

## From the Grape Vine

by Robert Kleffel & Noemí Paz

### Wine Blends

#### Blending Wines in Bordeaux

When people just say "Bordeaux wine", they typically mean the classic red the French, over centuries, have mastered the art of blending to create a consistent taste. Because the climate in France is variable, there are good years and bad years. The wine masters use blending to improve the taste of the wine. The red Bordeauxs are created with Cabernet Sauvignon, often blended with Cabernet Franc and Merlot. The color tends to be a garnet/ruby shade. The flavor is typically light with blackberry, black fruits, wood, and other notes. A classic Bordeaux

is said to have a "cigar box" aroma to it. Legally, the grapes that can be included in a red Bordeaux can only come from the following varieties: Cabernet, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, and Carmenere.

In the Graves District of Bordeaux, the dry whites, are made by blending mostly Sauvignon Blanc with a small amount of Sauvignon Gris. In the Sauternes District, the sweeter whites are made with Sémillon, Sauvignon, and a drop of Muscadelle.

**Blending Wines in the New World** — In the Americas, wine masters are not bound by revered traditions or strict legislation. Further, because of less variable climates there



was not the need to "correct" problems with the wine due to climate. As a result, vintners produce unblended wines with the name of the grape on the label rather than the name of the district in which the grapes were grown.

Concha y Toro created a new line of wines called Trio. These wines always are a blend of three wines and are very good.

There is a growing trend in blending wines not to correct defects but rather to create an interesting new wine taste. The wines that follow are great examples.

**25 Lagunas, \$106 Pesos, about \$8.70 US** — North of Mendoza, Argentina's dominant grape growing areas lies Huanacache region of San Juan. There once was a chain of 25 interconnected lagoons inhabited by the indigenous Huarpe tribes who traveled in small canoes called "Lagooners." These lagoons have long since dried up, leaving what is now a renowned viticulture region. It is practically uninhabited, with vast expanses of vineyards that take their irrigation from the crystal clean runoff of the nearby Andes.

Finca Rewen, the winery that produces 25 Lagunas, has an estate vineyard located at 2,000 feet, near the foothills of the Andes Mountains. San Juan is an arid wine region, known for having intense sun, and is ideal for producing warm climate varietals. The Cabernet/Syrah blend does not taste like either of its grapes. It is a new clean taste that is very food friendly, a great table wine.



#### Tasting Notes:

- Eye: red and violet hints.
- Nose: red fruits and spices.
- Palate: fresh and clean palate with round tannins and a long finish.

**Finca Beltron Duo, \$73 Pesos, about \$6 US** — The Chenin grape does not have the fine reputation of the Chardonnay but it is a hardy grape that blends well with Chardonnay. Chardonnay does not always go well with food but is excellent as an aperitif. This Beltron Duo belongs on the dinner table. It even goes with salads with vinaigrette dressing. Finca Beltron is a wholly organic vintner and at its low price you should try it.

**Tasting Notes:** Lively tropical fruits dominate the senses, finishing with a deliciously creamy and slightly honeyed peach and pear flavor.

*We welcome your comments and suggestions .Email: Noemí Paz at [licorespaz@hotmail.com](mailto:licorespaz@hotmail.com) or Robert Kleffel at [bkleffel@hotmail.com](mailto:bkleffel@hotmail.com)*

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