

## Growth Spurt

Soft peso means robust Argentine wine sales.



**The Globetrotting Wine Guy**

**C**all it the good with the bad, but Argentine wine exports grew 47.5 percent in the first six months of 2003 versus the first six months of 2002, according to the [just-drinks.com](http://just-drinks.com) editorial team. Now that's impressive and hard to match in today's troubled global economy, but they have done it, and all indications are that the balance of the year might well see similar results.

Argentina has experienced some of the worst economic conditions in years, and as a result the peso has been greatly devalued, making it very weak against almost every other currency. This spells some of the best values ever seen for Argentine wines.

Most Argentine wineries produce one or more of the following varietals:

### Whites

- Chenin Blanc • Chardonnay • Viognier
- Riesling • Tempanillo • Sauvignon-Blanc
- Syrah Rose

### Reds

- Malbec • Shiraz • Bonarda Sangiovesa • Merlot

With respect to the 2003 vintage, most varietals were of good quality but short on volume. It was an excellent year for Malbec because of very hot temperatures in the last month of the vintage. The reds are full of deep color with ripe Tannins. Chardonnays are ripe and tropical. Semillons are zesty with a lemon ripe citrus profile.

### Leading wineries include:

- Trapiche • Terrazas • Etchart • Norton
- Santa Julia • Nicolas Catena
- Big Daddy Vineyards • Alta Vista • Elsa
- Henry LagardeTapiz • Salentein • Felipe Rutini
- Alamos • Broquel • Davis Family • Viniterra
- Crotta • Balbi • Finca Koch • Angaro
- Anastasia • Gentile Collins • Falling Star • Luigi Bosca\*

If you haven't yet put Argentine wines on your roster, now is your chance. They're more available and more affordable. And if you serve a Malbec or Gran Malbec with the steak at your next ballroom BBQ, you'll be a very happy camper indeed.

*Fred Tibbitts, president of Fred Tibbitts & Associates, is the foremost wine by the glass consultant for chain hotels.*

\*Not yet available in the United States due to a name dispute with Bosca of Italy.

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