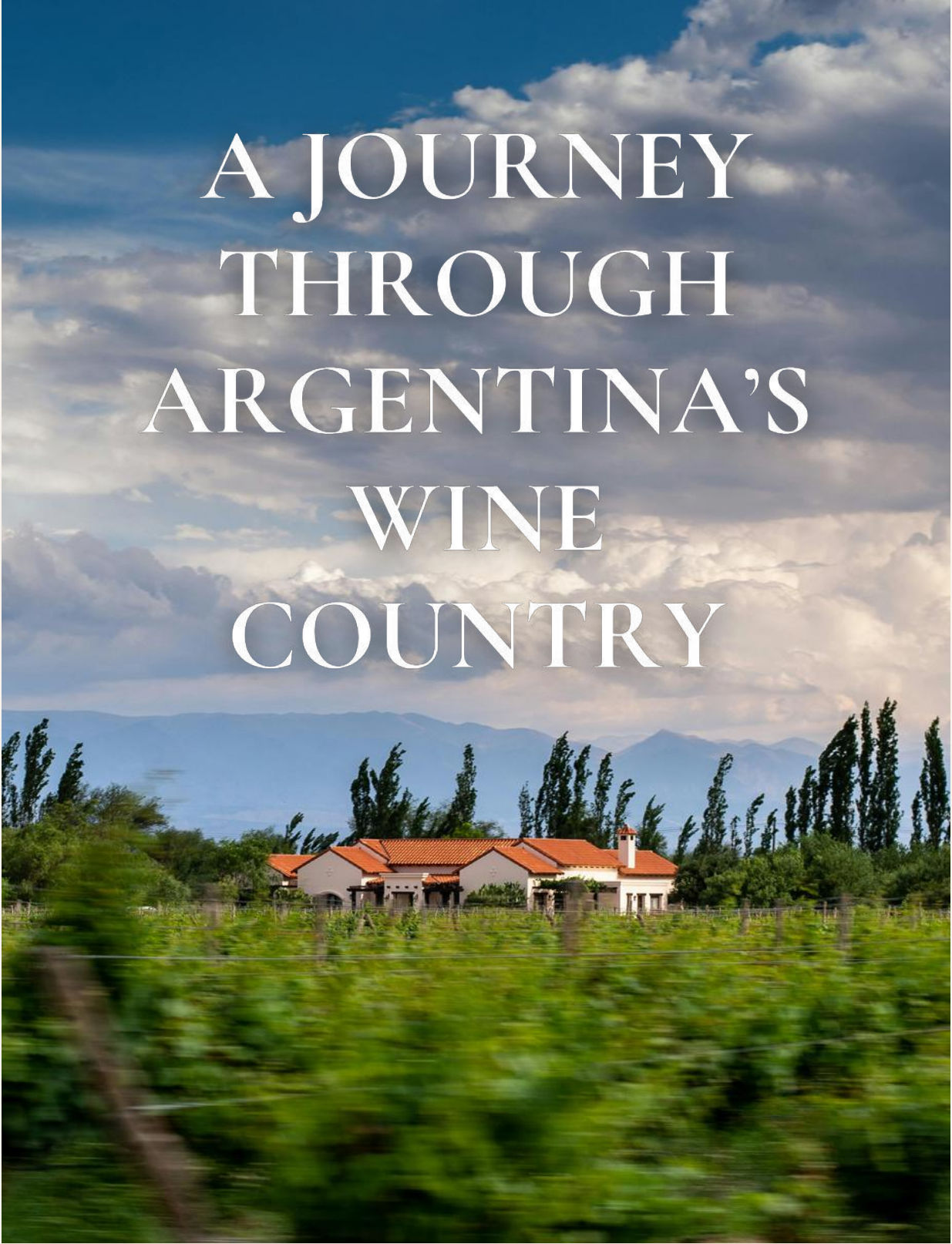


FOR THE CURIOUS ADVENTURER

A scenic landscape photograph of a vineyard in Argentina. In the foreground, there is a lush green vineyard with rows of grapevines. In the middle ground, a white house with a red-tiled roof and a small chimney is visible, surrounded by tall, slender trees. In the background, there are blue mountains under a sky with scattered white clouds. The title text is overlaid on the sky and mountains.

A JOURNEY THROUGH ARGENTINA'S WINE COUNTRY

PRESENTED BY FAMILIA MORGAN



Our devotion for Argentine wines led us to establish our own vineyard. One of the most surprising things we've found is just how many incredible, lesser-known wineries Argentina has—hundreds, in fact, that are practically unheard of in the U.S.

We know this firsthand, as we collaborate with—and sometimes compete against—these wineries. Truth be told, even the more modest wines from Argentina often rival, if not surpass, some of the premium bottles available in the U.S.

Today, we're embarking on a fruitful journey through San Rafael's history, exploring Argentina's wines and its remarkable landscapes. Who knew that so much knowledge could be packed into tiny grapes?

Team Familia Morgan

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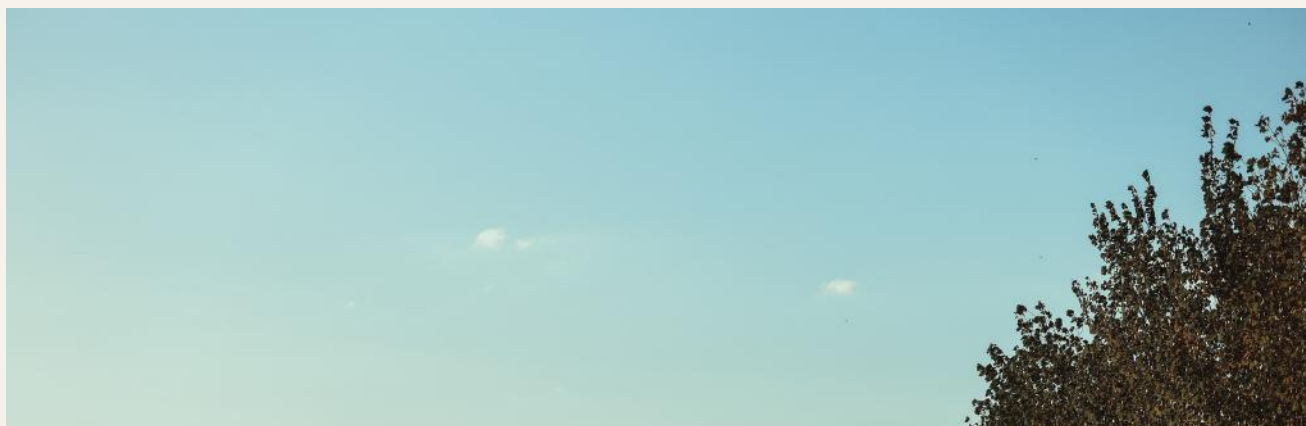
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DISCOVERING

Argentina's unique terroir

Argentina's unique terroir is a key factor in its renowned wines. From high-altitude vineyards and varied soil types to a semi-arid climate and innovative irrigation methods, each element contributes to a flavor profile rich with depth and character. This distinctive environment sets Argentina's wines apart.



ALTITUDE

Distinct Sun Exposure



Argentina's vineyards are **among the highest globally**, with elevations ranging from **500 to over 3,000 meters (1,600 to 9,800 feet) above sea level**. These high-altitude areas experience intense daytime sunlight, building rich flavors and complex color in grapes. At night, cooler temperatures preserve acidity, leading to wines with a vibrant balance of fruit and freshness. This diurnal range, especially in Salta's highlands, fosters aromatic, full-flavored wines, including the celebrated Torrontés and robust Malbec.



SOIL DIVERSITY

Mineral-Rich Grounds

Argentina's soils are quite diverse, shaped by **river deposits, glacial shifts, and erosion**. In Mendoza's Uco Valley, for example, **limestone-enriched soils** contribute **minerality and elegance to Malbecs**, while Salta's **sandy soils highlight Torrontés' bright aromas**. Patagonia's **mineral-rich, wind-swept soils nurture refined Pinot Noir and Merlot**, echoing the purity of the terrain. These well-drained soils encourage deep-rooted vines, intensifying flavor complexity.

CLIMATE

Andes Meltwater



Argentina's semi-arid climate **receives little rain**, reducing disease risk and enhancing grape quality. Mendoza, for instance, **averages just 200-250 millimeters (8-10 inches) of rain annually**, relying on Andean meltwater for controlled irrigation. **The Andes also shield vineyards** from excessive rain, providing consistent sunshine essential for photosynthesis and grape ripening. This irrigation system, adapted from ancient Andean practices, ensures grapes ripen with rich concentration and balance.



INNOVATION

Tradition & Modernity

Argentina's winemaking blends traditional methods with modern techniques. **Hand-harvesting and foot-treading preserve the artisanal touch**, while advances like **temperature control and micro-oxygenation enhance wine quality**. Increasingly, wineries are adopting sustainable practices, **including organic and biodynamic farming**. This mix of heritage and innovation enables Argentine wines to offer nuanced profiles that honor both the land and winemaking legacy.



MICROCLIMATES

Across key regions





MENDOZA

Argentina's wine heartland, Mendoza features sub-regions like Uco Valley, where limestone soils and high altitude produce mineral-rich Malbecs. Luján de Cuyo yields bold, fruit-forward wines known for their soft tannins, and the dry climate supports richly flavored wines.



SALTA

With vineyards reaching 3,000 meters, Salta produces intensely aromatic Torrontés and bold Malbecs, thanks to the intense & constant sunlight and a semi-arid climate.

PATAGONIA

Patagonia's cooler southern climate and mineral-rich soils yield elegant, vibrant wines like Pinot Noir and Merlot, capturing the refined essence of the region's unique terroir.



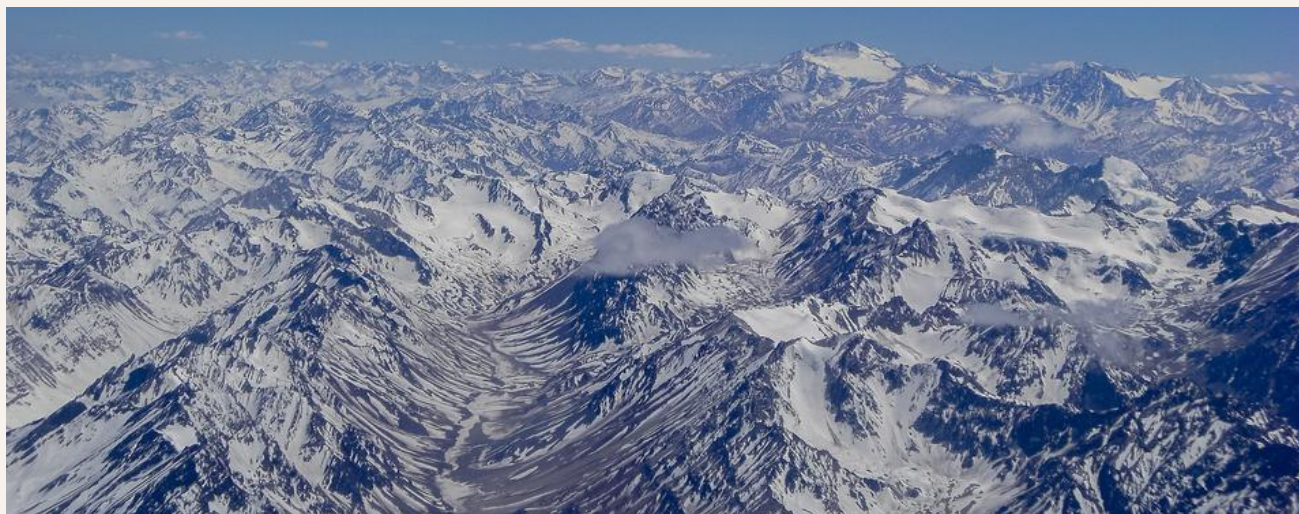


REGIÓN DE CUYO

Argentina's wine region



Nestled beside the Andes Mountains



The Cuyo region is the heart of Argentina's wine production. This area encompasses some of the country's most significant wine-growing zones, primarily Mendoza and San Juan, which together account for an impressive 95% of Argentina's total vineyard area.

Mendoza, the largest wine-producing region in Argentina, is renowned for its esteemed wineries and internationally acclaimed wines. The region boasts numerous sub-regions, each with its unique qualities and characteristics, offering wine lovers a variety of areas to explore.

Beyond Mendoza, San Juan is also a prominent player in Argentine winemaking, featuring key areas such as the Valle de Pedernal. This region, known for its high elevation, is celebrated for producing wines with a distinct character and quality.

Discovering Exceptional Wines from Cuyo

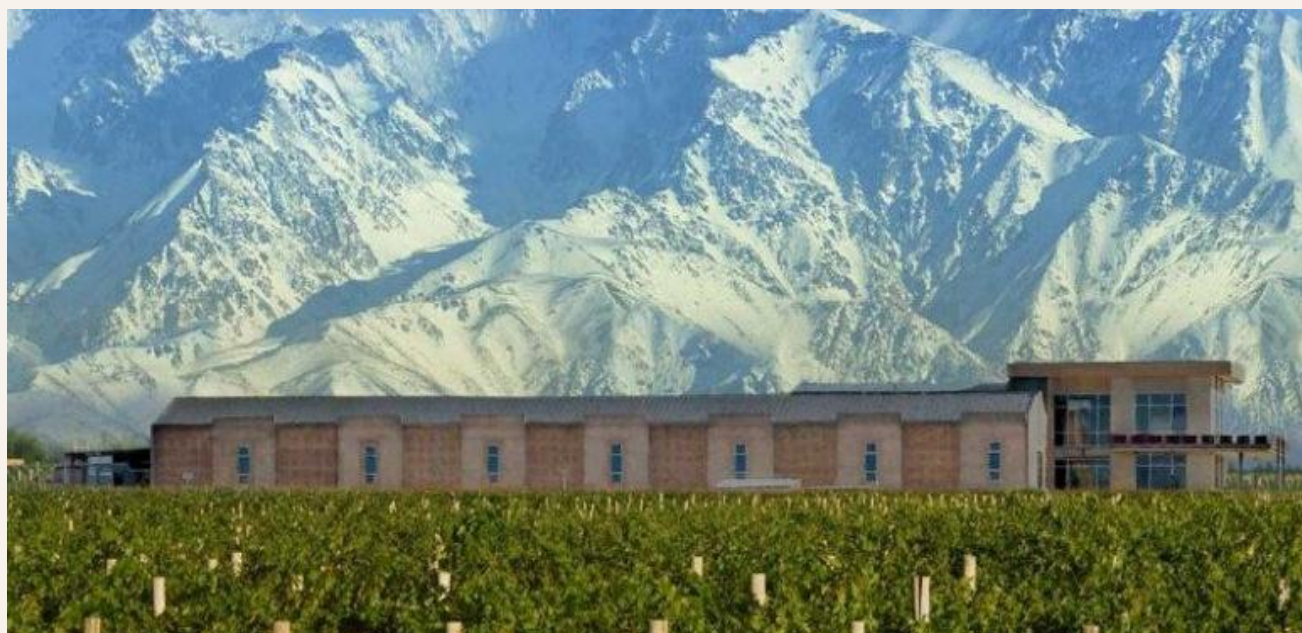


Understanding the diverse landscape of Cuyo can greatly enhance your wine selection experience, as the variations in altitude and soil type across the region influence the distinct profiles of its wines.

For instance, sub-regions within Cuyo differ significantly in terms of altitude. Higher elevation vineyards create a cooler climate that contributes to wines with greater elegance, pronounced freshness, and vibrant fruit flavors. If you enjoy this style, pay close attention to altitude details on winemaker notes and consider wines from areas such as Tupungato and Tunuyán within the renowned Valle de Uco, as well as from the elevated Valle de Pedernal in San Juan.

Soil composition also plays a critical role in shaping the wine's character. Vineyards in lower-lying areas near rivers often sit atop alluvial soils with a higher clay content. Wines produced in these soils tend to be richer and more full-bodied, with intense ripe fruit flavors and a robust tannin structure. This information can be particularly useful if you're seeking a wine with a lush, opulent profile.

Mendoza's Sub-Regions

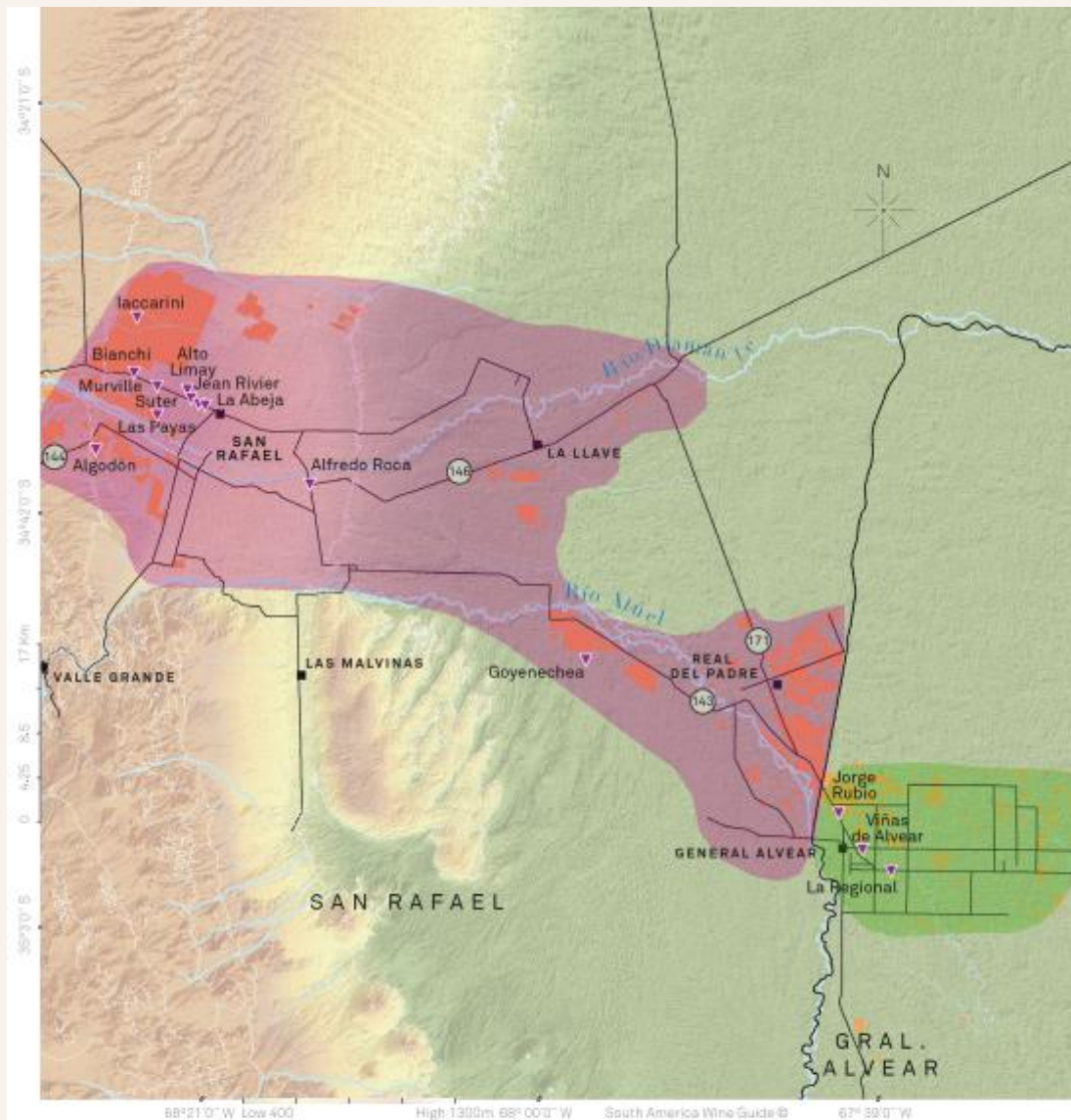


Luján de Cuyo: Often called the "Land of Malbec," Luján de Cuyo is located just south of Mendoza city and is home to some of Argentina's oldest vineyards. With altitudes around 900–1,100 meters, this area's wines are typically approachable when young but also age well, developing complexity over time.

Maipú: Known for its warm temperatures and fertile soils, Maipú is one of the oldest wine-growing areas in Mendoza. While it produces robust reds like Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, it's also notable for its high-quality olive oil production. Maipú's wines are often dense, full-bodied, and feature concentrated fruit flavors.

Uco Valley: Celebrated for its exceptional Malbecs, wines from this area contain a balance of acidity, freshness, and structure. Sub-regions such as Tupungato and Tunuyán offer cool-climate conditions that result in more elegant and mineral-driven wines.

The Foundations of San Rafael



SAN RAFAEL & GENERAL ALVEAR

- ▼ Wineries
- Towns
- Principal routes
- - - Departmental boundaries
- Rivers
- Vineyards
- REGIONS**
- San Rafael
- General Alvear



Following Argentina's institutional organization, European immigration was encouraged, and **San Rafael** became a notable destination, particularly for French pioneers. Around 1871, the French engineer **Julio Gerónimo Ballofet** arrived in San Rafael, tasked with the urban and economic development of the department. Ballofet not only initiated key infrastructural projects but also played a significant role in bringing **Rodolfo Iselín** to the area, who would go on to establish the French Colony.



Initially, efforts focused on leveling land and constructing irrigation channels, which facilitated livestock farming. Agriculture soon followed, spurred by Ballofet's vision to introduce specialized technicians. These experts created an experimental agricultural field dedicated to testing and adapting various crops, especially fruit trees, to the region's conditions. This rapid progress led to a significant population increase, which in turn spurred the development of new neighborhoods and streets. Infrastructure projects flourished, including the construction of the main square, civil registry, police headquarters, the cathedral, the first hospital, and School No. 25 de Mayo. The land for the current school, which bears Ballofet's name, was donated and now serves as the site for the Communal Building.



In the final decades of the 19th century, a wave of Italian immigrants arrived, complementing the French community and further enriching the region's development. As a result, on October 2, 1903, a law officially moved the administrative center to the French Colony, renaming it Nueva Villa de San Rafael.



A month later, the arrival of the railroad to San Rafael accelerated agro-industrial growth. The region's agricultural output began to reach major cities across Argentina. By 1930, San Rafael's landscape transformed, marked by extensive road and building developments. On October 7, 1922, Nueva Villa de San Rafael was officially declared the City of San Rafael, as it is known today.

Sustainability and Innovation



In recent years, Mendoza's wine industry has seen a shift toward sustainable practices and technological innovation. Many wineries have adopted organic and biodynamic farming methods, aiming to reduce environmental impact and preserve the health of the vineyards. Some estates utilize gravity-flow systems for gentle processing, while others incorporate solar panels, water recycling, and other eco-friendly technologies. Mendoza's winemakers are also experimenting with new grape varieties, blends, and winemaking techniques to diversify Argentina's wine offerings.

The commitment to sustainability is complemented by Mendoza's focus on wine tourism. The region has invested in creating visitor-friendly experiences, from luxury vineyard accommodations and fine dining options to vineyard tours and wine tastings, attracting wine lovers from around the world.

Economic and Cultural Impact



The wine industry is a crucial part of Mendoza's economy, generating employment and attracting investment. Mendoza's wines are exported globally, with key markets in North America, Europe, and increasingly, Asia. This international success has not only brought economic benefits but has also elevated Argentine wine culture on the world stage. Mendoza's wine heritage is deeply woven into Argentina's cultural identity.

Winemaking traditions, passed down through generations, are celebrated in annual events like the Vendimia, or grape harvest festival, where locals and visitors alike honor the wine harvest with parades, music, and regional food. The Vendimia festival is a vibrant testament to Mendoza's enduring connection to its wine industry and to the role of wine in Argentine life.



HISTORY

A journey through time



Argentine wine is steeped in history, blending Old World traditions with the distinct terroir of South America. From its beginnings with Spanish settlers in the 16th century to its emergence as a powerhouse in the global wine industry, Argentina's wine story is one of resilience, innovation, and deep-rooted cultural pride.



16th Century: The Arrival of Vines

Argentina's journey with viticulture began in the mid-1500s when Spanish colonizers brought the first grapevines to the Americas. These initial vines, likely of the Criolla variety, were planted by Spanish missionaries to produce sacramental wine. In 1557, vines were introduced to Argentina's fertile regions, particularly around Mendoza and San Juan, laying the groundwork for what would become the nation's key wine-producing areas.

Criolla vines adapted quickly to Argentina's sunny, semi-arid climate and high-altitude landscapes, and soon, local populations began to produce wine beyond religious needs, incorporating it into daily life and regional culture.

19th Century: The Influence of European Immigration

Argentina's wine industry took a significant leap in the mid-19th century with an influx of European immigrants, particularly from Italy and Spain. These immigrants brought with them advanced winemaking knowledge, techniques, and a love for wine.

Domingo
Faustino
Sarmiento
1811 - 1888



This era marked the introduction of European grape varieties such as Malbec, which arrived in 1853 through the efforts of Michel Aimé Pouget, a French agronomist hired by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, a prominent Argentine politician and educator. Sarmiento's vision was to elevate Argentina's agricultural practices, and Malbec soon became one of the country's defining varietals, adapting particularly well to Mendoza's terroir.

During this time, winemaking grew from a local practice into a burgeoning industry as immigrants established vineyards across Mendoza, San Juan, and La Rioja. These early vineyards not only expanded Argentina's grape variety catalog but also set the foundation for large-scale wine production.

20th Century: Growth, Crisis, and Adaptation

The early 20th century saw Argentina's wine industry flourish as domestic demand surged. Wine became a staple of Argentine life, enjoyed by people across social classes. By the mid-1900s, Argentina had one of the highest per capita wine consumption rates in the world. However, the focus at that time was on quantity rather than quality, with large volumes of inexpensive table wines dominating the market.



The 1970s and 80s brought economic and political challenges to Argentina, impacting all sectors, including the wine industry. Hyperinflation, shifting government policies, and changing consumer preferences led to a period of crisis. During these decades, Argentine winemakers began to reconsider their approach, recognizing the need to focus on quality to survive in an increasingly competitive market.

The Quality Revolution: Late 20th Century to Early 21st Century

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Argentina's wine industry began a transformation. Producers shifted from focusing solely on mass production to emphasizing quality, as Argentine wines started to gain international recognition. Investments poured into the industry, with winemakers modernizing equipment, refining techniques, and adopting sustainable practices.

Mendoza emerged as a hub for premium wine, with regions like the Uco Valley attracting global attention for their high-altitude vineyards and innovative production.



Malbec, once overshadowed by more established European varieties, became Argentina's signature grape, gaining acclaim for its bold flavors, velvety texture, and ability to express the diverse terroir of Argentina. This period marked Argentina's entry into the premium wine segment, and it solidified the country's reputation on the world stage.

21st Century: Global Success and Innovation

The 21st century has been a period of incredible growth and recognition for Argentine wine. With international markets increasingly appreciating Argentina's unique offerings, the country has continued to expand and innovate.

Wineries across Argentina now produce a diverse range of wines, from robust reds to refreshing whites, and have embraced indigenous varieties such as Torrontés alongside international grapes.



Regions like Salta, known for its extreme altitudes, have captivated consumers with highly aromatic wines, while Patagonia has gained attention for cool-climate varieties like Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Argentine winemakers have also focused on sustainable practices, experimenting with organic and biodynamic methods to meet the growing demand for environmentally conscious production.

Today, **Argentina is the largest wine producer in South America** and ranks among the top wine-producing countries globally. The country's wines, especially Malbec, have garnered a dedicated following worldwide, celebrated for their depth, quality, and distinct Argentine identity.



IN CONTRAST

The diversity of Malbec



Mendoza's Malbec 🍷

Mendoza offers some of Argentina's best expressions of this grape. Malbec wines from this region vary depending on the area. For instance, those from Luján de Cuyo are fuller-bodied and robust, while wines from the Uco Valley are fresher. Typically, they exhibit intense aromas of red and dark fruits like blackberry and plum, along with floral hints of violet. Aging in barrels adds complexity with notes of tobacco and vanilla. On the palate, these wines are smooth, with silky and fresh tannins.

Patagonian Malbec 🍷

In Patagonia, Malbec behaves differently than in other parts of the country due to unique regional characteristics. Summers bring large temperature swings, with daytime highs around 25°C and nighttime lows below 10°C; winters average -4°C. These wines are generally less intense than Mendoza's. The nose reveals subtle notes of ripe red and dark fruits, such as blackberries, plums, and raspberries, sometimes with a touch of minerality. The palate is fresher, with delicate tannins, producing elegant and refined wines.

Northern Malbec 🍷

Northern Argentina is famous for its high-altitude vineyards, where some of the world's highest Malbec vines thrive at over 3,100 meters above sea level. This unique terroir produces more concentrated, robust wines with higher alcohol content and firm, marked tannins, ideal for those seeking intense wines. These wines often feature typical notes of ripe fruit, such as plum and blackberry, with intensified floral hints like violet and, sometimes, sweet spices.

Other Distinctive Regional Grapes



Northern Argentina

🍷 **Cabernet Sauvignon** from northern Argentina is structured with intense aromas of peppers, dark fruits, and herbal notes. On the palate, these wines are elegant and complex, with firm tannins and robust body, ideal for long aging.

🍷 **Tannat** here is notable for its intensity, featuring aromas of dark fruits, spices, tobacco, chocolate, and minerals. It has a robust body with high tannin concentration and a long finish, with high acidity that provides balance and aging potential.

🍷 **Sauvignon Blanc** has gained popularity in recent years, producing distinctive wines that stand out from other regions. High altitude and temperature variations – warm sunny days followed by cool nights – benefit this grape, especially in the highest vineyards.

🍷 **Torrontés Riojano** is the signature grape of northern Argentina and the country's only native varietal. Often mistaken as sweet, it is actually dry, with tropical and citrus fruit notes, as well as floral hints of jasmine or rose. On the palate, it is fresh, with a soft texture, mature fruit presence, a gentle entry, and a dry finish with a slight bitterness that balances well.



Argentine Patagonia

🍷 **Pinot Noir** excels in Patagonia, where its cool climate creates fresher, softer, and more balanced wines, often enjoyed young but also aged with excellent results. Aromas include fresh fruits like strawberries and cherries, sometimes accompanied by floral or mineral hints.

🍷 **Merlot** adapts well to this region, yielding wines that are elegant, structured, and expressive. With herbal aromas, red fruits, and hints of tobacco, it has a smooth, medium-bodied taste and a long finish.

🍷 **Cabernet Franc** is expanding across the country, offering different profiles in each region. In Patagonia, it is fresh, aromatic, and complex, with aromas of fruits like blackberries and currants, along with spiced and green pepper notes.

🍷 **Semillón** stands out among Patagonia's whites. Though not widely planted, its quality continues to improve, yielding wines with green apple, honey, and pear aromas. On the palate, it is soft, with moderate acidity and excellent aging potential when barrel-aged.

🍷 **Patagonian Chardonnay** is distinct from Mendoza's, characterized by freshness and elegance in young wines. The nose combines citrus and stone fruit notes like peach, with a medium body and a delicate, persistent finish.



Mendoza

🍷 **Malbec** is Mendoza's flagship grape, known for some of the best expressions worldwide. This medium- to full-bodied grape is fruit-forward, with notes of ripe plum and blackberry, complemented by floral hints of violet and barrel-induced vanilla or tobacco notes.

🍷 **Bonarda** is Argentina's second most planted grape, often used in blends. While historically used for its high quality at a low cost, recent improvements in vineyards have led to high-quality Bonardas with raspberry, strawberry, and herbal notes, making it a fruity and smooth wine.

🍷 **Cabernet Franc** has grown popular, eventually becoming Argentina's second-most-consumed grape. Known internationally for its quality, it has notes of raspberries, dark and red fruits, green pepper, and tomato leaf. Mendoza's Cabernet Francs are structured, with firm yet silky tannins and a fruity freshness.

🍷 **Chardonnay** is known as the "queen of whites," adapting distinct characteristics in each region globally. In Mendoza, it thrives in higher-altitude areas, with cooler climates and significant thermal amplitude, promoting slow ripening. The wines show citrus, white fruit, and stone fruit notes. Barrel aging adds buttery and vanilla flavors for a fresh, creamy, and complex wine with good body.



WINEMAKERS

from Argentina





Susana Balbo

Known as the "Queen of Torrontés," Susana Balbo is a true pioneer in Argentine winemaking. Her innovative approach has redefined Mendoza wines, blending tradition with cutting-edge techniques. With a passion for showcasing Argentina's native varietals, she has earned international acclaim, especially for her work with Torrontés and Malbec.

Daniel Pi

A master of Argentine terroir, Daniel Pi's expertise at Trapiche is in crafting wines that showcase the vast diversity of Argentina's vineyards. His philosophy focuses on blending bold, balanced flavors while staying true to each vineyard's unique characteristics. Known for his meticulous attention to detail, Pi has elevated Argentine wine to new levels.





Marcelo Peleritti

Acclaimed as the first Latin American winemaker to receive a perfect 100-point rating, Marcelo Peleritti creates wines that embody the essence of Uco Valley. His winemaking style is deeply connected to the land, and his wines are known for their structure, complexity, and harmony, consistently impressing wine lovers around the world.

Roberto de la Mota

A celebrated figure in Argentine wine, Roberto de la Mota's expertise lies in Malbec. Combining French training with Mendoza's terroir, he crafts wines at Mendel Wines that are rich, expressive, and meticulously balanced. Known for his passion for quality and authenticity, de la Mota is a leading advocate for Argentine Malbec.





Pepe Galante

Known as the "Father of Modern Argentine Wine," Pepe Galante revolutionized winemaking in Argentina. His work at Catena Zapata introduced innovative techniques that elevated the profile of Argentine wines worldwide. Galante's commitment to quality has made him a respected figure, especially for his contributions to Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Alejandro Vigil

Often called a rockstar winemaker, Alejandro Vigil is renowned for his creative approach at Catena Zapata. A passionate experimenter, he brings innovation and boldness to Malbec, pushing boundaries to create wines that are vibrant and unique. Vigil's dedication to excellence has made him one of Argentina's most influential winemakers.





VINTAGES

from Argentina





2015: A Difficult Start

The 2015 vintage faced challenges with rain and cooler temperatures impacting yields, but some regions like San Juan produced high-quality grapes. This was a tough year, and winemakers had to adapt to unpredictable weather patterns.

2016: A Year to Remember

A cooler year, 2016 was outstanding, especially for reds in Mendoza and Patagonia. The balanced wines of this vintage continue to stand out due to their freshness and aging potential.

2017: Warm and Intense

This vintage saw high temperatures and early ripening, leading to smaller grape sizes and concentrated, intense flavors. Reds like Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon thrived in the heat, offering bold profiles.

2018: Consistent and Balanced

Warm, dry conditions created a near-perfect growing season, producing balanced wines with great aging potential. This vintage was marked by consistent quality across regions, making it a great year for both reds and whites.



2019: Classic Elegance

2019 featured warm days and cool nights, resulting in structured and aromatic wines. The reds from this year, especially Malbec, Cabernet Franc, and Cabernet Sauvignon, showed excellent aging potential and vibrant aromas.

2020: Hot and Early

The 2020 season faced drought and high heat, especially in Mendoza and San Juan. However, early harvests helped winemakers retain acidity and freshness, particularly in reds like Malbec. Yields were down, but quality remained high.

2021: Cool and Concentrated

A cooler year with more rain led to lower yields for whites, but excellent quality for reds, particularly in Mendoza. The resulting wines had great concentration and balance, with fresh acidity and moderate alcohol levels, making 2021 a standout year for age-worthy wines.

2022: A Rollercoaster Year

Despite early frosts and a challenging growing season, 2022 delivered wines with excellent aging potential. The reds, particularly Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Cabernet Franc, showed remarkable concentration and color. In regions like Patagonia, yields were down, but the quality remained high.



2023: Low Yields, High Quality

2023 saw one of the smallest harvests on record due to frost, but the quality of the grapes was exceptional. The early harvest produced wines with impressive balance and freshness, especially in reds like Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon. The wines are expected to age well, and winemakers are optimistic about the future potential of this vintage.

Thank you for reading

You can visit us at our website

www.familiamorgan.com

