

Stretching over 1 million square miles (four times the size of France!), Argentina offers a diverse landscape with which to produce world class wines at an amazing value. No irrigation needed here-the majestic Andes Mountains supply year round snow melt to help the grapes achieve optimum potential. High elevation vineyards protect vines from many of the diseases other wine producing countries are faced. You find over one third of the 900 wineries are practicing sustainable agriculture because it just comes naturally.

Grapes here have what is considered the longest 'hang time' in the world! Can you say ripe? Couple that with the age of the vines first brought here in 1860 and the altitude and you have a perfect 'blend' of low yield-high intensity fruit-perfect for great wine!

Mendoza is the most well known area and in the Mendoza - Malbec is king. Although considered a great blending wine for the wines of Bordeaux something magical happens here where Malbec is transformed into a beautiful fruit forward wine with softer tannins and lower acidity. Although compared to being a 'rustic' version of Merlot, I believe it is truly the fit as the ultimate steak wine. The culture of Argentina dictates a great cut of beef with a grand glass of wine to go with it. Open flame cooking adds the great flavor of char that Malbec needs to round out the perfect pairing.

# Argentina



## Wine Jewel of the Southern Hemisphere

by Scotty Whigam

Here are some of the best examples of food-friendly reds I have tasted over the last year...

<b>Bodega Colome' Estate Malbec</b>	<b>895003</b>	<b>17.49</b>	<b>92 pts Wine Advocate</b>
<i>Dark with spicy aromas and a succulent texture- biodynamically farmed, too! This high elevation (7000 ft) offering from the Hess Family is the essence of 'Mountain grown-it's the richest kind!'</i>			
<b>Kaiken Ultra Malbec</b>	<b>156270</b>	<b>13.99</b>	<b>90 pts Wine Spectator</b>
<i>Plush Texture and ripe tannins with violet aromas and a solid blackberry finish</i>			
<b>Dona Paula Estate Malbec</b>	<b>479466</b>	<b>10.49</b>	<b>90 pts Wine Spectator</b>
<i>A backbone of lush raspberries and hints of plum and licorice-really food friendly</i>			
<b>Killka Malbec from Salentein</b>	<b>608500</b>	<b>9.09</b>	<b>90 pts Wine Enthusiast</b>
<i>Ruby red with a core of plum and rounded blackberries ending in a sleek finish</i>			
<b>Pascual Toso Syrah</b>	<b>156226</b>	<b>7.69</b>	<b>88 pts 'Best Buy' Wine Enthusiast</b>
<i>With Paul Hobbs as the consulting winemaker this wine shines!</i>			
<b>Septima Cabernet Sauvignon</b>	<b>488602</b>	<b>6.99</b>	<b>87 pts Wine Spectator</b>
<i>Classic flavors yet complex and spicy with 6 months in American oak</i>			

Like chefs and their recipes the great winemakers have a full range of grapes with which to blend here. This is the 5th largest wine producing country in the world! Bonarda, Cabernet, and Syrah thrive here and add loads of complexity to any Argentine red blend. These wines totally overdeliver in bold flavors and incredible value. These are the true gems!

<b>Tikal Patriota</b>	<b>489000</b>	<b>13.29</b>	<b>92 Wine Advocate/90 Wine Spectator</b>
<i>Dense and layered with mocha and sexy oak-captivating and remarkable!</i>			
<b>Ben Marco Expresivo</b>	<b>489130</b>	<b>22.38</b>	<b>92 Wine Advocate/90 Wine Spectator</b>
<i>40 year old vines producing hints of sandalwood and dark chocolate with smoky oak</i>			
<b>Bodega Norton Privada</b>	<b>156335</b>	<b>15.39</b>	<b>92 pts Wine Spectator</b>
<i>Superb concentration and balance with ripe fruit, spices, and coffee</i>			

Lest we forget our white grape brethren, Argentina is home to its own native grape Torrontes. Fresh and aromatic with moderate acidity, it is dominated by peach and apricot aromas. It requires a deft hand in winemaking skill to achieve a balanced wine that will intrigue the palette. Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, and sparkling wines are produced in smaller quantities ensuring excellent quality.

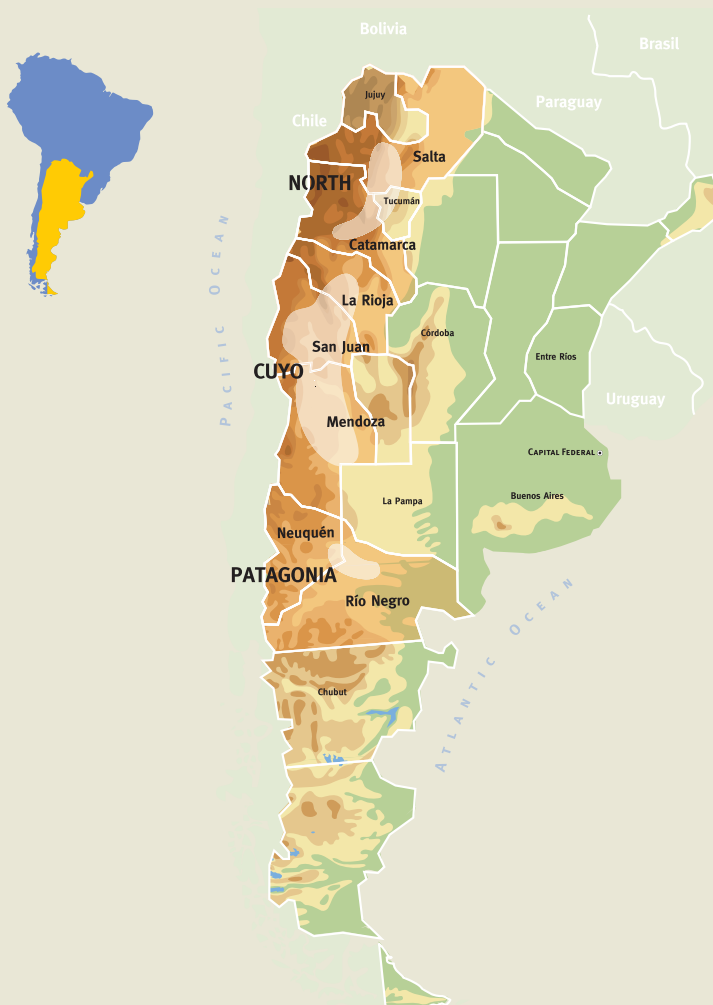
Here are a couple of little secrets that pair well with seafood and shellfish.

<b>Crios Torrontes</b>	<b>489400</b>	<b>10.49</b>	<b>90 pts Wine Advocate</b>
<i>Intensely floral with peach and melon flavors and a dry crisp finish</i>			
<b>Bodega Colome' Torrontes</b>	<b>498004</b>	<b>8.39</b>	<b>89 pts Wine Enthusiast</b>
<i>Elegant and intense with a spicy rose nose and a tropically wonderful finish</i>			
<b>Bodega Norton Rose</b>	<b>156318</b>	<b>6.29</b>	
<i>Intense aromas of strawberries and blueberries with quite a long finish and plenty o'bubbles!</i>			
<b>Portillo Sauvignon Blanc</b>	<b>605817</b>	<b>6.29</b>	
<i>Refreshing and crisp with a hint of lemongrass and tropical fruits</i>			
<b>Luca Chardonnay</b>	<b>487800</b>	<b>20.99</b>	<b>93 pts Wine Advocate</b>
<i>With toasty oak as a backdrop this wine is creamy, round, and spicy all at once!</i>			

Mendoza was voted 'Wine Region of the Year' in 2008 by the Wine Enthusiast for a reason. There are numerous tourist friendly wineries with free tours and tastings. Accommodations range from cozy to grand throughout and don't forget the quality of meat that is raised here. Overall a great destination to plan your next wine tour! Start today by enjoying a glass of Malbec with your next meal.

## Introducing in February:

<b>Red Diamond Malbec</b>	<b>889650</b>	<b>6.29</b>
<b>Diseno Torrontes</b>	<b>893522</b>	<b>7.69</b>



*Salentein Winery, Argentina*

