



## 2010 National Tasting Project

# *The Wines of Chile & Argentina*

**Project Chairperson:** Dennis Cassady  
**Email address:** [ntp@americanwinesociety.org](mailto:ntp@americanwinesociety.org)  
**Phone:** 623-561-2317

**Data Summarization:** Pam Davey  
**Email address:** [pamdavey@aol.com](mailto:pamdavey@aol.com)  
**Phone:** 440-708-0518

# Wine History of Chile<sup>(1)</sup>

## The Beginnings of the Chilean Wine Industry

Chilean wine history begins with the arrival of Spanish conquerors. In the mid-sixteenth century, the missionaries introduced the vines to produce wine for Catholic mass rituals. It is believed that the first vineyards in Chile were planted by Francisco de Aguirre Copiapó northern Chile. Diego Garcia de Caceres first planted vines in 1554 in Santiago. The grapes from the Santiago area were used in the mass production of wine, according to records dating back to 1555. The cultivation of vines and wine production moved south during the next one hundred years, reaching beyond the Bio Bio River.

Chilean wine exports increased rapidly between 1784 and 1789, competing in the international market with European wines. In 1831 it had a total of more than 19 million of vines planted in Chile. After Chilean Independence the wine industry began to blossom.



Pedro Lira's 1889 painting of the founding of Santiago by conquistadors. As the Spanish conquered the land they brought grapevines with them.



Francisco de Aguirre

## The Beginnings of the Modern Wine Industry in Chile



In 1830, Frenchman Claude Gay convinced the Chilean government of the need to create a state agricultural station to be called Quinta Normal Agriculture. Most varieties of grapes grown in Italy and France were imported to the Fifth for wine production and consumption. In 1850 the Fifth Normal had more than 40,000 vines and 70 different varieties of grapes. With the arrival of Bordeaux varieties, Chilean wine history enters the modern era of winemaking.

In 1851 Don Silvestre Ochagavía Echazarreta varieties brought from France and most classic of the period known to plant their land in Talagante. Ochagavía introduced varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon, Semillon and Riesling. These would be the basis for the beginning of the modern wine industry in Chile. The vines are easily adapted to the climate in Chile and it is believed that the vines are the only existing clones of grapes prior to the Phylloxera epidemic that exists in the world. Chile is the only producer of wine on a large scale that has never had an outbreak of Phylloxera.

In the mid-1880s, Chilean wines are exported and marketed successfully in European markets. The quality of the wines was recognized at fairs and competitions, culminating in 1889 when they won the "Grand Prix" in Paris specializing in a sample. In 1938, the area of vineyards in Chile surpassed 100,000 hectares, as the wine exports reached their maximum levels, equivalent to the prewar period.

World War II marked the beginning of a decline in the Chilean wine industry. The industry entered a period of recess, which lasted until the 1980s. In this period, the wine industry was affected dramatically by the tax levied on wine industry and social policies implemented to combat the consumption of alcohol. In 1980 the country had a total of

106,000 hectares of vineyards in production, an area similar to that of 1938; however, the country's population had nearly doubled over the same period.

In the 1970s and 1980s there was a decline in domestic demand for Chilean wine, causing a dramatic drop in the price of grapes. About half of the Chilean vines were uprooted. The political climate of the time was another factor that weakened the Chilean wine industry.

### **The Recovery and Rebirth of the Modern Chilean Wine Industry**

Upon the return to democracy in 1990, the Chilean wine industry began a slow but steady recovery. Between 1990 and 1993 an additional of 10,000 hectares of various strains wine grapes were planted in conjunction with large investments in new technologies for production of wine, with a focus on the growth of the international markets.

### **Chile's Wine Industry Today**

Chile has been highlighted as a global producer of excellent wines and spirits. Flavor, color and centuries of experience, are some of the features that make the Chilean wine one of the more popular of the world. The valleys of Chile receive an ideal combination of soil, sunlight, temperature and humidity, which lead to world class grapes and wine. Chilean wines are among the most organic. Due to the dry summer season, Chilean vineyards resist infestation and natural geographic barriers have protected the country from the arrival of Phylloxera and other diseases. The absence of these threats allows producers to grow their vineyards with reduced dependence on chemical agents. In 2007, total exports of Chilean wine exceeded \$ 1.256 billion, with destinations to five continents, led by the UK, U.S. and Canada.

Foreign investment has significantly influenced the development of the Chilean wine industry, among which are Torres Winery and Chateau Lafitte. Today, Rothschild, Pernod Ricard, Kendall-Jackson, Francisco State, Bruno Prat are among those international vintners with substantial investments in the Chilean wine industry. All of them attracted by the ideal geo-climatic conditions, the promise of premium quality fruits, healthy crop conditions, and a growing demand for Chilean wines around the world.

Special thanks to Viña Veramonte for some of the historical facts gathered for this article.

### **Chile's Wine Regions**



<sup>(1)</sup> From [www.chilean-wine.com](http://www.chilean-wine.com)

# Wine History of Argentina

The wines of Argentina have a history that has grown through the years beginning in the mid-16th century. A Chilean friar first brought wine into Argentina via a cutting. As he nurtured the seedlings, wine-making in Argentina began to morph and evolve leading to the origin of two important wine regions: Mendoza and Cuyo in the years of 1561 and 1562. To further the wine development in these areas, vine cuttings were imported from Santiago del Estero, an Argentine city.

The 19th century opened another venue of wine-making with the arrival of European settlers. The presence of the French, Italians, and Spaniards added another flavor to the developing Argentine wine. The economic implication of the newly constructed railroad in 1885 was the ease of transporting wine from the wine-making regions to the cities and other areas of Argentina.

As the demand for wine increased, the satisfaction for a great taste also grew. With the presence of wine innovator Tuburcio Benegas, a new taste was on the horizon. Benegas's genius brought the masterful formulas to wine-making enhancing the Argentina vino with the French varieties of Burgundy and Bordeaux. These wines were in harmony with the juicy Argentina meats, aplenty in these South American localities.



Provincial governor Domingo Sarmiento was instrumental in having the first Malbec vines brought from France to Argentina



Harvest at O. Fournier in Mendoza

By the 1970s, most of the wine produced in Argentina was common table wine, continuing with the trend to accompany the Argentinean meats. At the same time, policy regarding the agriculture of vineyards did not exist, causing many of the farms to overlook superiority for magnitude. This led to a decline in wine quality since a poor wine was not welcomed into the Argentine cuisine. In order to improve the quality of the wine, these vines had to be eliminated and new plants sowed. The new plants, along with the goal of excellence in wine-making, Argentine wine took on another appearance - one of first-class taste, exceptional color, and unique flair.

Although wine-making in Argentina maintained a small profile until the 1980s, local wine production has over a 300 year history. Inspired by the triumph of both California and Australian wines, Argentina began to export their creations to an international audience.

Argentina is the world's fourth or fifth-largest wine producing country. Many people don't know that. They know about the Pampas of the Gauchos, the Tango dancers passing a thorny rose mouth-to-mouth, the political setting for British hack-composer's mega-successful theatrical musical in 1978 turned into a 1997 movie (Madonna as Eva Peron), the loss of the *Malvinas*, AKA the Falklands, to Great Britain in 1982, and the *Hand of God* deployed by Maradona against England in retribution to win the 1986 Quarterfinals at the FIFA World Cup in Mexico.



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# 2010 AWS National Tasting Project

## *The Wines of Chile & Argentina*

### Common Varietal Wines

#### Chilean White:

- \*Chardonnay
- \*Sauvignon Blanc
- Riesling
- Gewurztraminer
- Chenin Blanc

#### Argentinean White:

- \*Torrontés
- Viognier

#### Chilean Red:

- \*Cabernet Sauvignon
- \*Merlot
- \*Carménère
- Syrah
- Pinot Noir

#### Argentinean Red:

- \*Malbec
- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Syrah

\*Wines we will taste for this NTP

## Varietal Characteristics

### Torrontés

Enticing aromas that are strikingly similar to Viognier, with hints of peach pit, flowers and orange citrus fruit. On the palate, it has a beautiful structure and acidity along with enticing fruit flavors that keep you coming back for another sip and plenty of body for a wine that shows such delicate aromas and flavors. Fruity, floral and yet still quite dry, this wine has to be tasted to be believed.

Yellow apples, lychee, white and purple flowers, spices, and tropical fruits are all common flavor descriptors of Torrontés.

### Sauvignon Blanc

Sauvignon Blanc Smell and/or Flavor Elements	
Varietal Aromas/Flavors:	Processing Bouquets/Flavors:
<u>Herbaceous</u> : grass, weeds, lemon-grass, gooseberry	vanilla, sweet wood
<u>Vegetal</u> : bell pepper, green olive, asparagus, capsicum	butter, cream
<u>Fruity</u> : grapefruit, lime, melon	oak, smoke, toast
<u>Aggressive</u> : mineral, "catbox"	flint

## Chardonnay

Varietal Aromas/Flavors:	Processing Bouquets/Flavors:
<u>Stone Fruits</u> : apple, pear, peach, apricot	<u>Malolactic</u> : butter, cream, hazelnut
<u>Citric Fruits</u> : lemon, lime, orange, tangerine	<u>Oak (light)</u> : vanilla, sweet wood, coconut
<u>Tropical Fruits</u> : pineapple, banana, mango, guava, kiwi	<u>Oak (heavy)</u> : oak, smoke, toast, lees, yeast
<u>Floral</u> : acacia, hawthorn	<u>Terroir</u> : flint, mineral, mint

## Carménère

Carménère wine has a deep red color and aromas found in red fruits, spices and berries. The tannins are gentler and softer than those in Cabernet Sauvignon and it is a medium body wine. Although mostly used as a blending grape, wineries do bottle a pure varietal Carménère which, when produced from grapes at optimal ripeness, imparts a cherry-like, fruity flavor with smoky, spicy and earthy notes and a deep crimson color. Its taste might also be reminiscent of dark chocolate, tobacco, and leather. The wine is best drunk young

## Merlot

Typical Merlot Smell and/or Flavor Descriptors	
Varietal Aromas/Flavors:	Processing Bouquets/Flavors:
<u>Fruit</u> : currant, black cherry, plum	<u>Oak (light)</u> : vanilla, coconut, sweet wood
<u>Floral</u> : violet, rose	<u>Oak (heavy)</u> : oak, smoke, toast, tar
<u>Spice</u> : caramel, clove, bay leaf, green peppercorn	<u>Bottle Age</u> : truffle, mushroom, earth, coffee, leather, cedar, cigar box
<u>Herbal</u> : bell pepper, green olive	

## Malbec

Malbec is usually low in acidity, high in tannins, and has an inky-black color. It is described as being a rich deep purple with an earthy and slightly musty but pleasant aroma. It is a full bodied wine with a hint of mocha and an alluring blend of blackberry, blueberry and dark cherry.

## Cabernet Sauvignon

Typical Cabernet Sauvignon Smell and/or Flavor Descriptors	
Varietal Aromas/Flavors:	Processing Bouquets/Flavors:
<u>Fruit</u> : black currant, blackberry, black cherry	<u>Oak (light)</u> : vanilla, coconut, sweet wood
<u>Herbal</u> : bell pepper, asparagus (methoxy-pyrazine), green olive	<u>Oak (heavy)</u> : oak, smoke, toast, tar
<u>Spice</u> : ginger, green peppercorn, pimento	<u>Bottle Age</u> : cedar, cigar box, musk, mushroom, earth, leather

# Wine Tasting Instructions For the Presenter

***This is a BLIND tasting. All tasting wines must be bagged to conceal their identity.  
Do not reveal the wines to the participants before the tasting.***

## **Wine Selection**

For the aperitif, choose any wine(s) you wish that fits your budget.

For the tasting, there will be 1 white wine and 5 red wines.

- 1 Chardonnay from Chile
- 1 Carménère from Chile
- 1 Merlot from Chile
- 1 Malbec from Argentina
- 2 Cabernet Sauvignons from Chile

Purchase the vintages listed – they are the most recent available as of this time. Choose 6 wines to taste. The number of bottles needed of each depends on the number of participants at the tasting and how carefully they are poured. There are 25.6 ounces of wine in a 750ml bottle. If you pour 1-1½ ounces of wine per person, you can get approximately 16-20 pours per bottle.

We have chosen wines that are made in large quantities, as much as possible, so you should be able to find most of them. If you have trouble finding them in wine stores near you, many are available online. Start looking early so you have time to order, if necessary. Please contact Dennis Cassady if you are having major problems.

The white wines should be served at about 54-61°F. Serve the red wines at about 65° F (cellar temperature). If you serve the red wines warm, it may strongly diminish the aromas and flavors of the wine.

## **Tasting Preparation**

Supplies Needed:

- Tasting wines
- Paper bags long enough to cover the bottles
- Tape
- Marking pen
- Corkscrew
- Extra blank corks (opt.)

Instructions:

1. Number the bags, keeping track of which wine is in each bag number. The wines should be tasted in the order of the varietals selected on the sheets from lighter reds to bolder reds.
2. Remove the capsules from the bottles completely.
3. One hour before the tasting, open the red wines to allow them to breathe. If a cork is easily identifiable, replace it with a blank cork or another wine's cork so it is not identifiable. If a screw top cap is used, replace it with a blank cork.
4. Place the bottle in a numbered paper bag to correspond with your list and tape the bag shut near the top so the wine cannot be identified.

## Conducting the Tasting

### Supplies Needed:

- Prepared wines for tasting blind
- One wine glass per person
- AWS Scoring Sheets
- Varietal Profile Sheets (one per person) – Pages 5 & 6
- Pens/pencils
- Presentation information and materials.
- Summary reporting form

### Instructions:

1. Review the reporting instructions and material so you are familiar with what information will be presented during the tasting.
2. It is important that each participant use the AWS scoring sheet to write down descriptors and scores. Encourage everyone to score the wines.
3. If the taster is an AWS Graduate Wine Judge, he/she needs to mark Y (es) in the GWJ spot in the upper right hand corner of the scoring sheet. It is important for proper analysis that judge status is identified.
4. Start the tasting with the background information provided or your own research on Chilean and Argentinean wine history.
5. Introduce the varietal profile sheet that provides descriptors and normal characteristics for each varietal.
6. Ask the volunteers to pour the wines, one at a time, in the order as numbered. Allow a few minutes after each wine is poured for everyone to taste, score and write comments before proceeding to the next wine. We highly recommend that the tasting be conducted with no discussion so others are not influenced. Once the tasting is complete, you can reveal the wines and encourage discussion.
7. When the tasting is finished, collect all the scoring sheets. Follow the instructions provided for reporting the results.

## Reporting Your Results

Make sure that each participant uses the AWS 20-point scoring sheet to record ratings. Scores should be reported in full (not fractional) points. When all the wines have been scored, collect the attendees' forms and record the scores on the summary form. Even if tasters do not want to have their scores recorded, please include them in the number in attendance in the top section of the form.

Using Microsoft Excel, fill out the Chapter and Wine Information sections page on Page 1. In the Wines section, enter the wine number, vintage, description and cost for each wine. In the Results section, mark Y(es) or N(o) to designate whether the taster is an AWS Graduate Wines Judge and then record the scores for each wine. If you have more than 25 tasters, click on the Page 2 tab in the lower left corner and you will see a form to record the results for 150 additional tasters. When you have completed filling in the worksheet(s), please email the file within 2 weeks of the tasting, to [pamdavey@aol.com](mailto:pamdavey@aol.com). You will receive an e-mail acknowledging receipt of your data.

If you don't have Excel – no problem! We are developing a way for you to report your results on the AWS website. This will mean that you don't need Microsoft Excel to fill out the summary sheet. We hope to have the web-based reporting available by May 15. Watch the website and the [AWS News](#) for more information.

If you have any questions, contact Dennis Cassady (623-561-2317 or [ntp@americanwinesociety.org](mailto:ntp@americanwinesociety.org)) or Pam Davey (440-708-0518 or [pamdavey@aol.com](mailto:pamdavey@aol.com)). Please return the results to us within 2 weeks of your tasting. **We must receive all data by October 15 in order to include it in the final report.**

**Have a great tasting and enjoy the wines!**

# AWS National Tasting Project 2010

Chapter Name & State:		Contact Name:	
Date of Tasting:		Contact Email:	
Number in Attendance:		Contact Telephone:	

Wine No.	Year	Description	Price

Results:	Wine Judge?						
Taster #1							
Taster #2							
Taster #3							
Taster #4							
Taster #5							
Taster #6							
Taster #7							
Taster #8							
Taster #9							
Taster #10							
Taster #11							
Taster #12							
Taster #13							
Taster #14							
Taster #15							
Taster #16							
Taster #17							
Taster #18							
Taster #19							
Taster #20							
Taster #21							
Taster #22							
Taster #23							
Taster #24							
Taster #25							
Average:		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

# AWS National Tasting Project 2010

Chapter Name & State:	Phoenix, AZ	Contact Name:	Mike Malbec
Date of Tasting:	August 8, 2010	Contact Email:	aws-phoenixchapter@cox.net
Number in Attendance:	42	Contact Telephone:	523-561-2317

Wine No.	Year	Description	Price
CH1	2008	Santa Rita 120 Chardonnay Central Valley, Chile	9
CA3	2008	MontGras Carmenère Reserva, Colchagua Valley, Chile	14
ME2	2008	Concha Y Toro "Casillero Del Diablo" Reserve Merlot, Chile	11
MA1	2006	Bodega Norton Reserve Malbec, Argentina	18
CS1	2007	Vina Montes "Alpha" Cabernet Sauvignon, Chile,	24
CS3	2007	Casa Lapostolle Cabernet Sauvignon, Rapel Valley, Chile	14

Results:	Wine Judge?	CH1	CA3	ME2	MA1	CS1	CS3
Taster #1	N	14.0	17.0	15.0	13.0	16.0	12.0
Taster #2	N	13.0	15.0	14.0	15.0	15.0	14.0
Taster #3	N	13.0	16.0	13.0	15.0	17.0	13.0
Taster #4	N	15.0	15.0	15.0	14.0	18.0	11.0
Taster #5	Y	14.0	16.0	16.0	17.0	17.0	13.0
Taster #6							
Taster #7							
Taster #8							
Taster #9							
Taster #10							
Taster #11							
Taster #12							
Taster #13							
Taster #14							
Taster #15							
Taster #16							
Taster #17							
Taster #18							
Taster #19							
Taster #20							
Taster #21							
Taster #22							
Taster #23							
Taster #24							
Taster #25							
Average:		13.8	15.8	14.6	14.8	16.6	12.6



**APPEARANCE**

- 3 - Excellent - Brilliant with outstanding characteristic color.
- 2 - Good - Clear with characteristic color.
- 1 - Poor - Slight haze and/or slight off color.
- 0 - Objectionable - Cloudy and/or off color.

**AROMA AND BOUQUET**

- 6 - Extraordinary - Unmistakable characteristic aroma of grape-variety or wine-type. Outstanding and complex bouquet. Exceptional balance of aroma and bouquet.
- 5 - Excellent - Characteristic aroma. Complex bouquet. Well balanced.
- 4 - Good - Characteristic aroma. Distinguishable bouquet.
- 3 - Acceptable - Slight aroma and bouquet. Pleasant.
- 2 - Deficient - No perceptible aroma or bouquet or with slight off odors.
- 1 - Poor - Off odors.
- 0 - Objectionable - Objectionable or offensive odors.

**TASTE AND TEXTURE**

- 6 - Extraordinary - Unmistakable characteristic flavor of grape-variety or wine-type. Extraordinary balance. Smooth, full-bodied and overwhelming.
- 5 - Excellent - All of the above but a little less. Excellent but not overwhelming.
- 4 - Good - Characteristic grape-variety or wine-type flavor. Good balance. Smooth. May have minor imperfections.
- 3 - Acceptable - Undistinguished wine but pleasant. May have minor off flavors. May be slightly out of balance, and/or somewhat thin or rough.
- 2 - Deficient - Undistinguished wine with more pronounced faults than above.
- 1 - Poor - Disagreeable flavors, poorly balanced, and/or unpleasant texture.
- 0 - Objectionable - Objectionable or offensive flavors and/or texture.

**AFTERTASTE**

- 3 - Excellent - Lingering outstanding aftertaste.
- 2 - Good - Pleasant aftertaste.
- 1 - Poor - Little or no distinguishable aftertaste.
- 0 - Objectionable - Unpleasant aftertaste.

**OVERALL IMPRESSION**

- 2 - Excellent
- 1 - Good
- 0 - Poor

**TOTAL SCORES**

- 18 - 20 Extraordinary
- 15 - 17 Excellent
- 12 - 14 Good
- 9 - 11 Commercially Acceptable
- 6 - 8 Deficient
- 0 - 5 Poor and Objectionable

The **American Wine Society** is a national non-profit consumer organization which is dedicated to educating its members and the general public about wine appreciation, production and use. The society is an independent organization with no commercial affiliation and has chapters throughout the United States and Canada. Membership is open to anyone interested in wine - amateur, enthusiast or professional.

*For further information contact:*

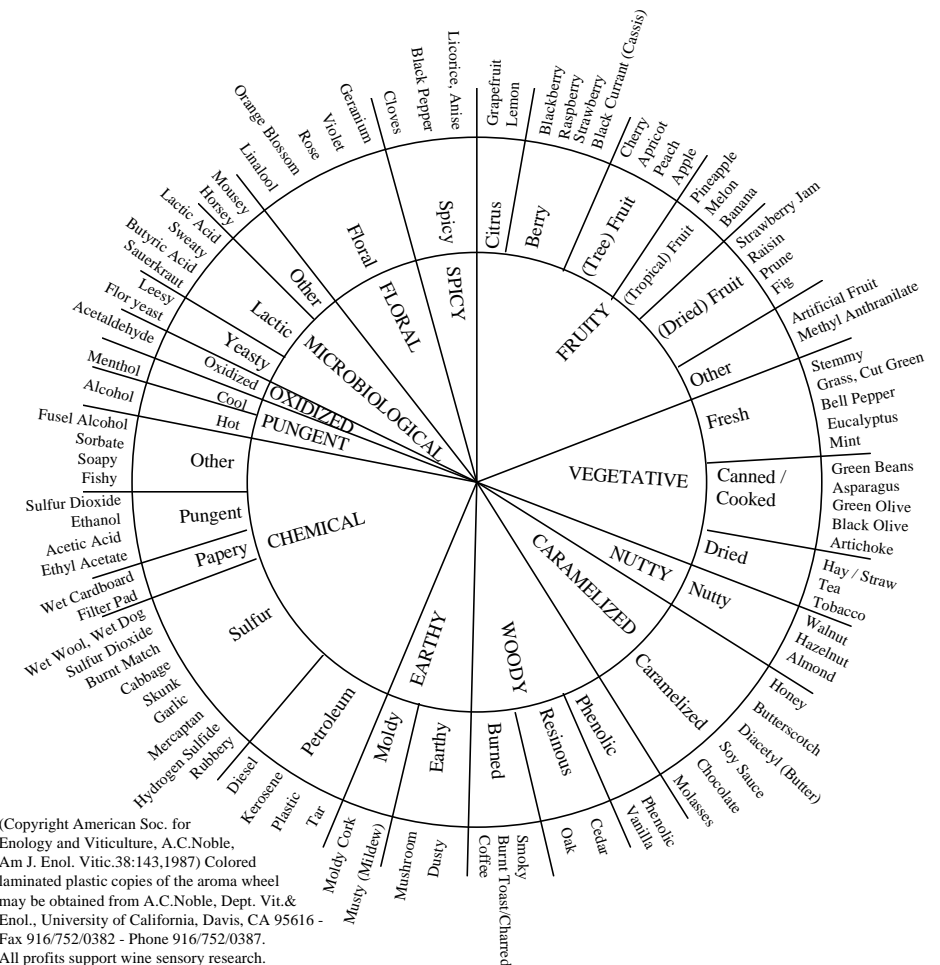
**AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY**

200 East Crogan Street  
Suite 201

Lawrenceville, GA 30046

PHONE 678-377-7070

Mary Ann Coskery, Executive Director  
coskery@americanwinesociety.org



(Copyright American Soc. for Enology and Viticulture, A.C.Noble, Am J. Enol. Vitic.38:143,1987) Colored laminated plastic copies of the aroma wheel may be obtained from A.C.Noble, Dept. Vit.& Enol., University of California, Davis, CA 95616 - Fax 916/752/0382 - Phone 916/752/0387. All profits support wine sensory research.

