

Chile & Argentina 7-Night, 8-Day Wine Tour

Provisional Itinerary

NOTE: This is a provisional itinerary. Due to the constantly evolving nature of winemaking in both Chile and Argentina we are constantly reviewing our programs as we discover new and exciting wineries. The final itinerary revision will normally be completed about 4-6 weeks before the tour. International flights normally arrive between 6 and 10 AM, and depart after 9 PM. Some carriers will include Santiago as a layover on a ticket to Mendoza; see the itinerary for details of this flight. We recommend taking a pre-tour night in Santiago and we can arrange early check-in at the hotel if you wish; please check with us for current rates.

There is (currently) a \$130 entry fee in Chile for US and some other nationalities; if you have a passport from another country you may be exempt. There is (currently) a departure tax of approximately US\$18 from Argentina.

Day 0 Sat **Hotel Bonaparte, Santiago**

OPTIONAL PRE-TOUR day – hotel only, no services

Independent arrival – airport transfers can be arranged; please contact us for pricing and details. City tour of Santiago can be arranged; please contact us for pricing and details.

Day 1 Sun November 30 **Santa Cruz - Colchagua Valley** **LD**

09:30 Depart Santiago to drive south to Colchagua.

11:00 Stop to visit Camino Real in Rancagua, then continue just down the road to Altair in Requinoa for a visit followed by lunch close to the estate. Altair is one of the new stars of Chile, so we have left time to fully explore the winery without having to rush away.

We continue south about 90 minutes, to the Colchagua Valley, Chile's most famous wine region. Check into our hotel in the center of Santa Cruz, and relax for a little before a late afternoon visit to Neyen. Neyen is a new venture which has rapidly become one of the most respected in Chile, with Patrick Valette (ex-consultant to Chateau Pavie) as consultant and his protégé Fabien Réquillard making the wine.

Dinner at Alma Campesina in Santa Cruz.

Day 2 Mon **Santa Cruz – Colchagua/Curico** **L**

This morning we drive down to Curico, Lontue and Molina regions, about an hour or so south of Colchagua. Here we visit a producer that gets a lot less attention than those up in Colchagua, but which deserves far more credit than it receives.

10:30 we visit Vina Echeverria which is one of the most interesting vineyards, not only for the quality of the wines but also to see how they manage each individual plot in the vineyard. Besides this, it is owned by a lovely family with a great welcome.

We continue to lunch with Pedro Grand, and old friend of Peter who was one of the founders of Montes – the winery next to his home is still where the bulk of Montes wine is produced. This is a lovely way to meet one of the old establishment of Chile in the house that he designed and partly built himself, and to relax with him over a leisurely lunch. This is one place you might want to bring a gift bottle, if you have packed some interesting wines.

We may possibly squeeze in another visit this afternoon, depending on how long we stay with Pedro, but typically this is such an enjoyable afternoon that we end up staying late.

We drive back up to Santa Cruz and leave dinner open for you to decide what to do on your own, depending on how tired you are.

Day 3 Tue **Santa Cruz - Colchagua Valley** **L**

10:00 Lapostolle's Clos Apalta winery, constructed just 2 or 3 years ago and dedicated to making its namesake, rated at the very top of Chilean Ultra-Premium wines. The estate is perched on the side of the valley, and it a state of the art facility.

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12:30 Visit followed by Lunch at Vina Viu Manent. Jose Miguel Viu has taken over the family affairs from his father, and has cemented the estate's reputation as one of the best producers in the valley. We enjoy a delicious lunch in the winery after our tour and tasting.

Afternoon visit to either Vina las Ninas or VOE (Vina Organica Emiliana).

Vina las Ninas was started by eight French women in the late 1990s, and is yet another of Chile's new budding superstars – the building may not be the most attractive in the valley, but the wine is definitely worth getting to know.

VOE is the main project of my friend Alvaro Espinoza, possibly the most important “young” winemaker in Chile. This is an organic vineyard which produces outstanding wine, including the excellent Coyam.

We may have a little spare time this afternoon to visit the museum next to our hotel, if we're lucky. Dinner is open tonight for you to explore the lovely little town of Santa Cruz.

Day 4 Wed

Hotel Bonaparte, Santiago

L

Depart after breakfast and head west through the upper reaches of the Colchagua Valley, then north along the “coastal” road (that doesn't really follow the coast, but is the closest passable road to it!) This is a chance to see the rural part of Chile close-up, as we follow paved and unpaved sections of road through the various farmlands. We emerge into the San Antonio Valley, which is a south-western continuation of the more famous Casablanca Valley which runs west from Santiago towards Valparaiso.

11:30-12:00 Visit to tour and taste at Casa Marin, one of the most respected wineries of the region, followed by lunch and a folkloric music performance in the home of owner, Osvaldo Marin.

16:30 Kingston Family Vineyards in Casablanca Valley. This is another new boutique winery, owned (logically) by the Kingston family. Courtney Kingston now lives in the San Francisco area, where she is in charge of marketing, but grew up here on the estate.

We continue to Santiago to check into our hotel, then leave you free to dine as you wish after a fairly strenuous day's travel.

Day 5 Thu

Hotel Bonaparte, Santiago

LD

Maipo wine region, around the city of Santiago.

10:30 Quebrada de Macul – home of Domus, one of Chile's earliest Ultra-Premium wines and still regarded as one of the best.

12:00 Almaviva, this is the joint venture between Concha y Toro and Mouton Rothschild which made history not only because of its \$100 price tag, but because it was the first non-Bordeaux wine to be traded on the most exclusive “wine exchange” in the world, the Bordeaux Negociants' Bourse. Still one of the most highly regarded wines in Chile, the winery has stuck to its original philosophy of making a single wine from a small boutique vineyard in the Bordeaux tradition, rather than branching out with different varietals – although there is now a second wine produced, again in the Bordeaux tradition.

Lunch today is rather unique; we will visit a vocational school's farmhouse restaurant for a taste of typical Chilean food prepared by some very talented students and faculty.

Our last visit of the day is to Antiyal, the personal vineyard of my friend Alvaro Espinoza, who was named 2007 “Wine Personality of the Year” at the International Wine Challenge in London. Alvaro and I were inducted into the Jurade of St. Emilion together in 2000. He is one of the most talented winemakers in the world today, and consults for several wineries in Chile. A firm believer in organic and biodynamic farming, Alvaro's personality is truly captured in his own Antiyal, which translates roughly as “Anti-man”, if you are familiar with West-Indian culture...

Dinner at Caramano, one of the most authentic Chilean chefs in Santiago, and practically never frequented by turistas – not surprising as its entry is through the garage! Don't worry, you'll love it!

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Day 6 Fri LD **Hotel Lares de Chacras, Mendoza**

Depart to the airport after breakfast, to arrive by 09:30 for the following flight to Argentina:

SANTIAGO SCL Depart 1025A EQP: AIRBUS A320

MENDOZA MDZ Arrive 1115A

On arrival in Mendoza we transfer to have lunch at Almacen del sur in the Maipú region just outside the city. This is considered the best restaurant in Mendoza by many of the local winemakers, open only for lunch as it is an extension of the original delicatessen business, located in the midst of its farmlands.

We continue with a visit to Achaval Ferrer, one of the most famous wineries in Argentina at this time, producing wines that can stand up to competition in any international market.

We check into our boutique hotel in the town of Chacras de Coria, about 15 minutes from downtown Mendoza, and give you a little free time to unpack and relax.

20:00 Depart for dinner at Cava de Cano, a boutique winery where we dine in the old cellar, with a wonderful variety of typical Argentinean dishes.

Day 7 Sat L **Hotel Lares de Chacras, Mendoza**

Today we visit the Uco Valley, about 90 minutes from Mendoza at the foothills of the Andes mountain range. This is the region with the highest potential of development in Argentina's wine industry.

9:00 We leave the hotel in the morning and we head south to the Valle de Uco region.

9:30 Our first visit and wine taste at Pulenta Estate winery which was completed only a couple of years ago and is enjoying a fine reputation already.

We continue 45 minutes to Andeluna, another of the new projects here that are attracting international attention. Owned by the Lay (as in Frito) potato family this is an excellent boutique winery.

14:00 At lunch time we'll visit Altus winery, where after the visit we'll have the pleasure of enjoying a most delightful meal in an old house specially designed to receive guests.

16:30-18:00 Return to hotel in the afternoon with free time to spend as you wish, either relaxing at the hotel or you could choose to go into the city to shop and sightsee if you have energy to spare.

Dinner is open tonight, but we will of course advise, reserve or accompany you as needed, either in Chacras de Coria or Mendoza. There is a rich choice of fine places to dine...

Day 8 Sun L **Departure**

Luján de Cuyo vineyards all day, before we depart in the evening.

Our first visit is at Tapiz winery, where we will start by visiting the vineyards and finish in the winery, tasting wine from American and French oak barrels to see the differences in character.

We continue to Decero (Swiss owner who also has wineries in Napa & Australia) another top winery that used to be called Landelia.

Vina Ruca Malen, where we enjoy a visit of this top estate followed by an excellent lunch at the winery overlooking the magnificent Andes mountain range.

Our final visit is to the tiny winery of Carmelo Patti, where we'll be received by Carmelo himself, one of the most remarkable winemakers in Argentina and making some of the most remarkable wines. Return to the airport by 16:00 in time to check in for our departing flights.

Price per person based on a min. 6 guests, double occupancy from \$3575. Single Supp: \$925

Note: All visits are subject to change due to winery schedules or other unforeseen circumstances. Please don't hesitate to request specific wineries that you would like to visit; we will always do our best to include any customization of the itinerary that is reasonably possible.

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