



AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY

Grapevine



Lehigh Valley Chapter April 2024

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LehighValleyAWS.org



April Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting

Malbec: Mendoza vs. The World!

Sunday, April 21, 2024 - 1:00PM to 4:00PM

Taste of Italy

639 Main Street, Hellertown, PA 18055

Hosted by Geoff Harrington & Lisa Waelchli

Register at LVAWS.org by Wednesday, April 10th (limited to 40)



April Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Anatolian Kitchen

Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 6:00 PM

3016 Linden Street, Bethlehem, PA 18017

Hosted by Ann Vlot

Register at LVAWS.org by Thursday, April 18th (limited to 30)



May Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting

Italy vs France

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 6:00PM

Delizioso Italian Grill

1985 Brookside Road, Macungie, PA 18062

Hosted by Joe Pugliese and Kevin Campbell

Register at LVAWS.org by Tuesday, May 14th (limited to 40)



May Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Mis Raices Columbian Restaurant & Bakery

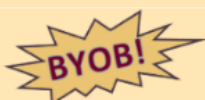
Thursday, May 30, 2024 at 6:00 PM

2915 Schoenersville Road, Bethlehem, PA 18017

(formerly Cactus Blue)

Hosted by Ann Vlot

Register at LVAWS.org by Thursday, May 23rd (limited to 25)





June Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Penn Pizza

Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 6:00 PM
1251 S. Cedar Crest Blvd, Allentown, PA 18103
(located at the medical office building)
Hosted by Ann Vlot
Register at LVAWS.org by Friday, June 21st

SAVE THE DATE

Message from the Chair - Kevin Campbell

Our string of great events continued in March. For those of you that were traveling and unable to attend the **Breloff's** tasting, you really missed a good one. Awesome wines and very well presented. See full write-up later in this newsletter.

The March BYOB organized by **Ann Vlot** was attended by over 30 people and I believe a record turnout for our Chapter. We were trying a new venue at **Delizioso's** and they really came through for us. It was quite a challenge to have such a large group ordering from an extensive menu with so many individual checks. Rosa and her young daughter, also named Rosa, really hustled serving us and Joe in the kitchen did a wonderful job preparing the food. It appears we have now discovered a great new venue and are looking forward to holding our May Italy vs. France tasting at their outside patio.

On Sunday April 21, **Geoff Harrington** and **Lisa Waelchi** will be hosting our April tasting. It will feature Malbec from Mendoza vs. other Malbecs from around the world. This tasting will also be at a new venue, **Taste of Italy** in Hellertown. I believe it has been more than 20 years since our Chapter held a Malbec tasting and I'm confident **Geoff** and **Lisa** will do a great job.

Then on April 24th, **Ann Vlot** has us go back to **Anatolian Kitchen** in Bethlehem for our monthly BYOB event. Given the high turnouts at our recent BYOBs, if you are interested in attending, I'd register early as this event will most likely sell out.

Please also welcome two **new members**: **Charlotte Buck** and **Tracy McGinty**. We look forward to meeting you at a future BYOB or tasting!

Cheers,

Kevin

Chair of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the American Wine Society

Follow Us on Social Media!

There is no need to wait for the monthly newsletter to find out what is happening in our LVAWS. You can keep up to date with information and event pictures on our website and on Facebook and Instagram social media.

Nancy Parker (Facebook), Shannon Tompkins (Instagram) and Mike Parker (website) keep you informed.



Website: lehighvalleyaws.org



Facebook Group: American Wine Society- Lehigh Valley Chapter



Instagram Group: [aws_lehighvalley](https://www.instagram.com/aws_lehighvalley)

Press the Icon - follow and like us today!

April Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting Malbec: Mendoza vs. The World!



Sunday, April 21, 2024 - 1:00PM to 4:00PM

Hosted by Geoff Harrington and Lisa Waelchli

Taste of Italy

639 Main Street, Hellertown, PA 18055

\$55 per person (includes wine and food)

Register at LVAWS.org by Wednesday, April 10th



Many believe that the thick-skinned Malbec grape has found its ultimate expression in the dark-hued and richly flavored wines of Mendoza, Argentina, but Malbec had its origins in France and powers great wines in Cahors. It has also produced some memorable bottles in California and Washington. Let your palate decide! Then enjoy great Italian cuisine from Chef Santo at Tre Scalini.

Special thanks to Kevin Campbell for his guidance in wine pairings.

Limited to 40 people

Remember to bring 2 wine glasses and a bottle of wine to share.

Wine Education – Malbec Wines Suzanne Laverick-Stone

It Takes Two to Tango




The *bandoneon* is perhaps an unfamiliar musical instrument to many, but when you hear its accordion-like music, you will immediately associate it with the iconic tango. The dance originated in the 19th century in the Rio de la Plata, the border between Argentina and Uruguay, and it did not have an auspicious beginning. A *tango* initially meant *a musical gathering of the enslaved*, eventually adopted by bar and (ahem) brothel owners to entertain guests. So, as you can imagine, it was not an immediate success with the upper crust.

However, the tango eventually made its way to France, and then the world, whereupon

Argentina's rich and famous decided to embrace it (pun intended). Quite the opposite happened with the Malbec grape. It originated in France, where it was and still is difficult to grow, but in Argentina, the grape flourished in the dry altitudes of Mendoza. Malbec's reputation spread, and is now grown world-wide, and even the French are finding a new respect for it. The terroirs of southwest France and the Mendoza in Argentina couldn't be more different, and those differences impact the wines. So, put on some tunes (I highly suggest Andrea Bocelli's performance of *Por Una Cabeza* from the 1992 film *Scent of a Woman*), grill a steak, open a lovely Malbec, and grab a partner.



Meet the Fam

Malbec is grown worldwide and the grapes can look dissimilar and produce distinctive wine characteristics depending on the clone and terroir, but generally, the grapes are dark purple and thin-skinned with robust tannins and dark fruit flavors that ripen mid-season. DNA testing has provided a look at Malbec's parentage and relatives. Merlot and Malbec share the same mother – a long-lost grape now called *Magdeleine Noire des Charentes*, almost extinct except for five vines rediscovered in France in 2009, one in a forest in Brittany, and four on Charentes farmland. There are three other “children,” and all five have different fathers. Cabernet Franc is Merlot's papa, but another obscure, also endangered grape from southwest France named *Prunelard Noir* is the father of Malbec, which means that we are lucky that Magdeleine and Prunelard found each other . Malbec itself is a parent to *Jurançon Noir* (with Folle Blanche) and *Caladoc* (with Grenache). Just like any offspring, Malbec can be bratty, although less so now that science has provided the right tools to make wine with the best expression of the terroir. We now know that it does well in a fairly dry environment with lots of sunshine, elevation, and nightly dips in temperature.

French Malbec: Merci to queens, kings, popes, and tsars!

The Malbec grape has had a rollercoaster history from fame to infamy in France, its place of origin. Like so many other European grape stories, two thousand years ago in their quest to conquer the world, it is believed that the Romans planted Malbec in Cohors in the southwestern French province of Quercy. By the 12th century, the *Black Wine of Cahors* as it was called because of its dark inkiness, was well-regarded, and the story is that it was served at royal parties including the 1152 wedding of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry Plantagenet, the future king of England. In the 14th century, Pope John XXII, while in Avignon, drank Malbec for sacramental purposes. Tsar Peter the Great swore by Malbec to ease his ulcers, and its tannic nature helped preserve it for the long trip.

France: Name that Grape

Malbec has many different names in France, most notably Auxerrois, Pressac, and Côt Rouges. The variation is due to the French *Appellation d'Origine Protégée* (AOP) method of naming wines by place, so in order to know if Malbec is in the bottle, one must know where in France it is made. There are several conceivable reasons for the name *Malbec*. Was it introduced to Bordeaux by a Monsieur Malbeck or was it derived from the French *mal bouche* (bad mouth)? Neither option is substantiated but it is not surprising that French winemakers in the Middle Ages would have “badmouthed” Malbec, relegating it to lowly blending status. Cahors was the primary producer, but laws required their wines to be sent to Bordeaux to be exported primarily to the wine-loving British. Of course, Bordeaux merchants sent their own wines first, and those from other places were not a high priority. Therefore, Malbec became lower-priced and less in demand, thus reducing plantings. Then came the pile-on, including the devastating phylloxera epidemic in the 19th century and a legendary frost in 1956, so whenever it was time to replant, many growers chose hardier varieties. Today, it is still one of the permitted blending grapes in Bordeaux with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Gamay, but not planted as much as the others. Malbec adapts to its terroir, but the cooler, damper climate of southwest France can make things difficult, as the thin-skinned grape is subject to mold, rot, frost, and disease. Cahors, though, is successful at Merlot production, with its limestone plateau and eight other classified soil types, along with hot summers and damp winters somewhat tamed by the Lot River and influenced by the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Pyrenees Mountains. The fall *vent d'autan* is hot, dry air from the south that helps grapes to ripen. Cahors was given AOC (now AOP) status in 1971, requiring Malbec to be at least 70% of the wine. Merlot and/or Tannat are permitted for blending. Today, the area has over 3,000 hectares of Malbec, and 75% of the producers are *cave particulière* (private cellars), bottling their own wines. French Malbec is usually fruitier and lighter in body and color than in warmer New World climates such as Argentina, Chile, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and the United States.

Argentinians have Malbec and mate, so don't cry for them.

Malbec has become the flagship wine of Argentina, and it is enjoying worldwide accolades, but they actually have two “official” drinks: Malbec of course, but also a drink called *mate* (rhymes with *latte*), originating thousands of years ago with the indigenous Guaraní people. Still wildly popular today, mate is a highly caffeinated tea made from leaves and twigs of the yerba plant served in a hollowed-out calabash gourd which is passed around one person at a time. While we cannot pinpoint the first time the Guaraní people thought to brew the yerba plant, we can pinpoint the place and time that Malbec made its appearance in Argentina, and surprisingly, the story starts with a Frenchman and Chile. Michel Aimé Pouget, exiled for taking part in a coup against Napoleon III, escaped to Chile in the 1840s at the government's request to see how the French varietals, including a cutting of Malbec, would prosper in their terroir. At about the same time, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento was also exiled to Chile for taking part in a coup of his own against the dictator of Argentina, Juan Manuel de Rosas. Domingo (a future president of Argentina) and Michel met, sparking a friendship that would result in Michel taking his wine acumen across the Andes to Argentina, beginning his studies in Mendoza on April 17, 1853 (which is why April 17th is Malbec World Day).



High and Dry

Mendoza is not the first place one might think to grow grapes; it is a semi-desert climate with an average of only 8 inches of rain per year (in comparison to 40 inches in France), 2,500 feet above sea level sitting in the rain shadow of the Andes. But Malbec loves sun, elevation, and diurnal shifts in temperature from day to night – hello, Mendoza. Two other factors helped to spark successful winemaking there. First, grapes need water, and the snow melt from the Andes provides it, thanks to the Huarpes and Incas, the original inhabitants, who centuries ago created a system of channels to provide irrigation, still used today. Secondly, vineyards need hardworking employees. The 19th century immigration of thousands of Italians and Spaniards provided the area with much-needed labor and know-how about wine making. But the area is not without its challenges -

Mother Nature cannot always be tamed. There can still be diurnal shifts that are too severe, as well as frost and hail, especially at the higher elevations, even in the semi-desert climate. And then there is *El Zonda*, a strong wind from the mountains to the plains bringing humidity and possible frost that can devastate flowering vines. Another danger is *La Piedra*, a freak summer hailstorm. Today's winemakers can rely on years of research, such as the use of flood irrigation, high overhead trellising, spreading crops over several locations, and mesh protection. And while Argentina's wine regions do fight roundworms that can kill vines from the roots, the phylloxera louse struggles to survive in the sandy soils, and to date has not had significant effect.

The 21st Century – Argentina Wines of Quality

Argentina has over 500,000 acres under vine and provides 84% of the world's Malbec. That is because parts of Argentina are a Malbec playground of sun, elevation, and poor but well-draining alluvial soils of stones, sand, lime, silt, and clay deposited by rivers long ago. Mendoza is in the Cuyo region of western Argentina and covers over 92,000 miles. It is divided into five sub-regions: Uco Valley, Primera Zona, Northern Oasis, the East, and the South. Most wine comes from the Uco Valley where the vineyards are in the highest altitudes (2,821 to 5,282 feet) and the Primera Zona, with two main growing areas, Maipú, the first Argentina DOC (1993), and Luján de Cuyo (1989).

“It's like finding gold – a combination of research, historic knowledge, and luck.” Dr. Laura Catena

Modern winemaking includes geologic studies in different areas, looking to find the best terroir, such as calcareous limestone deposited when a sea covered the Andes but terroir aside, the highs and lows of Argentina's winemaking business parallels its unstable political and economic history. Under Spanish rule, Argentina was exploited for resources until winning independence in 1812, followed by an economic downturn. By the turn of the 20th century, Argentina was again a wealthy country, benefitting from the advent of railways and helpful tax exemptions, but in the 1960s, during a time of political unrest, many vines were uprooted to make way for grapes like *Criolla* that produced huge quantities of cheap jug wine, giving Argentina a bad reputation. Warfare from 1978 to 1990 led to, among other things, uprooting more vines. In 2001, Argentina's economy collapsed, and hyperinflation ensued. It is just in the last two decades that pioneering winemakers began to focus on quality over quantity. Enter Nicolás Catena Zapata, who, during a visit with Robert Mondavi in California during the 80s, was inspired and determined to make award-winning wines from Bordeaux grapes; as an afterthought, he included Malbec vines, which would eventually become very important. Paul Hobbs, another American winemaker of note, provided expertise and advice, especially in his quest to master fine Malbec. In 1997, one of Catena Zapata's Malbecs scored 95 points by Robert Parker and in 1998, two Malbecs scored 100-point *Wine Advocate* accolades. Today, Catena Zapata and his daughter, Dr. Laura Catena (Harvard! Stanford!), continue their research so that all Argentina producers can benefit. While many Malbecs are affordable, some Catena Zapata wines are date-night expensive, such as those from their scientific testing site, *Adrianna Vineyard River Stones*, at 5,000 feet above sea level with cool climate sunlight. Recently, Bodega Catena Zapata was awarded World's Best Vineyard for wine tourism. Another well-known producer is Familia Zuccardia. Their wines are naturally fermented, with French oak aging, producing full-bodied wines, and can be pricey.



“Laws are not invented; they grow out of circumstances.” Azarias

To compete in the fine wine market, it is important to guarantee quality. The most important wine regions of Argentina are the provinces of Mendoza (the main producer), San Juan, La Rioja, Salta, Camarca, Rio Negro, and southern Buenos Aires, producing 80% of the world's Malbec. A little bit of Malbec trivia is that, compared to France, Argentinian grape clusters group in smaller, tighter formation most likely because they are descended from a strain introduced by Michel Pouget which was probably lost in France during the phylloxera plague. In the late 1980s, Argentina passed wine classification laws allowing grape growers to apply for appellation status controlled by the National Viticulture Institute (NVI). There are three classifications of which global drinkers are gradually becoming aware:

- The two ***Denominaciones de Origen (DOC)*** have the most stringent regulations. In the DOC, Luján de Cuyo (1989), yields are regulated to less than 10 tons per hectare with aging of not less than one year in barrel. In 2021, Luján de Cuyo reestablished itself as a producer of fine wines with rocky, alluvial terraces and water from the Mendoza River. DOC San Rafael (2007) lies south of the main wine regions, and the vineyards sit at 1,600 to 2,300 feet, relatively low for Argentina, but with free-draining sandy, alluvial soils, allowing vines to develop deep roots.

- Lower than DOC, the **Indicacion Geografica (GI)** signifies the grapes' origins only; winemakers have the freedom to make the wine as they wish. Most of Argentina's 103 GIs are political districts, but Paraje Altamira, San Palbo, and Pampa El Cepillo are the first appellations defined by their unique terroirs. Many winemakers proudly designate the GI on their labels, often along with the broader regions, such as Mendoza or Salta.
- The **Indication of Provenance** is a term used for table wines with 10 designated areas.

Argentine wine bottles may include other helpful information such as the grape variety; if the bottle is labeled *Malbec*, at least 85% of the grapes must be Malbec. If no grape can be labeled as 85%, the blend will be labeled *corte, mezcla, assemblage, or coupage*. Other terms may be included: *Reserva* indicates at least 12 months in barrels, and *Gran Reserva* requires a minimum of 24 months in barrel.

Malbec Globe-Trotting

Cahors and Mendoza aside, it seems as if there are very few places and microclimates on earth that do not have Malbec on the menu. In general, the wine is deep purple with a magenta rim (a clue during blind tastings!). Argentina Malbecs are full-bodied with dark-fruit flavors and smoke on the finish; some have extensive oak aging. Cahors Malbecs, in contrast to those of the New World, will be lighter in color and body with tart fruit and higher acidity. In California and Washington, Malbec is not usually a major player, often used for blending. There is also some Malbec to be had in the wine regions of Ohio's Grand River Valley, Oregon's Umpqua and Willamette Valleys (where there is a yearly Portland tasting event called *Malbec in the City*), Idaho's Snake River Valley, Texan Hill Country, Virginia's Monticello and North Fork, North Carolina's Yadkin Valley, Michigan's Old Mission and Leelanau Peninsulas, New Jersey's Outer Coastal Plain, and Colorado's Grand Valley. Introduced in the 19th century to Australia, it was a bit of a disaster due to its persnickety nature, but it's making a comeback in Clare Valley and Langhorne Creek with hardier clones. For example, the noteworthy Wendouree Winery in Clare Valley makes Malbec from old (1898) vines. But let's not stop there – Malbec is grown in north Italy, New Zealand, Brazil, Chile, South Africa, British Columbia, Ontario, Peru, Bolivia, Mexico, and Israel.

"If you get all tangled up, just tango on." Al Pacino (aka Frank Slade)

In 2009, UNESCO recognized the history and uniqueness of the Argentina tango by including it on the *Intangible Cultural Heritage* list. It has a storied past, fusing New World, African, and European styles of dance and embodies drama, precision, passion, power, and spectacular performance. Is there a better metaphor for Malbec, from a lowly, not well-regarded blending grape in France to a varietal that has taken the world by storm, with different expressions based on the land and the winemaker? The reason for Malbec's worldwide explosion lies on the shoulders of Argentina (sorry, France), helping to define the possibilities of Malbec as a varietal. The world's response has been to sit up and take notice, encouraging iterations that will benefit all. So, my friends, fill your glass with a beautiful Malbec from your choice of terroirs, pass your gourd of mate with good friends, and if so inspired, tango the night away. But maybe put the wine glass down before the dips. Salud!



See Sources for Malbec Wine Education Article at end of Newsletter.

April Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Anatolian Kitchen

Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 6:00 PM

3016 Linden Street, Bethlehem 18017

Hosted by Ann Vlot

Register at LVAWS.org by Thursday, April 18th



Let's go back to a Turkish favorite. Nice atmosphere serving authentic mediterranean food and Turkish kebobs. They have many vegetarian options.

Limited to 30 people

Please remember to bring glasses and wine to share.

May Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting
Italy vs France



Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 6:00PM
Hosted by Joe Pugliese and Kevin Campbell
Delizioso Italian Grill
1985 Brookside Road, Macungie, PA 18062
\$60 per person
Register at LVAWS.org by Tuesday, May 14th

Because of the high quality of wines, well at least from France 😊, the cost of the tasting will be \$60 per person and limited to 40 people.

Limited to 40 people
Remember to bring 2 wine glasses and a bottle of wine to share.

May Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Mis Raices Columbian Restaurant & Bakery



Thursday, May 30, 2024 at 6:00 PM
2915 Schoenersville Road, Bethlehem 18017
(formerly Cactus Blue)
Hosted by Ann Vlot
Register at LVAWS.org by Friday, May 24th

Let's try this new venue in an old familiar spot.
To avoid a serving issue the restaurant has requested a limit of 25 so register early on the website
LVAWS.org

Limited to 25 people
Please remember to bring glasses and wine to share.

June Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Penn Pizza



Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 6:00 PM
1251 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown 18103
(located at the medical office building)
Hosted by Ann Vlot
Register at LVAWS.org by Friday, June 21st



Emily is excited to have us back! Good Italian food in a convenient location.

Please remember to bring glasses and wine to share.

March BYOB at Delizioso Italian Grill



Taste the Difference Report – Kevin Campbell

On Sunday, March 10, 2024, **Kathy** and **Mark Breloff** hosted a tasting at **Theresa's Italian Restaurant**. The tasting was completely blind with five different varietals tasted in pairs of two. Within each pair, there was a significant price difference, typically one at ~\$20 and the other at ~\$50. Participants were challenged to identify the varietal, which of the two was the more expensive and which of the two they preferred.

The five varietals tasted were: Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Red Blend, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon. All of the wines were from California. In general, most people were able to correctly identify the Chardonnay and Zinfandel. California's warm climate results in these varietals being very ripe and giving each a very distinct flavor profile. The red blend was initially confusing, with no distinct flavor profile, but it then became more obvious that it was therefore most likely a blend. The Merlots had many confused. They were both big tannic wines typical of Cabernet, indicating that Merlot grown in California can be very Cab like. The final pairing was also big and full-bodied, and knowing that Cabernet is the flagship of California and not yet been tasted, it was pretty obvious that they were Cabernets.



With respect to being able to identify the more expensive of the two wines in each pairing, the results were mixed. For the Chardonnay, the Zin and the Blend, the majority were able to correctly identify the more expensive. However, for the Merlot and the Cabernet, the majority were not correct.

With respect to preference, please see the table below, which gives a list of the wines, their prices, average score, standard deviation of the scores and a final ranking of the top 5 wines. As you can see below, the scores are very close. It would be hard to justify paying for the higher priced wine in any of the five pairings.

	Wine	Price	Avg	Std Dev	Rank
1	2021 Z. Alexander Brown Uncaged Chardonnay	\$14	16.5	1.61	
2	2022 Lloyd Chardonnay	\$50	16.5	2.00	
3	2021 Oak Ridge Zinfandel	\$15	17.0	1.72	5
4	2021 Martinelli Zinfandel	\$59	17.1	1.83	4
5	2021 Conundrum Red Blend	\$19	16.9	1.72	
6	2021 Chaos Theory Red Blend	\$50	17.2	1.74	3
7	2020 Kendall-Jackson Vintner's Reserve Merlot	\$21	16.9	1.58	
8	2020 Stags' Leap Merlot	\$44	16.7	1.85	
9	Austin Paso Robles Cabernet	\$22	17.8	1.46	2
10	2021 Austin Hope Paso Robles Cabernet	\$50	18.1	1.72	1

It was obvious that the **Breloffs** put a lot of effort into selecting very good wines at each price level and the scores reflect that. All of these lower priced wines are great buys.

Awesome job and congratulations **Kathy** and **Mark** on a great tasting!



Chairman's Selection – Kevin Campbell

In preparation for going up against Mr. Pugliese in the Italy vs. France tasting next month, I focused on French wines. However, the first one below is from Spain. The varietal, rating and price caught my attention. If you want to try something different, that really was not as different as expected, give it a try, you won't be disappointed.

All three wines below are available in large quantities at any of the LV premium stores.

Reino de Altuzarra 2021

VARIETY/STYLE: Graciano

COUNTRY: Spain **REGION:** Navarra

RATING: NA **PRODUCT CODE:** 000079685

\$8.99 (quoted at \$26)

Deep garnet to the eye, this wine offers a bouquet of pomegranate, raspberry and fennel pollen. Bright from first sip, it has plush tannins and flavors of black cherry, strawberry, roast yellow pepper, baking spices and orange zest that carry into a long-lasting finish.

— **92 Points Wine Enthusiast, May 1, 2023**

Kevin's notes:

Graciano is a blending grape used in Rioja wines. It is very rarely seen outside of Spain and is generally a small percentage in the blends where it is used. Similar to Petite Verdot, a small amount can have a significant impact on the blend.

*This wine being 100% Graciano and available in the USA is very unique and our local stores have tons of it. I wanted to try it just to see what Graciano tasted like. It far exceeded my expectations, and I can now understand why it got the 92 rating from Wine Enthusiast. I brought a bottle to share after the **Breloff's** tasting and it quickly disappeared.*



Chateau Labrousse 2020

VARIETY/STYLE: Red Blend

COUNTRY: France **REGION:** Blaye/Bordeaux

RATING: WE90 **PRODUCT CODE:** 100022983

\$9.99 (quoted at \$40)

A darker, riper style, with friendly, rich, dark berries and vanilla on the nose with some ground spices. Good length on the finish with a nice touch of earth and herbs for balance. A stellar value Bordeaux red!

— **Josh Hull, Chairman's Selection® wine buyer**

Aged in tanks and amphoras, this wine is rich, dense and spicy. Black fruits still sport firm tannins and a ripe, solid structure.

— **90 Points Wine Enthusiast, October 1, 2023**

Kevin's notes:

Dean Scott and I were first introduced to wines from Blaye about 3 years ago as a result of the Chairman's Selection. It is a newer right bank appellation located 25 miles north of Bordeaux, producing merlot-based blends in a more modern approachable style. These wines are often in the Chairman Selection, and I've never been disappointed. Very good solid wines at great prices and this one is just as Josh Hull describes above.



Boutinot Les Coteaux 2021

VARIETY/STYLE: Red Blend

COUNTRY: France **REGION:** Cotes du Rhone Villages

RATING: JS90 **PRODUCT CODE:** 100021935

\$12.99 (quoted at \$20)

Notes of dark cherries, currants, dried herbs and mild spices. Medium body with fine, firm tannins and a juicy core of berries throughout. Playful with a vivid finish.

— **90 Points James Suckling, September 2, 2023**

Kevin's notes:

This Southern Rhone blend is 75% Grenache and 25% Syrah and the alcohol comes in at 14%. Very good solid wine and just what you would expect given the make-up of the blend. The Grenache brings the ripe fruity characteristics and the Syrah adding darker color and spice.



Lehigh Valley Chapter Wine Tastings & Events

<u>2024</u>	<u>Hosts</u>	<u>Theme</u>
April 21	Geoff Harrington	Malbec
April 24	Ann Vlot	BYOB Anatolian Kitchen
May 21	Joe Pugliese/Kevin Campbell	Italy vs France
May 30	Ann Vlot	BYOB Mis Raices Columbian Restaurant
Jun 23	Vynecrest Winery	Tasting
Jun 26	Ann Vlot	BYOB Penn Pizza
July	Melissa & Bill Yenkevich	Tasting
Aug	Dean Scott	Tasting
Sep 15	Stony Run Vineyard	Tasting

Promoting wine appreciation through education

National and Lehigh Valley AWS Dues

YOU MUST JOIN BOTH THE NATIONAL AWS & THE LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
Both memberships run from January to December.

National AWS Membership: To join, you need to register with both the national American Wine Society (AWS) organization and a local AWS chapter. The national organization has a variety of membership plans available, but the most popular are an "individual" membership for \$49/year, and a "household" membership (for two people at the same address) for \$62/year. You can register for one or two local chapters. We ask that you select the Lehigh Valley Chapter as your primary chapter! You can sign up for national membership online at AmericanWineSociety.org.

Lehigh Valley Chapter AWS Membership: The Lehigh Valley Chapter has one membership level which is **\$10 per year per person**. To join you can complete the form (below) and **mail** it (LVAWS Treasurer Joe Pugliese, PO Box 98, East Texas, PA 18046), **OR** you can individually visit **LVAWS.org and pay on-line**, **OR** you can individually go on LVAWS.org, sign in as a member, and then click the **Donations Tab** to pay dues for a spouse, family member, or friend.

Once you become a Lehigh Valley Chapter member you can register for all of our wine tastings, educational events, and BYOB dinner parties.

Name(s) _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone # _____ City _____

State _____ Zip code _____

Sources for Wine Education Article

Sources: Jackson, V. (2021). *Malbec: A Tumultuous Wine Journey from Woe to Wow*; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tango>; www.alcoholprofessor.com/blog-posts/history-of-malbec-in-france; <https://www.google.com/search?https://blog.winesofargentina.com/destacadas/how-to-read-a-malbec-label/>; [q=bocelli+and+tango+song&oq=bocelli+and+tango+song&aqs=chrome..69i57j33i160l3.7946j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8&bsh=rimc/1; www.winefolly.com/tips/mendoza-vs-cahors-malbec/](https://www.winefolly.com/tips/mendoza-vs-cahors-malbec/); <https://fps.ucdavis.edu/grapebook/winebook.cfm?chap=Malbec>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malbec>; www.scienceofcooking.com/food-and-wine/malbec.html; <https://www.the-buyer.net/opinion/merlots-mum-wines-future-past/>; <https://southamericawineguide.com/prunelard-father-of-malbec-wine/>; <https://usualwines.com/blogs/knowledge-base/malbec-wine>; www.donquijote.org/argentinian-culture/traditions/yerba-mate/; <https://www.argentinawineguide.com/resources/malbec.html>; <https://helenjconway.com/the-lowdown-on-the-mendoza-wine-region/>; www.thefiftybest.com; <https://argentina.guides.winefolly.com/history/>; <https://southamericawineguide.com/the-gis-of-argentina-argentinas-modern-appellation-system/>; www.wine.appellationamerica.com/grape-varietal/Malbec.html; www.wineaustralia.com/whats-happening/stories-wine/july-2017/malbec; <https://vintnerproject.com/wine/the-new-frontier-for-american-malbec/>; <https://www.worldsbestvineyards.com/press-release-worlds-best-vineyards-top-50-2023-results.html#:~:text=The%20extensive%20list%20showcases%20the,won%20overall%20South%20American%20vineyard>

