North and South, wine makers in the Americas are continually producing exciting, interesting and high-quality wines which bear a distinct sense of style and place.

North America is the world’s most important wine producer and consumer outside Europe, in spite of the lasting legacy of prohibition and the large proportion of Americans who are either teetotal or only drink spirits or beer. Canada is a relatively new kid on the block, but is now making a name for itself as a small but quality-focused producer of fine wines.

South America is arguably the most important wine-producing continent after Europe. European vines were grown in Peru in 1531 long before they reached other countries in the new world.

South America’s wine industry, like its culture, is heavily influenced by the original immigrants who settled there, and their descendants.

♥ = sparkling wine  
○ = white wine  
● = red wine  
White/fortified wines from bone dry [1] to lusciously sweet [9].  
S = screwcap

CHILE

Surrounded by geographical barriers with the Atacama Desert to the north, the Andes to the east, the Patagonian Ice Field to the south, and the Pacific Ocean to the west, Chile’s unique and diverse combination of geography and climate makes it ideal for winegrowing. Unusually it is not the distance from the Equator which plays the dominant role here, rather the vineyards’ proximity to the Pacific Ocean or the Andes Mountains, with a greater diversity in soils and climates from east to west than from north to south.
1. **Viña Litoral Sauvignon Blanc, Leyda Valley 2013**
   Lovely nettle-leaf scented sauvignon blanc. Made by gifted new winemaker Stefano Gandolini at Ventolera, who have some of the best vineyards in Leyda. Drink this year and next. 13.5% S
   *ref CE7421*  £8.95 bottle  £107 dozen

   The cool-climate wine region of Leyda is situated close to the coast, and strongly influenced by the cooling influence of the cold waters of the Pacific. Afternoon sea breezes have a marked influence in reducing the land temperature, making this area ideal for slow-ripening varieties such as sauvignon blanc.

2. **The Society’s Chilean Chardonnay, Limarí Valley**
   Crisp and vibrant Limarí Valley chardonnay with about 10% barrel-fermented wine to contribute a little roundness without masking the bright citrus fruit. Drink this year. 14%
   *ref CE5151*  £6.75 bottle  £81 dozen

3. **Concha y Toro Corte Ignacio Casablanca Riesling 2013**
   From a very cool, top vineyard in western Casablanca, this is a medium-dry riesling with about a third of the harvest affected by noble rot, overlaying a lovely light honeyed aroma and flavour over a bright, fresh palate. Drink now to 2018. 12% S
   *ref CE7331*  £8.50 bottle  £102 dozen

4. **Talinay Limestone Coast Limarí Pinot Noir 2011**
   Understated, mineral pinot from a very cold limestone vineyard close to the sea. Great finesse and purity. Drink now to 2016. 14.5% S
   *ref CE7631*  £13.50 bottle  £162 dozen
A break in the coastal mountain range to the northwest of the Limarí Valley results in a very strong cooling influence from the 14ºC Pacific Ocean for vineyards planted about 25km from the coast. This cool climate, with rainfall of just 100mm per year, little or no frost risk and some soils containing limestone produce mineral styles of wine which ages well.

5. **Primus Maipo Cabernet Sauvignon 2011**
New to The Society, Primus is made by Veramonte from top-quality grapes sourced from some of the best vineyards in Alto Maipo. This fine, cedary cabernet sauvignon is a lovely example of the Maipo style. Drink now to 2018. 13.5%

*ref CE7531 £9.95 bottle £119 dozen*

6. **Koyle El Peuco Tempranillo-Mourvèdre Alto Colchagua 2011**
Exclusive to The Wine Society, from a vineyard in the hills above Los Lingues, this is a fine, smoky tempranillo with about 14% mourvèdre to add depth and grip, aged in barrel for over a year. Drink now to 2018. 14%

*ref CE7151 £11.50 bottle £138 dozen*

7. **De Martino Alto de Piedras Isla del Maipo Carmenère 2011**
Ripe, rich and concentrated carmenère from a well-managed vineyard in the Isla de Maipo planted in 1992. Aged for 18 months in barrel. Will age well and become quite Bordeaux-like. Drink now to 2022. 13%

*ref CE7381 £17.00 bottle £204 dozen*

The Alto Maipo is situated in the Andean foothills around 1,300 to 2,600 feet above sea level. These vineyards benefit from afternoon sunshine and cool night-time temperatures which ensure long slow ripening, essential for high-quality wine production.
8. **Miguel Torres Santa Digna Merlot Curicó 2011**
From the 15-year-old El Aromo vineyard in Curicó, this is lovely plummy merlot, yet lively and fresh too. 80% aged in barrel for six months. Drink now to 2016. 14%
ref CE6911 £7.50 bottle £90 dozen

9. **De Martino Gallardía del Itata Cinsault 2013**
Lovely ripe, peppery cinsault with sweet fruit and soft tannins. Enjoy in its exuberant youth and serve cool.
Drink this year and next. 13.5% S
ref CE7371 £8.95 bottle £107 dozen

De Martino dislike the overt aromas of new oak and so have turned to using 2,500-litre foudres. The size does not contribute any oak flavour, but allows oxygen to develop the flavours and soften the tannins in the red wines

ARGENTINA
The world’s fifth largest wine producer, Argentina has an enviable diversity of grape varieties thanks to mid-19th century immigration from Spain and Italy. Here the quality of the vineyards is due to altitude which ranges from 2,300 to 4,600 feet and up to 9,080 feet in the northern province of Salta. At this height overnight temperatures regularly drop low enough to produce deeply flavoured and coloured reds and aromatic whites.

10. ○ [2] **Faldeos Nevados Torrontés 2013**
Peach and grape-scented torrontés, Argentina’s original white grape, with a streak of lemony freshness. 50% comes from Cafayate vineyards and 50% from Altamira.
Drink this year and next. 14% S
ref AR2931 £7.50 bottle £90 dozen
Torrontés has become one of Argentina’s best-loved wines, ranking second in white wine exports from the country. There are three strains of torrontés – Mendocino, Sanjuanino and Riojano. The first two are best suited to being drunk whilst young and fresh; the latter is the most extensively grown of the three and is used for the production of premium wines. Torrontés makes a perfect aperitif, or is well suited to spicy and aromatic Chinese or Thai cuisine.

From a 70-year-old vineyard in Alta Mira, this is a superb example of semillon, with typical greengage aromas and old-vine texture. Drink now to 2018. 13%
ref AR2981 £10.50 bottle £126 dozen

12. ● Weinert Carrascal 2008
This delicious Argentine red is made from a blend of 40% malbec, 35% cabernet sauvignon and 25% merlot aged two years in foudres and six months in vats before bottling. Rich, velvety texture with mature flavours of cedar and leather.
Drink now to 2017. 14%
ref AR2841 £7.95 bottle £95 dozen

13. ● Susana Balbo Signature Malbec Mendoza 2011
This superb wine is a complex blend of 90% malbec with 10% cabernet sauvignon from an excellent-quality, cool harvest. It has a beautiful floral nose and a caressing velvety palate. Aged 13 months in 80% new French barrels and 20% second use. Drink now to 2020. 14.5%
ref AR2851 £12.95 bottle £155 dozen
Malbec was introduced to Mendoza in the mid-19th century, possibly via Chile’s pre-phylloxera vine imports from Bordeaux. Central Mendoza has the longest-established reputation for making fine wine in Argentina. Here the temperate climate combines with unusually gravelly soils which provide good drainage and low fertility, essential for the production of high-quality wine.

**URUGUAY**

Uruguay has an Atlantic-influenced climate, with warm summers and beneficial ocean breezes which cool the coastal vineyards. As in New Zealand, the wine maker’s biggest issue is high humidity or rainfall close to harvest and so vintages can vary widely.

Uruguay boast 9,000 hectares of vineyards, the largest concentration of which are in the coastal regions of Montevideo, San José and Canelones.

14. **Atlántico Sur Garzón Vineyard Marselan**  
    **Maldonado 2013**

Marselan is a Uruguayan cabernet sauvignon-grenache cross. Its lovely sweet, ripe, peppery grenache-like fruit underpinned by a cool southern Atlantic freshness. Drink now to 2016. 12.5%

*ref UR311  £8.50 bottle  £102 dozen*

Garzón is a new, cool area 22km from the east coast of Uruguay, in the Maldonado region. During the ripening period the average minimum is 16°C and the maximum 27°C. The soil is decomposed granite, low in fertility and very well drained, which results in low vigour, rare in Uruguay. This leads to fine aromatic wines with ripe tannins.
15. **Bouza Tempranillo Tannat 2012**
A lovely blend of 60% tempranillo for aroma and 40% tannat for structure aged for nine months in American and French oak barrels from a top-quality producer. Drink now to 2017. 14.5%

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Tannat is the star performer in Uruguay, producing deep, rich full-bodied reds, with a herbal, black-fruit character. Tannat produced in Uruguay is much plumper and more velvety than that produced in its homeland in southwest France and can often be drunk when only a year or two old.

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**USA**

Only France, Spain and Italy produce more wine that the USA, with all 50 states (including Alaska!) now making wine. Of these, California produces over 90% of all the wine made in the USA. Here the potential of the vineyard site is determined by what lies between it and the Pacific: the more mountains between the vineyard site and the sea, the less chance there is of the cooling sea air or fog reaching the vineyard to moderate the climate. Within the Pacific Northwest, northern Oregon is making a name for itself with the production of distinctive cool-climate pinot noir.

16. **Quartet Anderson Valley Brut Roederer Estates**
Quartet is the name of Roederer’s superb sparkling wine from Mendocino County. The vineyards are situated in the northern Anderson Valley, cooled by the proximity of the Pacific Ocean. The wine comes from a blend of four separate vineyards, hence the name. This blend of 70% chardonnay and 30% pinot noir is crisp and elegant in style, yet with a dry richness from ageing in bottle on yeast lees. Drink this year and next. 12%

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17.  • Lemelson Thea’s Selection Pinot Noir 2011, Willamette Valley
Fine, sensuous and succulent pinot noir with a concentrated finish. Real finesse, with lovely fruit purity and structure.
Drink now to 2018. 13%
ref US5491 £19.50 bottle £234 dozen

In Oregon the Coast Range acts as a sheltering sea-wall but here the Ocean’s warm North Pacific current brings rain rather than fog, and moderates what might otherwise be severely cold conditions.

18.  • Ravenswood Lodi Old-Vine Zinfandel 2011
From San Joaquin County, this old-vine zinfandel benefited from dry, warm days and cool nights producing a benchmark zinfandel with juicy black-cherry fruit and rich tannins. Drink now to 2016. 14.5%
ref US5501 £8.75 bottle £105 dozen

Zinfandel is California’s most distinctive grape variety and is a close relation of Southern Italy’s primitivo. It is grown across the state, but the best examples seem to come from meso-climates which combine hot days and cool nights such as the Sierras or Dry Valley Creek. There is no single flavour profile that can be associated with zinfandel, which can range in style from light, jammy Beaujolais-style wines, to robust, oak-aged reds with ripe cassis flavours and blueberry fruit.

19.  • Ridge Geyserville 2011
A single-site zinfandel blend produced since 1966, based on some of California’s oldest zinfandel vines; the youngest are 10 years old, the oldest over 120 years, with 60% 40 years old or more. The three adjoining vineyards are on the western edge of the Alexander Valley in Sonoma County. Drink now to 2023. 14%
ref US5401 £29.00 bottle £348 dozen
CANADA
Canada’s wine industry has only come of age as recently as the late 1980s. Now, with a focus on using high-quality grape varieties, coupled with the use of modern techniques, Canadian wines can hold their own on the world stage. The best wines are labelled VQA (Vintners Quality Alliance) and are produced in the province of Ontario, where 80% of the country's grapes are grown on the Niagara Peninsula.

Stylish, lean chardonnay with great precision and minerality from Ontario. This is modelled on Burgundy. Low-intervention winemaking and no filtering means this may throw a harmless tartrate deposit. Drink now to 2016. 12.5% S
ref CA71 £19.50 bottle £234 dozen

Ontario’s grape-growing region lies between 52° and 41° placing them in the middle of the northern grape-growing belt, on the same latitude as Bordeaux and the northern wine regions of California.