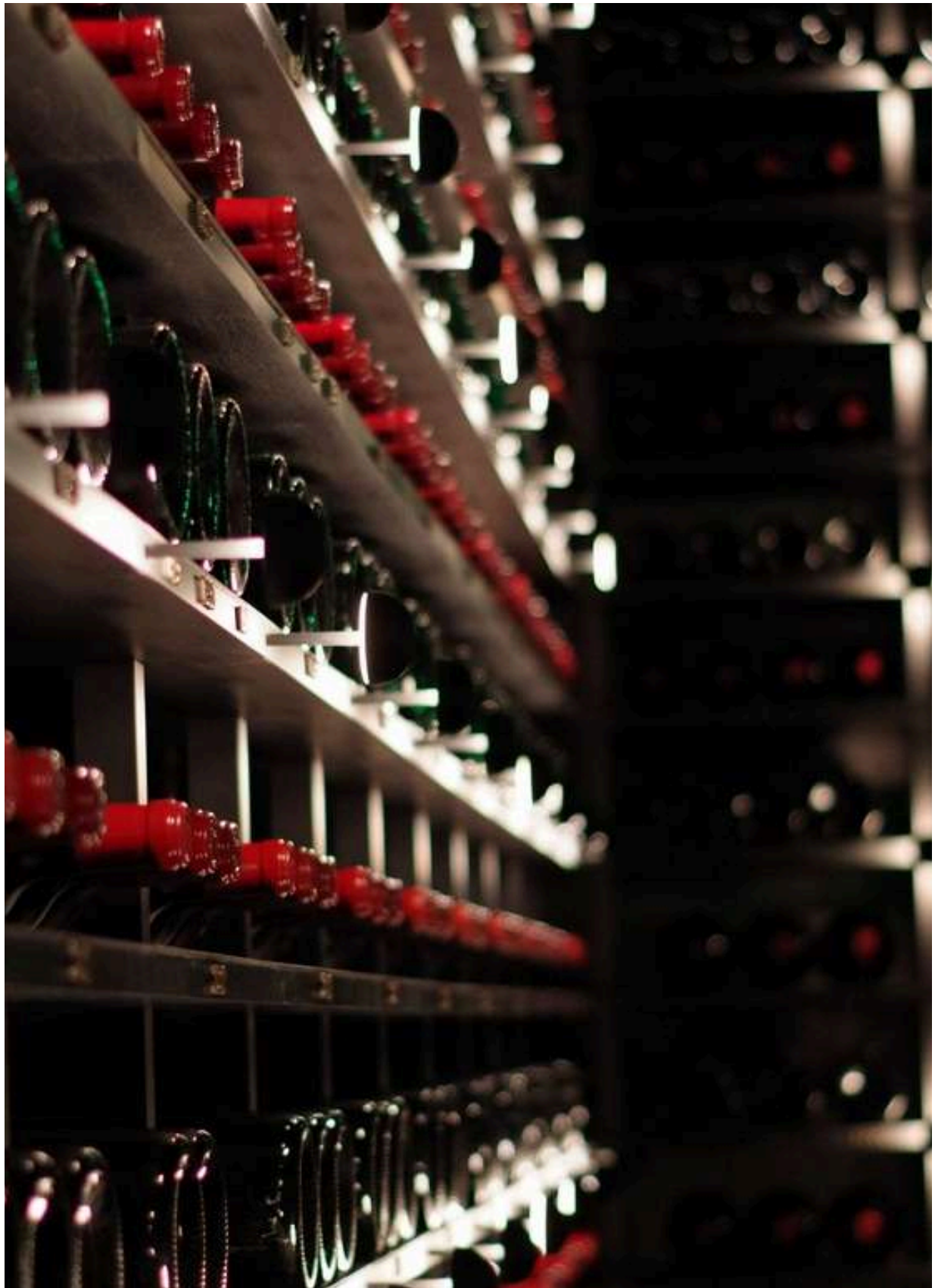


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WINE TOURISM
— MAG —

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CONTENTS

04

EDITOR'S NOTE

05

HERMITAGE

10

BUCKET LIST HOTELS

12

COSTA DAURADA AND
COSTA BRAVA

18

ALTO ADIGE

25

TEMECULA

29

CRAIG HOSBACH

30

JEAN DOMINIQUE
VACHERON

31

KINOÜ CAZES-HACHEMIAN

EDITOR'S NOTE

WINE TOURISM IN EUROPE VS. THE USA

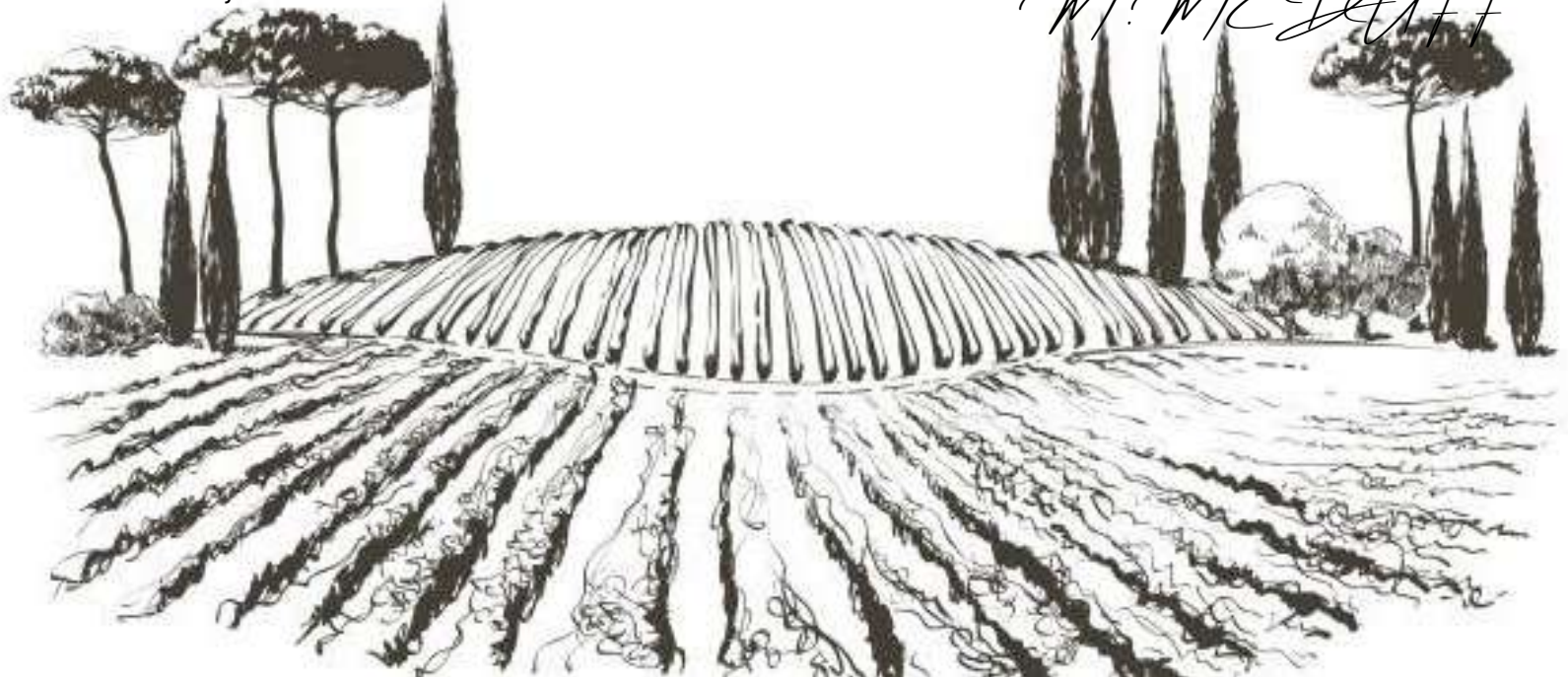
Wine tourism is a thriving industry on both sides of the Atlantic, yet the experiences in Europe and the USA offer distinct charms, shaped by history, culture, and geography.

In Europe, wine regions are steeped in tradition, with centuries-old châteaux, family-run estates, and vineyards that trace their lineage back to Roman times. Visitors to Bordeaux, Tuscany, or the Douro Valley are immersed in a deep cultural narrative, where wine is not merely a product but a way of life. Tasting experiences often take place in historic cellars, with winemakers whose knowledge has been passed down through generations. Regulations and strict appellation systems preserve authenticity but sometimes limit innovation in the visitor experience. European wine tourism often leans toward slow travel—extended stays, culinary pairings, and a strong connection to regional heritage. Notable destinations such as Mas Latour Lavail in Roussillon, Monverde Wine Experience Hotel in Portugal, and Château de l'Hospitalet in Languedoc offer immersive stays that blend wine, gastronomy, and luxury.

In contrast, the USA, particularly Napa Valley, Sonoma, and Oregon's Willamette Valley, embraces a more modern, dynamic approach to wine tourism. American wineries prioritize hospitality, offering curated tastings, vineyard tours by ATV, and even blending workshops. The focus is on accessibility, with many wineries welcoming newcomers with open arms rather than expecting prior knowledge. The relative youth of American wine regions allows for more experimentation, with wineries frequently blending tradition with innovation to create unique visitor experiences. The emphasis is often on the consumer journey, with high-end tasting rooms, direct-to-consumer sales, and a strong influence of food and wine pairings designed for contemporary palates. In the Finger Lakes, the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel provides an excellent base to explore the region's vibrant wine scene, complementing the lakeside charm with refined hospitality.

Both continents excel in offering immersive wine tourism, yet their approaches reflect their histories: Europe's deep-rooted traditions versus America's innovative and experiential focus. For travelers, the choice comes down to preference—whether they seek the charm of the old world or the excitement of the new.

M. McDevitt





HERMITAGE

UNIQUENESS OF PLACE

HERMITAGE HILL

Article By Joanie Metivier

IN THE WORLD OF FINE WINE, FEW PLACES CARRY THE PRESTIGE AND MYSTIQUE OF HERMITAGE HILL. RISING ABOVE THE RHÔNE RIVER IN SOUTHEASTERN FRANCE, THIS REVERED SLOPE HAS CAPTIVATED WINE LOVERS FOR CENTURIES.

IT IS A PLACE WHERE HISTORY, CLIMATE, AND GEOLOGY CONVERGE TO CREATE SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL AND ELEGANT SYRAHS. BEYOND ITS REMARKABLE WINES, HERMITAGE IS A PILGRIMAGE SITE FOR THOSE WHO SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THE PROFOUND INFLUENCE OF PLACE IN WINEMAKING.

THE STORY OF HERMITAGE HILL IS AS RICH AS THE WINES IT PRODUCES. THE NAME ITSELF DERIVES FROM A 13TH-CENTURY LEGEND: A KNIGHT, GASPARD DE STÉRIMBERG, RETURNED FROM THE CRUSADES AND SOUGHT REFUGE ON THE HILL, LIVING AS A HERMIT. WHILE HIS SPIRITUAL RETREAT GAVE THE HILL ITS NAME, THE VINEYARDS OF HERMITAGE PREDATE HIS ARRIVAL BY CENTURIES. THE ROMANS WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO CULTIVATE VINES HERE, RECOGNIZING THE EXCEPTIONAL POTENTIAL OF THE TERROIR. OVER TIME, THE WINES OF HERMITAGE GAINED LEGENDARY STATUS, GRACING THE TABLES OF EUROPEAN ROYALTY AND BECOMING ONE OF THE BENCHMARKS FOR FINE WINE. THOMAS JEFFERSON HIMSELF WAS AN ADMIRER, FURTHER SOLIDIFYING ITS PLACE AMONG THE WORLD'S ELITE VINEYARDS.



WHERE

the

SUN

SHINES

THE MOST

THE UNIQUE CLIMATE AND SOILS OF HERMITAGE

One of the most defining characteristics of Hermitage Hill is its dramatic topography. The vineyard slopes, which range from 130 to 350 meters above sea level, are composed of a complex mosaic of soils. The western section, known as Les Bessards, is dominated by granite, giving wines structure and longevity.

Further east, areas like Le Méal and L'Hermitte feature limestone, clay, and glacial deposits, which contribute to the finesse and richness of the wines. This diversity within a relatively small area is what allows Hermitage Syrah to express such layered complexity.

The Rhône River plays a crucial role in moderating the climate, reflecting sunlight and mitigating extreme temperatures. The Mistral wind, a hallmark of the Rhône Valley, sweeps through the vineyard, ensuring dry, disease-free conditions and intensifying the character of the grapes.

SUNLIGHT'S GIFT: THE ASPECT OF HERMITAGE

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Hermitage is its south-facing aspect, which allows it to bask in sunlight from dawn until dusk. Unlike many vineyards that struggle with shading at certain times of the day, Hermitage benefits from continuous sun exposure.

This extended ripening period allows the Syrah grapes to develop deep concentration while retaining the acidity that gives the wines their precision and longevity.

This unique solar advantage, combined with the rocky soils that radiate warmth even after sunset, contributes to the legendary power and depth of Hermitage wines. In cooler vintages, this can make all the difference, ensuring that the grapes reach perfect maturity while maintaining balance.

GUARDIANS OF THE HILL: LEGENDARY PRODUCERS

The custodians of Hermitage are among the most revered names in French winemaking. Domaine Jean-Louis Chave, whose family has been tending these vineyards for over five centuries, produces some of the most sought-after wines from the hill. Their meticulous blending of different lieux-dits captures the full spectrum of Hermitage's terroir.

Paul Jaboulet Aîné, another historic estate, is synonymous with La Chapelle, named after the small chapel at the summit of the hill. This cuvée has become one of the most iconic expressions of Syrah in the world, known for its aging potential and complexity.

Maison M. Chapoutier, a champion of biodynamic viticulture, owns several prime parcels across the hill, producing single-vineyard wines that highlight the individual nuances of Hermitage's terroir. Their rigorous approach to terroir expression and minimal intervention winemaking has elevated their wines to international acclaim.

Guigal, although more famous for their Côte-Rôtie wines, also owns prime land in Hermitage, crafting wines that showcase the hill's extraordinary concentration and depth.



A LIVING MONUMENT TO TERROIR

Hermitage Hill stands as a living testament to the power of place in winemaking. With its storied past, extraordinary terroir, and devoted vignerons, it continues to produce some of the world's most profound wines. For those who seek a deeper understanding of Syrah and the nuances of terroir, a visit to this hallowed ground is not just a journey—it is a revelation.



BUCKET LIST

HOTELS

By Michael Meduff

FOR THOSE WHO DREAM OF WAKING UP TO ROLLING VINEYARDS, SIPPING WORLD-CLASS WINES STEPS FROM THEIR SUITE, AND IMMERSING THEMSELVES IN THE ESSENCE OF WINE COUNTRY, A STAY AT AN IMMERSIVE AND QUALITY HOTEL IS THE ULTIMATE LUXURY. WHETHER IT'S A HISTORIC CHÂTEAU IN BORDEAUX, A SLEEK MODERN RETREAT IN NAPA, OR A RUSTIC ESTATE IN TUSCANY, THESE HOTELS OFFER MORE THAN JUST A PLACE TO SLEEP—THEY PROVIDE AN EXPERIENCE STEEPED IN TERROIR, GASTRONOMY, AND THE ROMANCE OF WINEMAKING.

If you're into wine and find yourself in the Finger Lakes, Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel is a solid home base. It's right on Seneca Lake, so you're minutes away from some of the best producers in the region—Dr. Konstantin Frank, Hermann J. Wiemer, and Glenora, to name a few. The drive alone, winding past vineyards, sets the mood.

The hotel itself is comfortable, well-run, with a great location. The bar and restaurant, Blue Pointe Grille, actually take local wine seriously—plenty of Finger Lakes Riesling, Cabernet Franc, and some nice sparkling options. The staff knows their stuff and won't push a mass-market pick when a great local bottle is right there.

One of my favorite moments? Sitting by the outdoor fire pit with a glass of single-vineyard Riesling, watching the lake catch the last light of the day. It's the kind of place that makes you slow down and actually appreciate where you are. If you're in the area to explore wine, this hotel won't disappoint—it lets the region speak for itself.



If you appreciate wine and history, Mas Latour Lavail is a stay worth considering. Tucked away just outside Perpignan, this beautifully restored 16th-century estate blends old-world charm with modern comfort. More importantly, it puts you right in the heart of Roussillon's wine country, where Grenache, Mourvèdre, and Carignan shine.

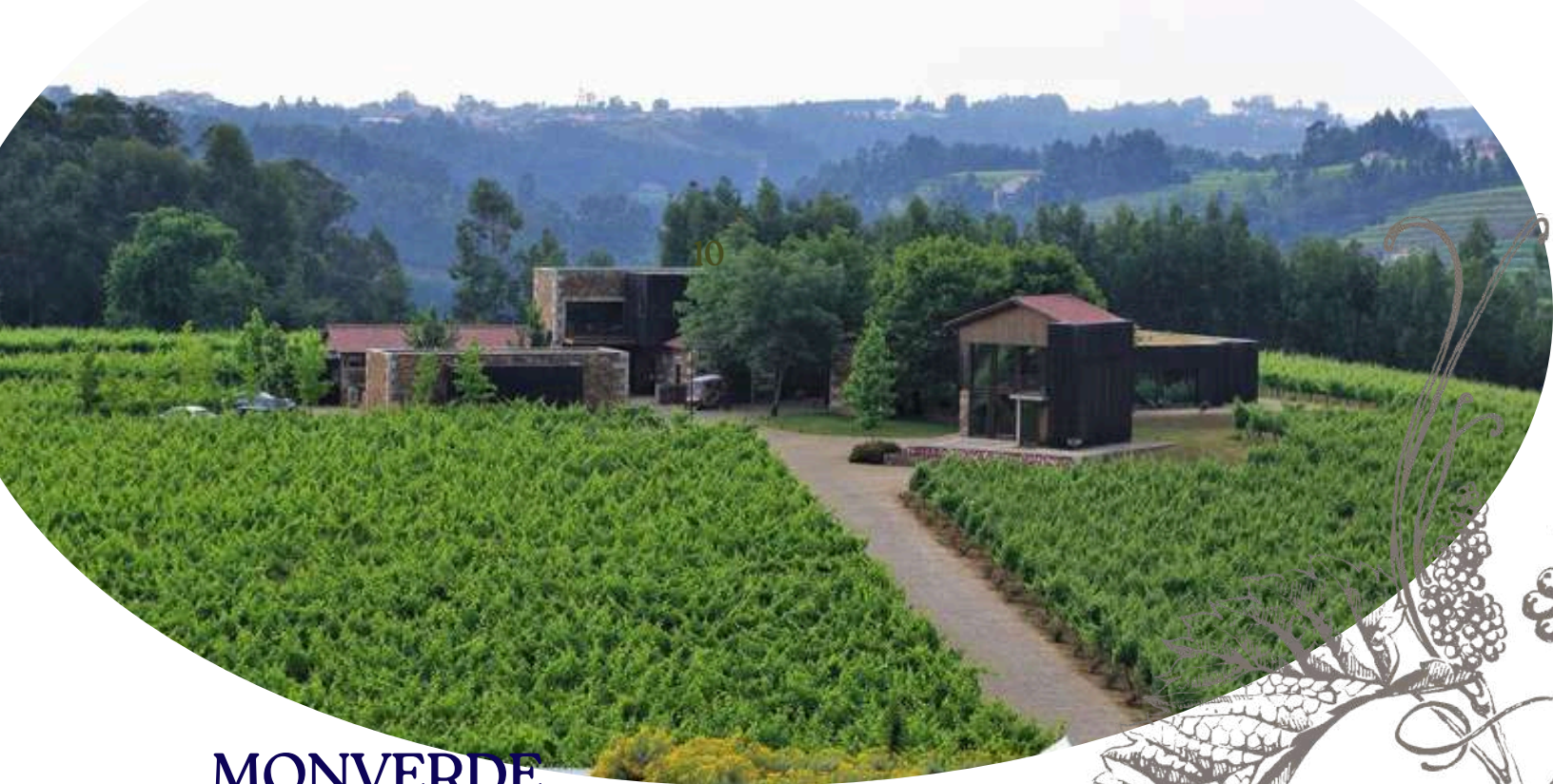
The rooms are spacious, with exposed beams and stone walls that remind you this place has stories to tell. It feels intimate, more like staying at a winemaker's estate than a hotel. There's no on-site restaurant, but with so many fantastic wineries and local bistros nearby, that's hardly a downside.

One of the highlights? Sitting by the pool with a glass of Banyuls, the region's famed sweet wine, as the sun sets over the vineyards. It's the perfect intimate, quiet retreat in wine country for you to feel privileged and like an estate owner.



WATKINS GLEN
HARBOR HOTEL

MAS LATOUR
LAVAIL



MONVERDE

If you love wine and want to immerse yourself in it, Monverde Wine Experience Hotel in Portugal's Vinho Verde region is a perfect retreat. Nestled among rolling vineyards, this boutique hotel is all about showcasing the region's unique wines—crisp, aromatic Loureiro, refreshing Alvarinho, and the vibrant, slightly effervescent styles that define Vinho Verde in Portugal.

The rooms blend rustic charm with modern comfort, many offering vineyard views that make it tempting to just sit back with a glass and take it all in. The on-site winery and tasting room are the real highlights. You can tour the vineyards, join a blending session, or simply relax with a bottle from Quinta da Lixa, the estate's own producer.

Dinner at the hotel's restaurant is a must—the kitchen does an excellent job pairing local dishes with the region's wines, making for a thoughtful, well-executed experience. Monverde is the classiest way to enjoy a mix of luxury and passion.

CHÂTEAU DE L'HÔSPITALET

If you appreciate wine and a sense of place, Château de l'Hospitalet in Languedoc is an experience worth having. Set in the heart of Gérard Bertrand's vineyards, this estate-hotel is more than just a stay—it's an immersion into the bold, sun-soaked wines of the region. Surrounded by rolling vines and the Mediterranean breeze.

The rooms are elegant yet understated, with vineyard views that remind you why you're here. Wine is woven into every part of the experience, from the guided tastings at the cellar door to the well-curated selection at the restaurant. The food is excellent—thoughtfully paired with Bertrand's biodynamic wines, from crisp Picpoul to deep, structured La Clape reds.

One of the best moments? Sitting outside in the late afternoon with a glass of Château l'Hospitalet Grand Vin Rouge, the scent of garrigue in the air, and nothing to do but enjoy the rhythm of wine country. Whether you're here for a tasting weekend, the Jazz à l'Hospitalet festival, or just a quiet escape, this place delivers everything a wine lover could ask for.





CLAUDE LALONDE

HIGH-END WINE TOURISM IN CATALONIA

COSTA DAURADA AND COSTA BRAVA



I just returned from an absolutely extraordinary trip to Spain, specifically to Catalonia, at the invitation of the region's Tourism Board. It was a press trip focused exclusively on wine tourism, covering the two main regions: Costa Daurada (south of Barcelona) and Costa Brava (north of Barcelona). To give you an idea of the distance traveled, there are approximately 300 kilometers between the southernmost town I visited (Torroja del Priorat) and the northernmost (Cadaqués).

Everyone knows Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, but are you familiar with the Costa Brava, Costa Barcelona, Costa Daurada, and Terres de l'Ebre? Catalonia, with the Pyrenees in the north reaching peaks of 3,000 meters, offers a stunning diversity of landscapes—from Cap de Creus on the Costa Brava to the Val d'Aran.

When it comes to wine, Catalonia certifies the quality of its wines and structures its wine tourism offerings around twelve Denominations of Origin (DO): DO Alella, DO Conca de Barberà, DO Costers del Segre, DO Empordà, DO Montsant, DO Penedès, DO Pla de Bages, DOCa Priorat, DO Tarragona, and DO Terra Alta, in addition to DO Cava and DO Catalunya.

Catalonia boasts 300 wineries to visit, 100 producers to discover, over a thousand gastronomic experiences, and 180 wine and food events.

As for wine tourism routes in Catalonia, key options include the Priorat Wine Route (DOCa Priorat and Montsant), the Lleida-Costers del Segre Wine Route, the DO Empordà Wine Route, the DO Bages Wine Route, Penedès Wine Tourism, DO Alella Wine Tourism, the DO Terra Alta Wine Route, the Trepà Route (DO Conca de Barberà), and the DO Tarragona Wine Route.

Our journey began in Barcelona and the Costa Daurada.



COSTA DAURADA

THE COSTA DAURADA STANDS OUT FOR HAVING SOME OF SPAIN'S FINEST WINE APPELLATIONS, INCLUDING DO MONTSANT AND DOCA PRIORAT, WHERE GARNACHA (GRENACHE) AND CARINYENA (CARIGNAN) DOMINATE, PRODUCING SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST HIGHLY REGARDED WINES. IN ADDITION, THE REGION IS HOME TO THE WINES AND CAVAS OF DO TARRAGONA, DO Penedès, DO CONCA DE BARBERÀ, DO CATALUNYA, AND DO CAVA.

BEYOND ITS WINES, THE COSTA DAURADA BOASTS 81 KILOMETERS OF COASTLINE WITH 60 GOLDEN SANDY BEACHES, FORMING THE MARITIME FRONT OF THIS REGION, WHICH INCLUDES BAIX Penedès, TARRAGONÈS, BAIX CAMP, ALT CAMP, CONCA DE BARBERÀ, AND PRIORAT.

WITH ITS EXCEPTIONAL WINES AND STUNNING COASTAL BEAUTY, THE COSTA DAURADA IS AN UNMISSABLE DESTINATION.



MÉRIDIEN RA BEACH & RESORT - EL VENDRELL

WE LEFT BARCELONA AND DROVE ABOUT AN HOUR TO EL VENDRELL, WHERE WE STAYED AT THE LE MÉRIDIEN RA BEACH HOTEL & SPA, LOCATED ON THE COSTA DAURADA. THIS LUXURIOUS RETREAT SITS ALONG THE GOLDEN SANDS OF SANT SALVADOR BEACH. A 5-STAR HOTEL AND SPA, IT OFFERS BREATHTAKING SEA VIEWS AND DIRECT BEACH ACCESS.

GUESTS CAN INDULGE IN WORLD-CLASS SPA TREATMENTS, SAVOR CATALAN CUISINE AT VARIOUS RESTAURANTS, OR EXPLORE THE NEARBY Penedès WINE REGION.

AND THE ROOMS? EXCEPTIONALLY SPACIOUS, WITH MANY FEATURING BALCONIES OVERLOOKING THE MEDITERRANEAN, OFFERING AN UNFORGETTABLE STAY.



AUGUSTUS FORUM CELLAR

RIGHT NEXT TO LE MÉRIDIEN IN EL VENDRELL IS VINEYARD AUGUSTUS FORUM, WHICH WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF VISITING. THIS ESTATE IS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF SPAIN'S TOP PRODUCERS, NOT ONLY FOR ITS BALSAMIC VINEGAR BUT ALSO FOR ITS STILL WINES.

ON 25 HECTARES OF ORGANIC VINEYARDS, THEY PRODUCE 100,000 BOTTLES OF WINE FROM BOTH INDIGENOUS AND INTERNATIONAL GRAPE VARIETIES. WE HAD THE CHANCE TO TASTE THEIR BALSAMIC VINEGARS, INCLUDING A 30-YEAR-OLD VERSION THAT COMPLETELY CHANGED MY PERCEPTION OF THIS PRODUCT, AS WELL AS THEIR STILL WINES UNDER THE AUGUSTUS LABEL.

THE MALVASIA DE SITGES, THE ROSÉ PRIMER ROAST, AND THE GARNATXA NEGRA WERE BURSTING WITH FLAVOR AND HAD AN ASTONISHING DEPTH. TRULY UNFORGETTABLE!



CASA VERMOUTH PADRO

– BRAFIM

AFTER OUR VISIT TO VINEYARD AUGUSTUS FORUM, WE HEADED TO A GASTRONOMIC HOTSPOT—THE GRAN CLAUSTRE HOTEL AND ITS BRUIXES DE BURRIAC RESTAURANT, LOCATED IN THE CHARMING MEDIEVAL VILLAGE OF ALTAFULLA, IN THE HEART OF THE “VILA CLOSA”. JUST 25 MINUTES FROM LE MÉRIDIEN AND AUGUSTUS FORUM, THIS DESTINATION OFFERED US AN EXCEPTIONAL CULINARY EXPERIENCE.

A MYRIAD OF CATALAN-INSPIRED DISHES TEMPTED OUR PALATES, ALL SERVED BY AN INCREDIBLY ATTENTIVE STAFF. THE RESTAURANT, LED BY JAUME DRUDIS, HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR AS A “RECOMMENDED RESTAURANT” BY THE MICHELIN GUIDE AND THE REPSOL GUIDE, SOLIDIFYING ITS REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE.

PERINET WINERY – PRIORAT

WHAT A WONDERFUL AND ENGAGING ENCOUNTER WITH SHERI PERRICONE, CEO, AND TONY ORTIZ, THE EXTRAORDINARY WINEMAKER, AT THEIR VINEYARD IN PRIORAT, WHERE THEY’VE BEEN CRAFTING BOLD AND CHARACTER-DRIVEN RED WINES SINCE 1998.

ALL THE GRAPES ARE HARVESTED BY HAND UNDER CHALLENGING CONDITIONS ON STEEP SLOPES AT ALTITUDES REACHING 400 METERS. THE GRAPES ARE THEN PLACED IN TANKS WITHOUT BEING PRESSED AND UNDERGO A SEMI-CARBONIC MACERATION. WE EVEN GOT TO TRY OUR HAND AT CAP PUNCHING—DEFINITELY A TASK THAT REQUIRES STRONG ARMS!

WE THEN MOVED ON TO BARREL AND FERMENTATION TANK TASTINGS, INCLUDING A CABERNET WITH IMPRESSIVE DEPTH, A 2023 SYRAH/GRENACHE BLEND BURSTING WITH INVITING SPICE AROMAS, AND A JOYFUL 2023 GRENACHE. WE ALSO TASTED A 100% CABERNET AGED IN FRENCH OAK BARRELS.

AFTERWARD, WE ENJOYED A PROPER TASTING LINEUP (MORE DETAILED NOTES TO FOLLOW SOON) FEATURING THE PERINET ROSÉ 2022, PERINET PENDENTS CARINYENA 2017, PERINET 1194, AND PERINET RANCI.



VINYES DOMÈNECH – D.O. MONTSANT

ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES AWAY, WE ARRIVED AT VINYES DOMÈNECH, LOCATED IN CAPÇANES WITHIN THE D.O. MONTSANT APPELLATION. IT'S WORTH NOTING THAT IN JUNE 2019, THE D.O. MONTSANT AWARDED VINYES DOMÈNECH THE TITLE OF BEST VINEYARD – WINEGROWER OF THE YEAR.

THERE ARE SOME ENCOUNTERS THAT LEAVE A LASTING IMPRESSION—A FEELING OF WHOLENESS AND INSPIRATION. MEETING JUAN IGNACIO DOMÈNECH, THE WINEMAKER, WAS EXACTLY THAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE. SURROUNDED BY HIS 130-HECTARE ESTATE, AN AMPHITHEATER OF NATURE ENVELOPS THE ENTIRE VINEYARD, CREATING A MAJESTIC ATMOSPHERE THAT SUBTLY INFLUENCES THE WINES.

HIS PHILOSOPHY OF ORGANIC VITICULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE FARMING ALLOWS HIM TO CRAFT STUNNING WINES, PARTICULARLY FROM HIS OLD-VINE GRENACHE. EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, AROMATIC HERBS AND THOUGHTFULLY PLANTED VEGETATION FORM A COMPLEX ECOSYSTEM INVOLVING THE LAND, INSECTS, AND LOCAL WILDLIFE. EVEN DURING TASTINGS, JUAN CONSTANTLY REFERS BACK TO THESE AROMATIC HERBS, AS THEY ARE TRULY INTEGRAL TO HIS WINES' IDENTITY.

WE THOROUGHLY ENJOYED HIS ROSAT DE MITJANIT (GRENACHE PELUDA ROSÉ), A WINE OF DELIGHTFUL DELICACY; THE RITA, A 100% WHITE GRENACHE BURSTING WITH FLORAL AND ORCHARD FRUIT NOTES; THE TEIXAR (GRENACHE PELUDA), A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY 2020 CUVÉE CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF THE ESTATE, WHICH SHOWED REMARKABLE DEPTH OF AROMA AND FLAVOR; AND FINALLY, THE VINYES VELLES DE SAMSÓ, MADE FROM OLD-VINE CARIGNAN.

THESE WINES TRULY CAPTURED MY IMAGINATION WITH THEIR BALANCE AND FRESHNESS—EVEN AT ALCOHOL LEVELS REACHING 15.5%. IT'S TRULY NOTABLE TO MEET A WINEMAKER WHO CELEBRATES BOTH HIS TERROIR AND NATIVE GRAPE VARIETIES WITH SUCH MASTERY OF EQUILIBRIUM IN HIS WINES. HERE'S HOPING JUAN'S WINES FIND THEIR WAY TO QUÉBEC SOON... STAY TUNED!



COSTA BRAVA

COSTA BRAVA STANDS OUT ON THE WINE MAP THANKS TO THE D.O. EMPORDÀ–COSTA BRAVA. THIS WINE-PRODUCING REGION, LOCATED IN THE NORTHEASTERNMOST PART OF CATALONIA, ENCOMPASSES 55 MUNICIPALITIES ACROSS TWO DISTRICTS. EMPORDÀ IS DIVIDED INTO TWO DISTINCT GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS: ALT EMPORDÀ, WITH 35 MUNICIPALITIES, AND BAIX EMPORDÀ, WITH 20.

THE REGION PRODUCES A WIDE ARRAY OF WINES, WITH TWO LOCAL SPECIALTIES TAKING CENTER STAGE: GARNATXA DE L'EMPORDÀ AND MOSCATELL DE L'EMPORDÀ. THE D.O. INCLUDES 30 WINERIES OPEN TO VISITORS, ABOUT 20 WINE BARS, AND 28 WINE-GROWING VILLAGES THAT OFFER A TRUE IMMERSION INTO THE REGION'S RICH WINE CULTURE.

AND THEN THERE'S GIRONA, A HIDDEN GEM OF THE MEDITERRANEAN! NESTLED NEAR THE PYRENEES, IT OFFERS THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE TWO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT WORLDS—THE VIBRANT ENERGY OF THE CITY AND THE PEACEFUL BEAUTY OF THE MOUNTAINS. GIRONA IS THE CAPITAL OF THE PROVINCE THAT SHARES ITS NAME, AND WITH A POPULATION OF AROUND 75,000, LIFE HERE MOVES AT A MORE RELAXED PACE THAN IN BUSTLING BARCELONA.

PERELADA WINERY

PERELADA ESTATE IS LOCATED JUST 25 MINUTES FROM THE RUINS OF EMPÚRIES. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST RENOWNED PRODUCERS OF WINES AND CAVAS IN CATALONIA. THE ESTATE PRODUCES STILL WINES WITHIN THE D.O. EMPORDÀ, AS WELL AS CAVAS FROM VINEYARDS SITUATED IN VILAFRANCA DEL PENEDÈS AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS. THE WINERY IS PART OF THE PERALADA SPA & RESORT, MAKING IT EASY TO VISIT THE WINERY DIRECTLY FROM THE HOTEL.

THE ESTATE CONSISTS OF FIVE VINEYARDS WITHIN THE D.O. EMPORDÀ APPELLATION: PONT DE MOLINS WITH 38 HECTARES OF VINES, MALAVEINA WITH 19 HECTARES, LA GARRIGA WITH 41 HECTARES, GARBET WITH 12 HECTARES, AND ESPOLLA WITH 21 HECTARES. THE NEW PERELADA WINERY IS NOT ONLY UNIQUE IN ITS ARCHITECTURE BUT ALSO A PIONEER IN SUSTAINABILITY, BEING THE FIRST WINERY IN EUROPE TO RECEIVE THE LEED® GOLD CERTIFICATION.



ESPELT VITICULTORS DE L'EMPORDÀ



LA VINYETA

WE MET JOSEP SERRA, THE OWNER OF THE VINEYARD, ALONG WITH HIS WIFE. TOGETHER, THEY ESTABLISHED THE VINEYARD IN 2002 WHEN THEY WERE BOTH VERY YOUNG AND HAD NO PRIOR EXPERIENCE, ASIDE FROM THEIR STUDIES IN AGRONOMY. INITIALLY, THE VINEYARD COVERED JUST 4 HECTARES. IT WAS ONLY LATER THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL NEIGHBORING PLOTS. IT WASN'T UNTIL AROUND 2006 THAT THEY BEGAN PRODUCING WINE.

TODAY, THE VINEYARD SPANS 90 HECTARES, IS ORGANICALLY FARMED, AND PRODUCES AROUND 250,000 BOTTLES ANNUALLY. THEY ALSO RAISE ABOUT 400 CHICKENS, KEEP SHEEP, CULTIVATE OLIVE TREES, AND FOLLOW A SUSTAINABLE, INTEGRATED APPROACH THAT INCLUDES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, SOUND WATER MANAGEMENT. THE ESTATE WAS NAMED VINEYARD OF THE YEAR IN 2018 BY THE CATALAN SOMMELIER ASSOCIATION.

THE VINEYARD IS LOCATED ALMOST AT THE HEART OF THE EMPORDÀ APPELLATION, IN MOLLET DE PERALADA, AND IS ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES AWAY FROM ESPELT VITICULTORS.

ANNA ESPELT IS A PASSIONATE FEMALE WINEMAKER AND INFLUENCER WHO, FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS, HAS BEEN CRAFTING ORGANIC WINES THAT TRANSCEND THE TERROIR OF EMPORDÀ AT HER ESTATE, CAP DE CRÈS, WHICH SPANS APPROXIMATELY 25 HECTARES. UNIQUELY, HER VINEYARDS ARE LOCATED FACING THE SEA WITHIN THE MAS MARÈS NATIONAL PARK. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE VIEW FROM THE VINEYARDS IS ABSOLUTELY BREATHTAKING! IT'S WELL WORTH THE VISIT. HER ESTATE IS ABOUT A TEN-MINUTE DRIVE FROM THE PERALADA RESORT.

AT HER ESTATE, SHE HAS CREATED A VARIETY OF ECOSYSTEMS THAT ENHANCE LIFE IN ALL ITS FORMS, INCLUDING THE LIFE OF THE WINE. THE VINEYARDS FEATURE GRAPE VARIETIES SUCH AS GRENACHE, CLAIRETTE (PICA POLLA), MOURVÈDRE, AND OTHERS. ANNA PRODUCES AROUND 200,000 BOTTLES ANNUALLY.

AS SHE PUTS IT SO WELL, IN ORDER FOR EMPORDÀ TO GAIN RECOGNITION, IT'S ESSENTIAL TO MAKE WINES THAT REFLECT THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. THE RIGHT GRAPE VARIETIES IN THE RIGHT ECOSYSTEM.



MY FRIENDS, WHAT AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY THROUGH COSTA DAURADA AND COSTA BRAVA! CATALUNYA IS SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST THE DAZZLING CITY OF BARCELONA—THOUGH IT'S BREATHTAKING, OF COURSE. BUT CATALUNYA OFFERS SO MUCH MORE! IT BOASTS OVER 300 WINERIES TO VISIT, 100 PRODUCERS TO DISCOVER, MORE THAN A THOUSAND GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCES, AND 180 FOOD AND WINE EVENTS.

WHEN IT COMES TO WINE TOURISM ROUTES IN CATALUNYA, THERE ARE SEVERAL TO EXPLORE: THE PRIORAT WINE ROUTE (DOQ PRIORAT AND MONTSANT), THE LLEIDA-COSTERS DEL SEGRE WINE ROUTE, THE DO EMPORDÀ WINE ROUTE, THE DO BAGES WINE ROUTE, PENEDÈS WINE TOURISM, THE DO ALELLA WINE ROUTE, THE DO TERRA ALTA WINE ROUTE, THE TREPAT ROUTE (DO CONCA DE BARBERÀ), AND THE DO TARRAGONA WINE ROUTE.

OUR JOURNEY LASTED SEVEN DAYS AND ALLOWED US TO EXPLORE THESE TWO MUST-VISIT REGIONS—COSTA DAURADA AND COSTA BRAVA.

WINE DESTINATION

ALTO ADIGE – STUNNING ALPINE SCENERY AND EXQUISITE WINES



ALTO ADIGE – BEAUTIFUL AND DIVERSE

ALTO ADIGE, ITALY'S NORTHERNMOST REGION AND ONE OF ITS SMALLEST, IS AN EXTRAORDINARILY BEAUTIFUL AND FASCINATING REGION WITH STUNNING MOUNTAIN SCENERY, GREEN VALLEYS, AND A RICH PATCHWORK OF VINES WHERE SOME OF ITALY'S MOST EXQUISITE WINES ARE MADE.

WHILE THE MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAINS OF THE DOLOMITES, A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE, FORM A PERMANENT BACKDROP, TOWERING TO AN ALTITUDE OVER 3000M, VINES GROW UP TO 1000M.ASL IN PICTURESQUE VALLEYS AND ON SUN-KISSED SLOPES. THE CLIMATE PROVIDES EXCELLENT CONDITIONS WITH CONSIDERABLE TEMPERATURE SWINGS, AROUND 300 DAYS OF SUNSHINE PER YEAR AND AN IMMENSE VARIETY OF TERRAINS INCLUDING LIMESTONE, PORPHYRY AND MARL.

ALTO ADIGE – A DESTINATION FOR ALL SEASONS

Alto Adige shares borders with Austria and Switzerland and three official languages are spoken (Italian, German and Ladin) which all contributes to a refreshing mix of cultures, cuisine, traditions and styles. The region is a true year-round destination with something to offer in every season and for every preference.

Winter is ideal for lovers of snowsports, with endless slopes suitable for all levels of expertise, from beginners to pros becoming a playground for snowboarders, downhill and cross-country skiers as well as for ski mountaineering, ski touring and the increasingly popular snowshoeing. But winter is also the time for Christmas markets and roaring fires in atmospheric mountain huts and cosy wine bars serving delicious specialities and local wines. Each year, the region's wine consortium organises wine-themed initiatives and tastings on the slopes and what better way to really get under the skin of Alto Adige.

When the snow melts and nature comes to life with fresh green springtime vegetation and the all-important bud break occurs in the vineyards, the mountains become the domain of hikers and bikers. The trails are particularly popular through the summer months when the season's grapes drink up the sunshine and work their way to full maturity.

Come autumn, the leaves take on their rich golden, yellow and red hues and vineyards and wineries become a hive of activity, with the excitement of the new harvest and anticipation of what this year's vintage will offer creating a buzz in the air. This is also the time of Törggelen, the annual tradition when farms and wineries usually closed to the public, open their doors to visitors for convivial occasions with grape juice and chestnuts as well as genuine home-made food and, of course, wine.



ALTO ADIGE - THE WINES

EVIDENCE HAS BEEN FOUND THAT WINE HAS BEEN MADE IN ALTO ADIGE FOR OVER 2,500 YEARS. NOWADAYS, WHITE VARIETIES DOMINATE THE SCENE AT A RATE OF 65%, WITH 35% RED. INTERNATIONAL GRAPES, PINOT GRIGIO AND CHARDONNAY, LEAD THE WAY AMONG THE WHITES, MAKING COMPLEX AND STRUCTURED WINES. GEWÜRZTRAMINER, THE INTENSELY AROMATIC TRADITIONAL GRAPE, IS ALSO WIDELY PRODUCED, ALTHOUGH REFRESHING PINOT BIANCO IS MORE FREQUENTLY CONSUMED AMONG THE LOCALS. SOME SUPERBLY EXPRESSIVE RIESLING AND SAUVIGNON BLANC IS ALSO MADE HERE, AND MOSCATO GIALLO, TYPICALLY MADE AS A SWEET PASSITO WINE, IS INCREASINGLY BEING PRODUCED IN INTRIGUING DRY VERSIONS.

WHEN IT COMES TO REDS, THE REGION'S NATIVE LAGREIN AND SCHIAVA DOMINATE THE SCENE, LAGREIN GIVING SMOOTH, VELVETY REDS WITH A DEEP PURPLISH COLOUR AND CHOCOLATEY, DARK FRUIT CHARACTER. THERE'S ALSO A TRADITIONAL ROSÉ VERSION OF LAGREIN, CALLED KRETZER, GENERALLY BRIGHT CHERRY PINK WITH FRESH FRUITY AROMAS THAT ARE BEST ENJOYED YOUNG. SCHIAVA REDS ARE DELICATE IN BOTH COLOUR AND STRUCTURE – THEY'RE GENERALLY LIGHT WINES WITH RED BERRY AROMAS AND ARE OFTEN SERVED SLIGHTLY CHILLED. OTHER REDS INCLUDE ELEGANT AND INTENSE PINOT NERO, A VARIETY ALSO GROWN HERE FOR SPARKLING WINES, ALONG WITH PINOT BIANCO AND CHARDONNAY. WHILE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE REGION'S WINES ARE STILL, THERE IS A GROWING INTEREST AMONG WINEMAKERS FOR ALTO ADIGE SPUMANTE. MANY PRODUCERS ARE NOWADAYS INVESTING IN FUNGUS-RESISTANT VARIETIES TOO, SUCH AS SOUVIGNIER GRIS AND SOLARIS, IN A MOVE TO REDUCE VINEYARD INTERVENTION IN AN EVER-CHANGING CLIMATE. RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IS DEEP-ROOTED IN EVERYDAY LIFE IN ALTO ADIGE, AND SUSTAINABILITY AND BIODIVERSITY ARE PRIORITIES IN THE WINE WORLD. THE REGIONAL WINE CONSORTIUM HAS ITS OWN 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND TEAMWORK IS A BYWORD.



ALTO ADIGE - THE WINERIES

While the majority of Alto Adige's 4800 wineries are small and family-run, often with charmingly rustic structures or stylish contemporary alpine architecture, some historic estates are based at stunning abbeys and castles. Guests are welcome almost everywhere, and producers are diversifying, often offering a variety of experiences, accommodation, or meals, and a visit to the wineries is an unforgettable way to gain a real insight into the local wine scene. The region's cooperatives should also not be overlooked – in recent years, the co-ops have been leading the way, making the most of their resources with pioneering research and new excellence.

ALTO ADIGE - THE WINE AREAS

Alto Adige currently produces less than 1% of Italy's wine and on average winegrowers have just one hectare under vine. It's a diamond tip of production however and 98% of the region's wines adhere to a DOC.

The region's wines are made in a roughly Y-shaped territory around the regional capital, Bolzano, and there are two separate denominations - Alto Adige DOC and Lago di Caldaro DOC - with altogether seven wine areas or subzones.

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LAGO DI CALDARO

While the DOC area is shared with the neighbouring Trentino region, the wines produced in Alto Adige can display the word 'Classico'. Lake Caldaro is a gorgeous, scenic spot surrounded by vineyards with its microclimate thanks to the lake's influence. Wine-themed events and initiatives are frequent, and there's a good selection of wine bars and wineries that welcome visitors. The fresh waters are inviting for a swim on hot summer days, and water sports facilities are available too. The principal variety in this area is Schiava for reds that are highly drinkable, fruity, and fresh.

SANTA MADDALENA

The slopes just north of Bolzano are home to the small Santa Maddalena subzone, and the vineyards can be reached by following the St. Oswald footpath from the city. It's one of the sunniest spots of the region and has some of the oldest vines, often traditionally pergola-trained, making for a scenic landscape. Santa Maddalena wines, Schiava-based reds with a slender and fragrant elegance, are highly contemporary and extremely versatile. Schiava is a family of varieties including Schiava Grossa, Schiava Gentile, and Schiava Grigia, all three of which are permitted for Santa Maddalena wines, and a classic pairing is a glass or two with a platter of Speck.

VALLE ISARCO

Enjoying a decidedly cooler climate than the other subzones, the 80 km-long Isarco river valley to the northeast of the region stretches from the attractive cathedral city of Bressanone in the north to Bolzano in the south. Thanks to its climate and extreme temperature swings, this is one of Italy's prime areas for elegant and characterful white wines. The fresh and fragrant Sylvaner leads the way alongside some excellent versions of other varieties – Veltliner, Kerner, Pinot Grigio, Gewürztraminer, Riesling and Müller Thurgau are all made here too.

TERLANO

Besides wine, this part of the Adige river valley west of Bolzano is celebrated for its many apple orchards and even more so for its fragrant asparagus. April is the perfect time to visit when the apple trees blossom and fresh asparagus is abundant – asparagus tours and events are also organised. The Terlano subzone allows for exclusively white wines - the local Sauvignon Blanc is a classic pairing for asparagus-based dishes. When no grape variety is mentioned on the label, the wine must be made of at least 50% Pinot Bianco and/or Chardonnay.

MERANESE

This area is around the historic town of Merano, known for its elegant architecture and for its spa with indoor and outdoor pools of natural thermal waters. It's also the location for the prestigious international Merano Wine Festival held each November and home to several top restaurants. While Meranese subzone wines are spicy and fresh Schiava-based reds, with up to 15% of other varieties permitted, the area also produces rich, fruit-filled Lagrein and some fine Pinot Nero in addition to the region's principal white varieties.

VAL VENOSTA

This subzone in the north western part of Alto Adige's wine-producing area enjoys dramatic day-to-night temperature swings which contributes to the intense aromas of the wines. A number of grape varieties are permitted for Val Venosta subzone wines and the variety must always be mentioned on the label. Riesling is a particular local star, together with Pinot Bianco – the region's go-to white – and Kerner, Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Müller Thurgau and Gewürztraminer for the whites plus Schiava and Pinot Nero reds. Val Venosta is an ideal spot for lovers of outdoor sports.

COLLI DI BOLZANO

This area of hills surrounding the region's capital, Bolzano, forms a kind of embrace around the adjacent Santa Maddalena subzone, and here too, the subzone wines are fragrant reds made with Schiava grapes. Bolzano itself is a fascinating place, where Germanic and Mediterranean traditions blend in the architecture, lifestyle, and especially in the many and varied restaurants. The deeply-rooted wine culture is very much in evidence, vines grow within the city, and even the cathedral has a historic 'wine door' where wine was once sold.

ALTO ADIGE - THE WINES

SPECK – PLATTERS OF SPECK, THE LIGHTLY SMOKED (TYPICALLY WITH BEECHWOOD) LOCAL SPECIALITY PROSCIUTTO, ARE ABUNDANT AT WINE BARS, MOUNTAIN HUTS AND RESTAURANTS, BOTH LOW-KEY AND EXCLUSIVE. SPECK IS ALSO A FREQUENT INGREDIENT OF OTHER DISHES FROM PIZZA TO PASTA, SALADS TO OMELETTES AND TRADITIONALLY FINDS ITS PARTNER IN A GLASS OF SCHIAVA.

CANEDERLI - ONE OF THE REGION'S BEST LOVED DISHES, THESE LARGE DUMPLINGS ARE OFTEN FLAVOURED WITH PIECES OF SPECK, CHEESE, HERBS OR VEGETABLES AND THE CLASSIC WAY TO SERVE THEM IS WITH MELTED BUTTER AND CHIVES. IDEAL WITH LOCAL LAGREIN OR PINOT NERO.

SPÄTZLE – THESE SMALL GREEN GNOCCHI MADE WITH SPINACH ARE A FAVOURITE ON ALTO ADIGE MENUS. THEY'RE OFTEN SERVED WITH A TEMPTINGLY CREAMY SPECK-BASED SAUCE AND ARE IDEALLY PAIRED WITH A REFRESHING ALTO ADIGE PINOT BIANCO.

APPLE STRUDEL – NO MEAL IS COMPLETE IN ALTO ADIGE WITHOUT A SLICE OF STRUDEL MADE WITH DELICIOUSLY FRAGRANT LOCAL APPLES, ALSO IDEAL AS A BREAKFAST TREAT OR ANYTIME SNACK. TRY IT WITH AN INTENSE, AROMATIC GEWÜRZTRAMINER PASSITO.



ALTO ADIGE - QUICK FACTS

- 5800HA UNDER VINE (1% OF ITALY'S TOTAL)

- 4800 WINEGROWERS

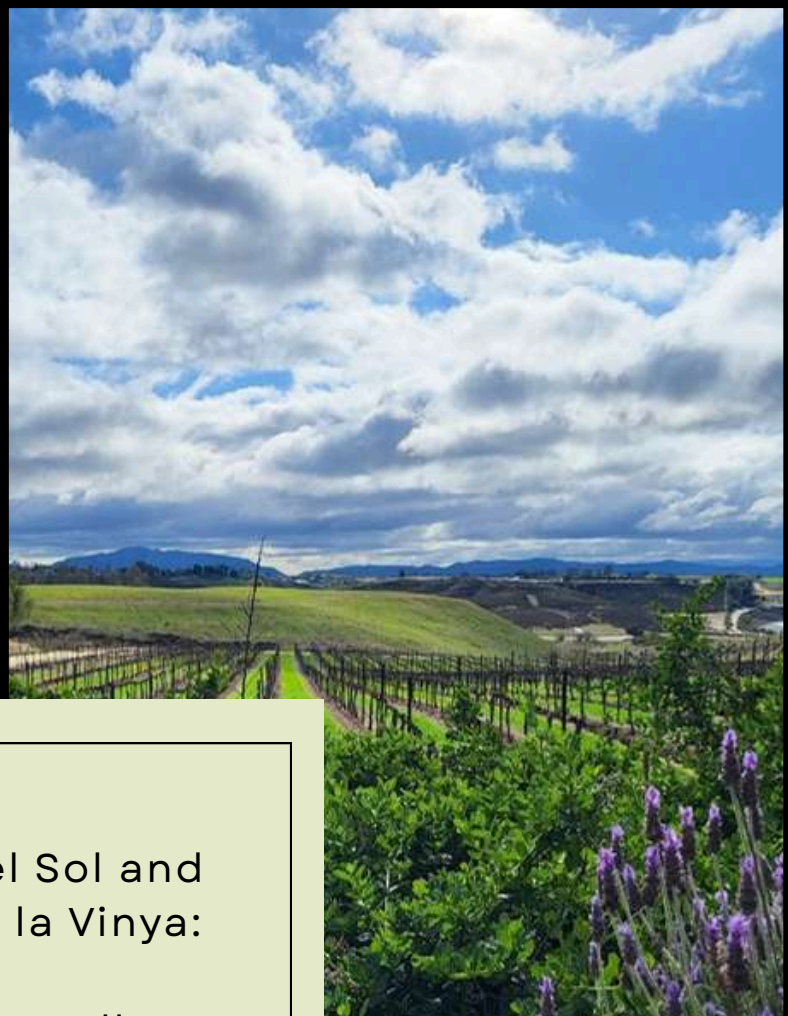
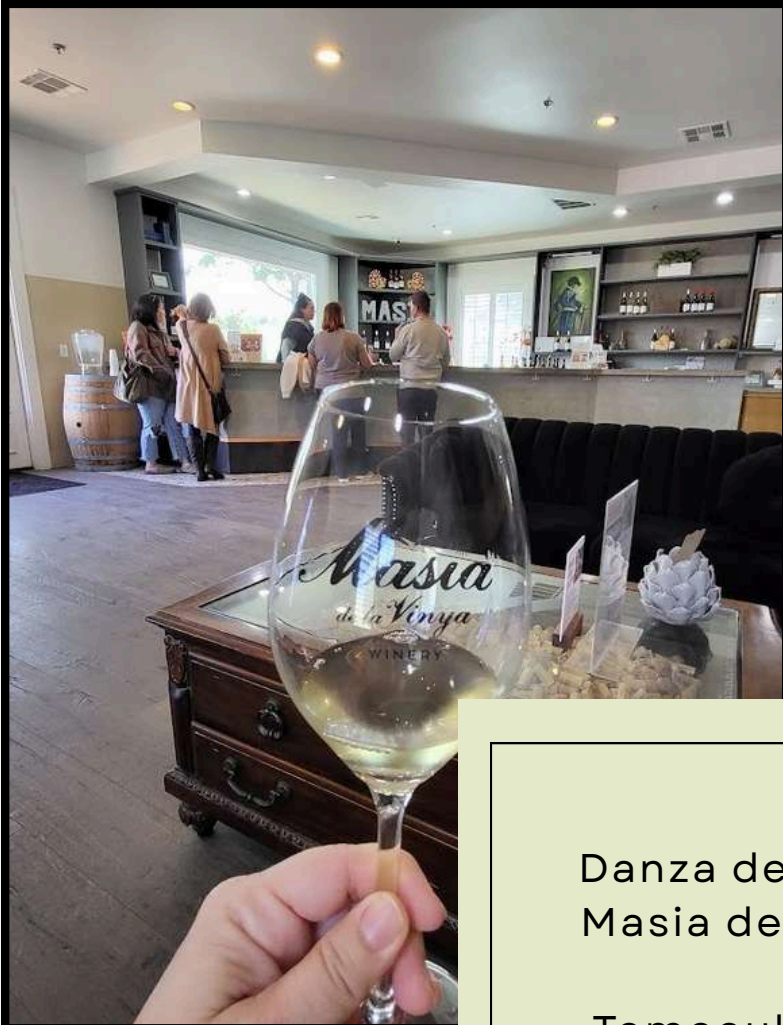
- 40 MILLION BOTTLES PRODUCED EACH YEAR
INCLUDING 450,000 TRADITIONAL
METHOD SPUMANTE

- 65% WHITE WINES, 35% RED WINES

- 20 VARIETIES OF GRAPE

- ALTITUDES OF VINES 200-1000M.ASL

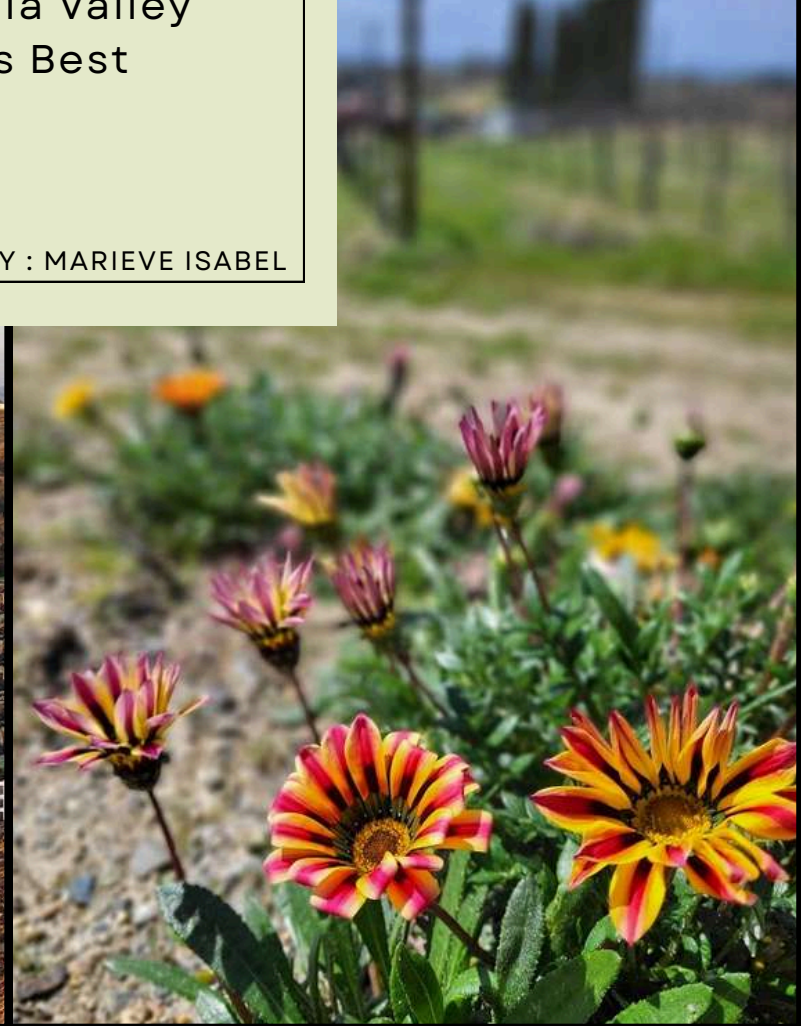
- 98% OF WINES ARE DOC



Danza del Sol and
Masia de la Vinya:

Temecula Valley
at Its Best

ARTICLE BY : MARIEVE ISABEL



When talking about California wines, Napa, Sonoma, and the Central Coast often come to mind. But as the largest wine-producing state in North America, the Golden State extends far beyond these three flagship regions. From the South Coast to the Sierra Foothills and Central Valley, California boasts more than 150 AVAs (American Viticultural Areas)—over half of all AVAs in the United States. It's time to explore the lesser-known gems.



TEMECULA VALLEY: A WELL-KEPT SECRET

Nestled in Southern California between Los Angeles and San Diego—less than a two-hour drive from either—Temecula Valley is a charming AVA framed by two mountain ranges. Largely a local destination, it is surrounded by 21 million residents who flock to its wineries for weekend escapes. While popular with bachelorette parties and wedding groups, it also draws serious wine lovers from nearby cities. Yet outside this circle, Temecula remains relatively unknown, as nearly all of its wines are consumed or sold locally.

My journey to Temecula Valley began with a five-and-a-half-hour drive from Tucson, Arizona. The route took us through cactus forests, rocky hills, and desert dunes. Occasionally, the sadly famous US-Mexico border wall peeked through the mountains. As we neared Temecula, the landscape grew greener, and the rolling hills became blanketed with vines. With close to 50 wineries and rising wine quality, the valley offers a lot to discover.

Danza del Sol and Masia de la Vinya: Winning Conditions

Along De Portola Road, a renowned stretch in Temecula Valley, eleven wineries invite visitors to explore the region's diversity and charm. Among them, Danza del Sol is a prime example of what this wine trail has to offer: beautiful location, picturesque view, flowery patio with live music, great wines, and an striking ballroom lined with oak barrels—an elegant setting for weddings and private events.

At the heart of Danza del Sol's success is winemaker Justin Knight, who has been leading production for over 15 years. Trained under the guidance of respected winemakers Mike Tingley, Arturo Villareal, and Renato Sais, Knight brings both experience and vision to the role. And he has fantastic grapes to work with.

The climate has something to do with it. Temecula Valley's geography and climate provide ideal conditions for viticulture. Situated just 20 minutes from the Pacific Ocean and at an elevation of 2,500 feet, the valley features sandy loam and decomposed granite soils, well-suited to grape growing. True to its name—Temecula means "where the sun shines through the mist"—the region benefits from cooling ocean breezes funneled through the Rainbow Gap in the nearby mountains. This daily phenomenon helps to temper the intense heat of the afternoon and extend the ripening season, promoting freshness and complexity in the fruit. The stark contrast between daytime and nighttime temperatures further enhances balance in the resulting wines.

In 2015, Danza del Sol expanded by acquiring Masia de la Vinya, a nearby estate located at the end of De Portola Road. Smaller in size and production, Masia offers a peaceful retreat for its wine club members, who enjoy access to tranquil tasting lounges.

Danza del Sol Estate Sauvignon Blanc.

Sourced from estate vines planted over 50 years ago—a rarity in the region—this Sauvignon Blanc is crisp, refined, and layered with citrus and mineral notes. It's a wine that speaks of place. As Carter describes it, it represents "Temecula in a glass."

Danza del Sol Rosé of Grenache.

Dry, floral, and fruit-forward, this rosé combines structure with drinkability. Versatile at the table, it's also beautifully enjoyable on its own.

Danza del Sol Orange Muscat Dry.

A forthcoming release, this dry expression of orange muscat retains the grape's floral aromatics while being structured and offering a fresh, clean finish. It's poised to become a customer favorite.

Masia de la Vinya Monastrell.

Known as Mourvèdre in France, this Spanish varietal thrives in Temecula's Mediterranean-like climate. The wine is bold yet balanced, with ripe fruit and earthy undertones that showcase the region's potential for Southern European grapes.



When Hospitality Comes First

A winery's success depends not only on its wines, but also on the quality of its guest experience. At Danza del Sol, that responsibility is carried by Walter Carter, Director of Client Experience. Known for his warm demeanor and dedication, Carter ensures that every visitor—whether a first-time taster or seasoned wine enthusiast—feels welcomed and well-cared for.

Carter personally trains his staff, using a distinctive and empathetic method. "I ask them to visit a winery with friends, and I serve them the way I expect them to serve our guests," he explains. By immersing new employees in the guest perspective, he builds a service culture rooted in sincerity and attentiveness.

The results are evident. During a visit, Carter is frequently greeted by returning guests, his easy smile and generous spirit making him a recognizable figure in the tasting room. During our time at Danza del Sol, he guided us through a curated tasting of standout selections from both estates. Here are a few highlights not to miss.

Temecula Valley may not yet have the global recognition of Napa or Sonoma, but its unique terroir, growing reputation, and genuine hospitality make it a standout destination for wine lovers. With dedicated professionals like Justin Knight and Walter Carter leading the way at Danza del Sol and Masia de la Vinya, the region is overdue for greater visibility. For those willing to look beyond California's best-known regions, Temecula offers an experience that is both authentic and rewarding—one glass at a time.



Where to Stay in Temecula Valley

Carter Estate Winery & Resort

Tucked away from the main roads, this peaceful retreat is ideal for a relaxing stay. Spacious bungalows feature private balconies that open directly onto the vineyard—a memorable way to wake up among the vines. Service is prompt and attentive, and the setting, with its towering palm trees, evokes the feeling of an international escape. The tasting room is quiet and offers table seating, making it easy to enjoy a glass of wine while catching up on work, if needed.



The New Inn

Few stays feel as luxurious, comfortable, and welcoming as The New Inn. Each room—its own cozy villa—features stunning bathrooms with both indoor and outdoor showers, a private patio with a fire pit, and beautifully landscaped gardens overlooking the vines. Rise early to witness dozens of hot air balloons drifting across the sunrise sky—an unforgettable sight. Now celebrating its fifth anniversary, The New Inn is perfectly designed for rest and indulgence. You'll be dreaming of your return.



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS: CRAIG HOSBACH – FOXRUN VINEYARDS

1. How did your career journey begin?

After studying computer science in college, I decided that a life behind a desk typing code was not for me. I moved back home to Belvidere, NJ, to determine my next step. My older brother was the marketing director of a local winery and asked me to help with some odds and ends around the winery because they were short-staffed. The next thing I knew, I was cleaning tanks and filtering wine in the wine cellar. I asked the owner of the winery to train me how to be a winemaker, which was something I knew absolutely nothing about, and he reluctantly agreed. Twenty-one years later, five different head winemaking jobs, and here I am at Fox Run Vineyards, which is exactly where I always wanted to be.

2. What is the most rewarding aspect of your profession?

Listening to customers speak about the wine while seeing the joy in their faces and hearing it in their voices. I love what I do, and I want to make wines I'm proud of, but ultimately, I'm here for the customer, so when I can achieve both, then that is the most rewarding aspect of my profession.

3. Can you describe the philosophy of your domain and how it influences the wines you produce?

My philosophy is to avoid dogma, recipes, and formulas. I approach winemaking with a particular style that I've spent 21 years working toward, but I like to let the wine guide me. I believe that not every wine style should be made every vintage, and that not try and fit a square peg into a round hole.

4. What do you believe is the most challenging aspect of winemaking?

The fact that more can go wrong than right. We're manipulating the grapes from the moment we prune the vines to the moment we bottle the wine. There's no such thing as no intervention, and we're intervening at many points to create an unflawed, consistently high-quality wine.

5. Do you have a favorite grape variety to work with? What makes it special to you?

I came to the Finger Lakes to make Finger Lakes Riesling, and that will always be my passion. It's an incredibly diverse grape that lends itself to many different styles. A close second would be rosés made from Cabernet Franc, Lemberger, and Pinot Noir.

6. Can you share a memorable vintage or wine you are particularly proud of?

It's a toss-up between 2017, my first year making wine in the Finger Lakes, and 2022, my first year at Fox Run Vineyards.

7. What makes your region and vineyard unique compared to others?

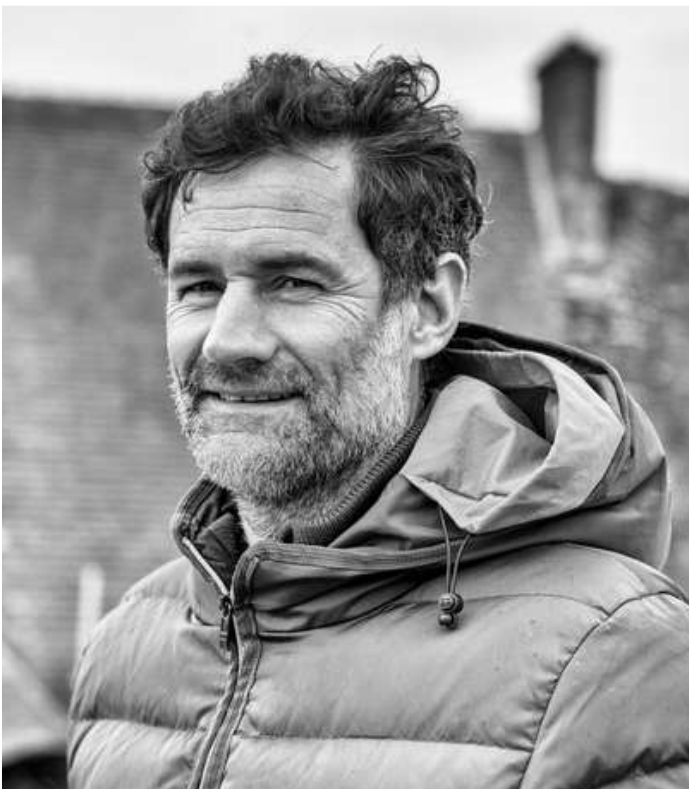
We have the advantage of working in a macroclimate that is moderated by the sheer size and depth of the 11 Finger Lakes. In particular, the land surrounding Seneca Lake, Cayuga Lake, and Keuka Lake is where the majority of the region's grapes are grown. This area is known for warm summer days and cool nights, helping the grapes reach physiological ripeness while maintaining their acidity, which drives the refreshing and food-friendly styles we've become known for.

8. If you could make wine anywhere in the world, outside your current region, where would it be and why?

I would like to work in a region that more closely mirrors the Finger Lakes' growing conditions, so possibly the Mosel or Alsace.



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS: JEAN-DOMINIQUE VACHERON – DOMAINE VACHERON



How did your journey begin?

Very early on, at the age of 12 and 14, I started working during the holidays with my father. Naturally, I turned towards viticulture studies in Beaune, and through various encounters and internships, I had the opportunity to taste some of the finest wines produced in France. And, of course, to meet some of the best winemakers.

What is the most rewarding part of your profession?

Our job is incredible because it's one of the few professions where we produce, transform, and sell our own products. It's a profession made up of a thousand different skills – you have to know how to do everything. Sometimes, in the morning we're working in the vineyards, and by evening, we're promoting our wines in a prestigious restaurant. Every time, I find it amazing...

Can you describe the philosophy of the estate and how it influences the wines you produce?

Our philosophy is to stay as close as possible to the vines and the cellar to achieve the highest quality wines. There's no real secret in our work: dedication and the desire to always do better must be the driving forces behind everything we do.

In your opinion, what is the most challenging aspect of winemaking?

When you want to highlight the terroir, like we do, the most challenging part is to truly understand the land and the vintage, and throughout the entire winemaking and aging process, to stay faithful to that vision.

Do you have a favorite grape variety to work with? What makes it special for you?

Of course, I love Pinot Noir – it's part of our DNA and brings us closer to Burgundy. But our signature grape is Sauvignon Blanc, which can be either easy or challenging, depending on how demanding we are. What I love about this grape is that we still haven't fully explored its potential. We can continue pushing further and craft more complex wines with it. It's special because depending on the philosophy of the winemaker, it can express everything and its opposite. In any case, what I really appreciate is that it can offer both freshness and complexity, along with beautiful mouthfeel and texture.

Can you share a memorable vintage or a wine you are particularly proud of?

I think the 2015 vintage taught us a valuable lesson.

It was a very hot year, and we harvested very ripe grapes with alcohol levels of 13.3% to 14%. At first, we were a little disappointed – it seemed almost too ripe. But now, the wine shows exceptional freshness. The lesson, I believe, is this: when you work the soils well, the wines have more minerality and therefore more freshness. It allows you to harvest riper grapes while still achieving a balanced wine.

What makes your region and vineyard unique compared to others?

Sancerre is already visually stunning, and that's important to me. The magic of Sancerre lies in its terroir and its climate, which work superbly well with Sauvignon Blanc. And that's truly unique.

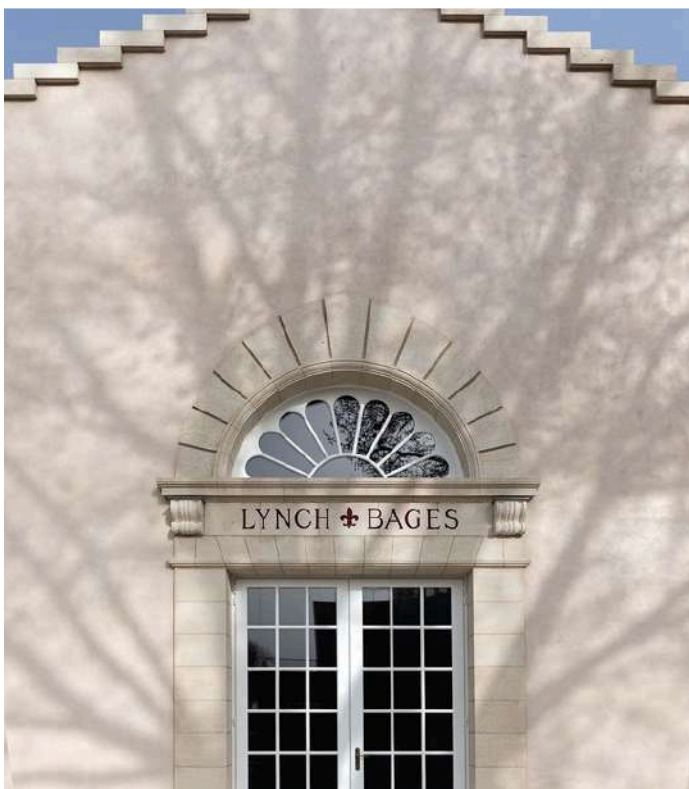
If you could make wine anywhere else in the world, outside your current region, where would it be and why?

On this point, I'm not going to be very original: I love Burgundy.

There too, the marriage between terroir, climate, and grape varieties is obvious.

The small structure of the estates also creates conditions that are very favorable to quality.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS: KINO CAZES HACHEMIAN – CHÂTEAU LYNCH-BAGES



How did your journey begin?

My personal journey is deeply rooted in my family's history, which has been anchored in the Médoc for five generations. It all began with my great-great-grandfather, Jean Cazes, born in 1837 in Ariège. Like many of his compatriots, he traveled to the Médoc each winter for seasonal work, especially replanting the Bordeaux vineyards after the phylloxera crisis. In 1875, he settled permanently in Pauillac.

His son, Jean-Charles Cazes, my great-grandfather, was a baker. In 1925, a fire destroyed his bakery, forcing him to reinvent himself. He then leased two wine estates: Château Ormes de Pez in Saint-Estèphe and Château Lynch-Bages in Pauillac. His first harvest was in 1933, and in 1939, he seized the opportunity to acquire both estates. After the war, my grandfather André Cazes joined the estate while also serving as mayor of Pauillac for 42 years.

In 1974, my father, Jean-Michel Cazes, an engineer by training, decided to return to Pauillac to take over the family legacy. A visionary and pioneer in the Bordeaux wine world, he understood early on the importance of promotion and international visibility for fine wines. At a time when few winemakers traveled, he journeyed around the world to promote the wines of Lynch-Bages and the Médoc.

Thanks to his charisma, insatiable curiosity, and generosity, he forged unique relationships with wine lovers across the globe, helping to build an unprecedented reputation for our wines. He played a vital role in opening Bordeaux to the international stage and modernizing the sector, setting in motion a dynamic that still benefits us today.

His impact extends far beyond our estate. As early as the 1980s, he foresaw the importance of wine tourism and launched an ambitious revitalization project in the village of Bages, creating Cordellian-Bages, a Relais & Châteaux hotel, opening the brasserie Café Lavinal, and other shops, –offering visitors a true immersion in the Médoc lifestyle.

Today, my brother Jean-Charles leads our family estates, and alongside him, following in our father's footsteps, I passionately strive to bring our wines to international markets.

Growing up at Lynch-Bages, I was introduced early to estate life. As a teenager, I helped with harvests, bottling, and even cooking for the harvesters. By age 14, I was already welcoming visitors for tours and tastings—well before wine tourism became what it is today. In the 1980s, I also had the chance to work with Seagram Château & Estate in New York and at Robert Mondavi in Napa Valley.

My path took me away from the Médoc for a few years, especially with AXA, first in Paris and then in New York, where I moved in 1996, met my husband Farzine, and started our family. Our three daughters—Sara, Afsaneh, and Nour—were born in the United States and carry this dual French-American culture.

I soon returned to the family business, which is a true passion of mine, and have taken on representation roles in North America, now extended to all our global markets. I'm deeply attached to the village of Bages, where I now live part-time. This allows me to continue developing our wine tourism activities, furthering the momentum initiated by my father, and offering visitors a unique experience of our beautiful wine region.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

First of all, I never really feel like I'm "working." My job is, above all, a passion—an incredible opportunity to meet people who share a love for wine and gastronomy. Every encounter is a new discovery, a chance to build connections and create emotion around a bottle.

Wine is much more than a product. It brings people together, tells stories, evokes memories, and accompanies life's most precious moments. Being part of a family that has made wine for generations is an incredible privilege—it allows me to meet enthusiasts from around the world, share our passion, and communicate the richness and uniqueness of our terroir.

What touches me most is seeing how our wines travel, how they're received and appreciated across the globe. Knowing that a bottle of Lynch-Bages might witness a special moment, a celebration, or simply a joyful gathering among friends gives deep meaning to what we do.

Lastly, there's a dimension of transmission that's especially dear to me—passing down our family story, my father's legacy, our passion for terroir and craftsmanship... and perhaps, one day, seeing our children continue this adventure with the same enthusiasm.

Can you describe the estate's philosophy and how it influences the wines you produce?

Our philosophy is based on respect for the terroir and a constant pursuit of excellence. Each parcel is tended with precision to fully express its potential and the intrinsic qualities of our land. We believe wine reflects its environment—its soil and the climate that shapes it. Every decision, whether in the vineyard or the cellar, is made to preserve authenticity and enhance our viticultural heritage.

Château Lynch-Bages embodies a balance between tradition and innovation. Our viticultural approach combines cutting-edge technology with time-honored practices that have built our reputation. For example, the renovation project we launched in 2016 allowed us to completely rebuild our facilities with state-of-the-art equipment. This ultra-modern winery enhances every stage of vinification while providing an ergonomic and functional workspace. Designed by architect Chien Chung (Didi) Pei, the new cellar is both a high-performance tool and a modern production space.

Our wines are distinguished by their opulence, aromatic richness, and great aging potential. Generous in their youth, they develop finesse, depth, and complexity over time. We aim to craft wines that combine power and elegance—a signature style among the great Pauillacs.

This same philosophy also guides our work at Château Haut-Batailley, which we acquired in 2017. Located on exceptional terroirs, the estate receives the same meticulous care to preserve its identity and fully express its potential. Since acquiring it, we've worked to reveal the finesse and elegance that define this wine, while respecting its history and terroir.

In short, our commitment is to produce wines that deliver immediate pleasure while offering remarkable aging potential, continuing the legacy of excellence that defines Château Lynch-Bages and Château Haut-Batailley.

What is, in your view, the most challenging aspect of winemaking?

I believe the most difficult aspect of winemaking today lies in vineyard management. The quality of a vintage is largely determined by what happens in the vines—that's where everything begins. Dealing with nature, especially changing climatic conditions, is undoubtedly the most complex part. While new technologies offer valuable tools for more precise winemaking than our parents or grandparents had, one crucial factor remains out of our control: nature itself. This is both a challenge and a gift—it's what makes each vintage unique and pushes us to adapt constantly.

Do you have a favorite grape variety to work with? What makes it special to you?

Cabernet Sauvignon holds a central place in our vineyard, representing nearly 75% of the plantings at Lynch-Bages. So it's no surprise that it's our favorite variety. It's hard not to be a little biased when talking about it, as it has shaped my palate over the years, being the base of the wines I've tasted all my life. This grape is remarkable for its resilience, its ability to produce powerful, tannic, well-balanced wines with excellent aging potential.

Can you share a memorable vintage or a wine you are particularly proud of?

When I think of memorable vintages, it's often the moments tied to them that come to mind. The 1982 vintage, for instance, holds a special place for me because it was served at my wedding. The 1989 vintage was my father's favorite. After his passing, he had asked us to drink a 1959 in his memory, and opening that bottle—filled with family memories—was deeply emotional. More recently, the 2022 vintage will also remain unforgettable: I had the chance to take part in the harvest with a few friends. It was a short but intense experience, and being part of such a great vintage is a treasured memory.

What makes your region and vineyard unique compared to others?

Every wine region has its own identity, shaped by geography, climate, and history. In the Médoc, we've cultivated vines for centuries, and our terroir has been enriched by waves of immigration that shaped its cosmopolitan character. The Dutch, then the English and Irish, all left their mark—particularly the Lynch family, who settled in Bordeaux in 1691 and managed our estate for 75 years. Later, migrants from Ariège like my own ancestors, along with Portuguese and Spanish workers in the '60s and '70s, brought their skills and further enriched our viticultural culture.

What makes Lynch-Bages truly unique is its exceptional location in the heart of the Médoc. This peninsula, stretching northward, is influenced by two major bodies of water: the Atlantic Ocean to the west, which tempers the climate, and the Gironde Estuary to the east, which protects our vines from cold winds. These unique natural conditions give our wines a remarkable identity. And beyond that—it's the land of my roots. Subjectively, it's unique to me simply because it's the most beautiful region there is.

If you could make wine anywhere else in the world, where would it be and why?

I'll cheat a little here—because we already have the privilege of producing wine in one of the most beautiful wine regions in the world: the Douro Valley in Portugal. Since 2002, in partnership with the Roquette family, owners of Quinta do Crasto, we've been producing Xisto, a great Portuguese wine named after the schist soil typical of the Douro's best terroirs.

For me, it's a truly fascinating region, with its dramatic terraced vineyards shaped by generations of human effort. Every time I go there, I'm amazed by its beauty. It touches me deeply—a place where nature's strength and human passion meet. Beyond its beauty and winegrowing history, the region also resonates with me personally: my mother is Portuguese, so it's another part of my heritage. Producing wine there is like reconnecting with a piece of my family's story. And working with the Roquette family—friends who share our passion—makes the experience even more meaningful. After all, our profession is above all about passion and sharing—and that's what drives us every day.

