

# CAPE + KANTARY

The Food Issue, Vol. 16

ON THE PLATE  
FOOD BLOGGING  
IN ASIA

BEST  
OF  
WINE REGIONS  
- PLACES TO  
UNCORK AND  
UNWIND

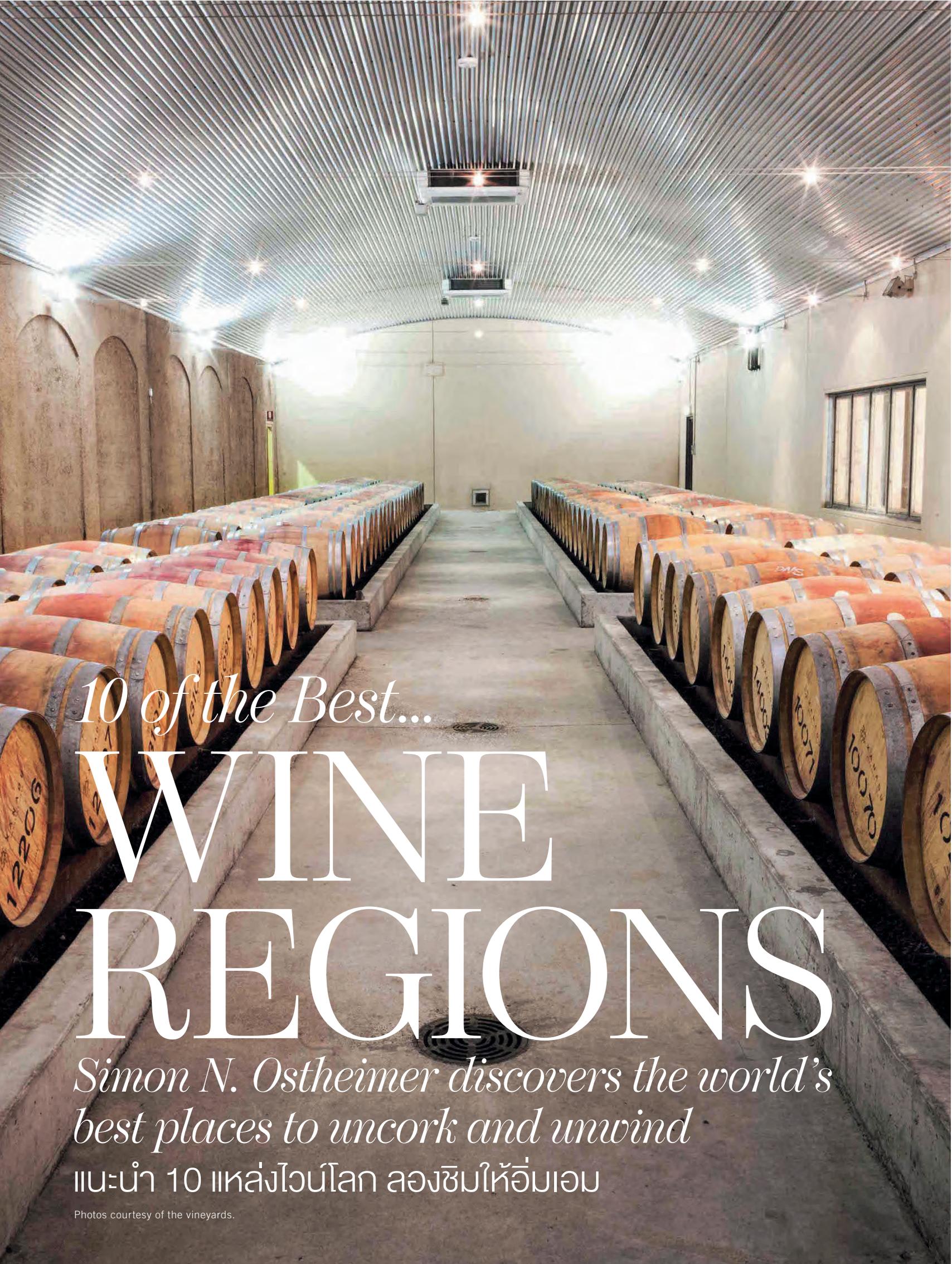
SPECIAL  
FEATURE  
from farm  
to table

## The FOOD ISSUE

ฉบับนี้มีเรื่องอาหาร

SPECIAL FEATURE สดจากไร่ ผู้ผลิตแสนอร่อย BEST OF ชมไปชิมไปกับแหล่งไวน์โลก  
ON THE PLATE ฟู๊ดบล็อกเกอร์ในเอเชีย





*10 of the Best...*

# WINE REGIONS

*Simon N. Ostheimer discovers the world's  
best places to uncork and unwind*

แนะนำ 10 แหล่งไวน์โลก ลองชิมให้อิ่มเอม

Photos courtesy of the vineyards.



## *Colchagua Valley, Chile*

Located 100 kilometers south of the capital, Santiago, and spreading from the Andes mountains to the Pacific Ocean, the Colchagua Valley is home to more than 30 wineries, producing some of the best red wines to come out of the South American country. With a climate and topography that resembles those found in California, it is a renowned producer of Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Malbec, and Merlot, made by globally recognized names, such as Montes (monteswines.com) – only founded in 1987; and the even younger winery MontGras (montgras.cl), an award-winning vineyard established six years later. It is at the latter that you'll

find the region's most visitor-friendly offerings, including the opportunity to harvest grapes in the field, take part in blind wine tastings, enjoy a Chilean barbecue, go horseback riding, put together traditional country meals, learn about food pairing, and get to make your own wine. For a comprehensive guide on all things Colchagua Valley, head to the region's official website at [visitcolchaguavalley.com](http://visitcolchaguavalley.com), which features information on what to do, how to get there, where to stay, what to eat, and, most importantly, the wine.

**Popular:** Lapostolle Cuvée Alexandre Merlot ([lapostolle.com](http://lapostolle.com))



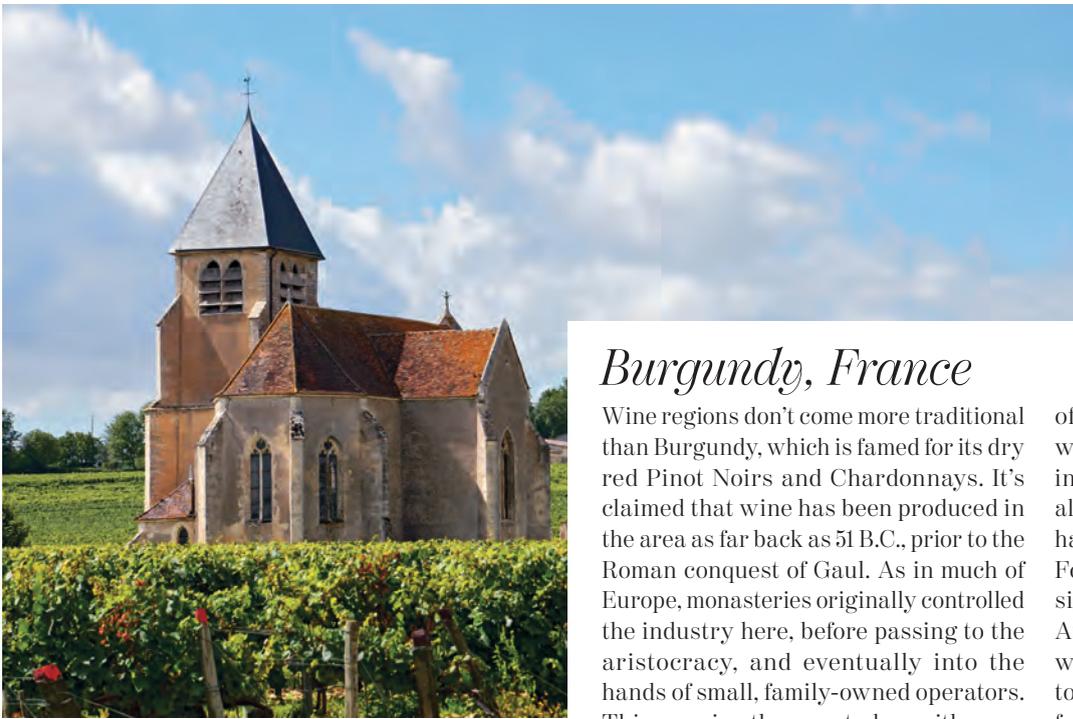
## *Margaret River, Australia*

While Victoria and New South Wales rightly attract the attention of wine enthusiasts, Western Australia, or more precisely the town of Margaret River, deserves to be known as Australia's wine heartland. Drawing upwards of 500,000 visitors annually, the area only produces three percent of the nation's grapes but sells a remarkable 20 percent of its premium wines. With an ideal temperate Mediterranean climate that lends itself to winemaking, the top five varietals produced here are Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, and Semillon. Despite now being home to almost 190 wineries,

wine production in Margaret River only dates back to 1967, when a doctor planted the area's first grapes on an eight-acre plot – today, vineyards cover some 12,400 acres. To see the area, sign up for one of the Bushtucker River & Wine Tours ([bushtuckertours.com](http://bushtuckertours.com)), which, for A\$100, take you on a typically Australian, relaxed and fun daytrip to visit seven iconic Margaret River estates, where you tuck into 40 tastings of local wines, cocktails, craft beers, cheeses, and chocolates, and enjoy a hosted winery lunch in fine company.

**Popular:** Xanadu Cabernet Sauvignon ([xanaduwines.com](http://xanaduwines.com))





## *Burgundy, France*

Wine regions don't come more traditional than Burgundy, which is famed for its dry red Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays. It's claimed that wine has been produced in the area as far back as 51 B.C., prior to the Roman conquest of Gaul. As in much of Europe, monasteries originally controlled the industry here, before passing to the aristocracy, and eventually into the hands of small, family-owned operators. This remains the case today, with some 400 different terroir recognized and wine that is categorized not only by its producer but also by the specific part of Burgundy in which it was made.

Altogether, the vineyards cover more than 70,000 acres and produce some

of the world's most expensive wines, which are classified Grand Cru and include labels such as Domaine Leroy; all emphasize "biodynamic" farming and have a strict ban on the use of chemicals. For an authentic visit to Burgundy, sign up with the appropriately named Authentica ([authentica-tours.com](http://authentica-tours.com)), which offers both private and group tours ranging in price from €350 to €890 for two people. Expect to enjoy exclusive lunches, stroll through winemaking villages, and take part in very high-end wine tastings.

**Popular:** Jean-Marc Brocard  
Vaulorent Premier Cru Chardonnay  
([brocard.fr](http://brocard.fr))



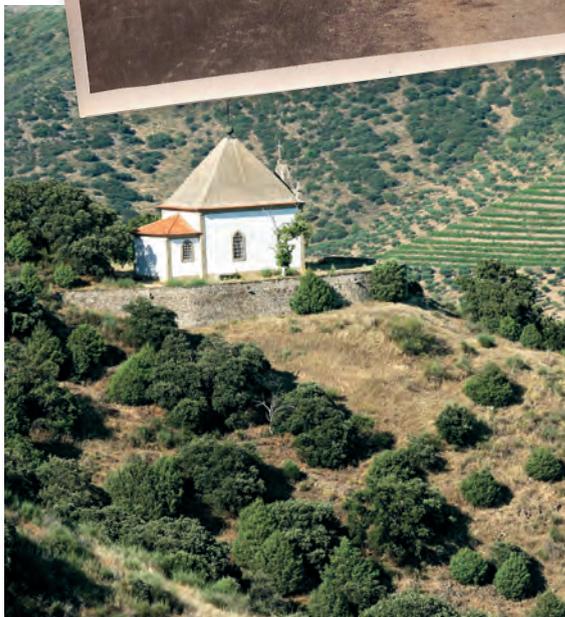
## *Douro, Portugal*

In the early 1700s, at war with Britain and Holland, France banned all exports of wine to the two rival nations. Forced to look further afield, the British and Dutch found a new supply in the Douro Valley of northern Portugal. However, concerned the wine wouldn't survive the long journey home, the Portuguese winemakers added a type of brandy, which not only fortified the wine for the sea voyage but also boosted both the alcohol level and the sweetness. As it was taken downriver, transported on traditional flat-bottomed boats known as *barcos rabelos*, and exported from the city of Porto, the new drink became known as Port.

While today you can also find variants made in nations including

South Africa, Australia, and Argentina, the original remains the most sought-after, with vines planted on steep stone-walled terraces that are now, collectively, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Douro River valley is ideal for winemaking due to its special microclimate, with 12 main varieties of grape blended to make both red and white versions of Port. Explore the amazing scenery and wines with Cool Tour Oporto ([cooltouroporto.com](http://cooltouroporto.com)) for €80, which takes you on a day trip of the valley, and includes lunch, wine tasting, transport, and multilingual guides.

**Popular:** Quinta do Vale Meão  
Douro ([quintadovalemeao.pt](http://quintadovalemeao.pt))





## Sonoma Valley, United States

While you might be more familiar with California's Napa Valley, it's the wines made in the county to the west – Sonoma – that deserve your attention. Grapes were first planted here back in 1812 when the area was still under Mexican rule; thus, a growing wine industry was already in place when the United States annexed California in 1854. Now home to more than 250 wineries covering some 49,000 acres, Sonoma is one of the most important winemaking regions in the country, producing Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir.

The wide variance in terroir means there are plenty of places to visit, but top of

most people's lists are the wine producing areas around Healdsburg, a picturesque little town of just 10,000 people. Divided between three valleys (Dry Creek, Russian River, and Alexander), the best way to discover the area is through a guided trip with Savor Healdsburg Food Tours ([savorhealdsburgfoodtours.com](http://savorhealdsburgfoodtours.com)), founded by passionate local Tammy Gass. For US\$89 per person, you enjoy fresh local cuisine made by award-winning chefs, learn about the area's rich winemaking history, and take part in an exclusive wine pairing.

**Popular:** Griffin's Lair Syrah ([griffinslair.com](http://griffinslair.com))



## Cape Town, South Africa

Hugging the southern tip of the African continent, where the icy waters of the Atlantic meet the warm swells of the Indian Ocean, Cape Town is undoubtedly one of the world's most stunning cities; however, it's arguably even more famous for its wines. Home to a staggering 800 wineries, Cape Town has hosted wine production since the mid-1600s when a Dutch surgeon was tasked with producing wines in order to ward off scurvy in visiting sailors. While wine has been continuously made since then, for centuries it received little recognition outside of the country, a problem exacerbated during the Apartheid years. Since the boycotts were lifted in the early

1990s, however, South African wines have experienced a major renaissance.

The Mediterranean-style climate common to the Western Cape, the region around Cape Town, makes it a suitable place to grow varietals like Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Colombard, and Shiraz. As the area has such a long and rich history, you really need a local's insight, which is what you get on the tours run by Wine Flies ([wineflies.co.za](http://wineflies.co.za)): for R700, wine guides with decades of experience introduce you to five different estates offering all-you-can-eat cheese and join you for a lunch of South African delicacies in the heart of a vineyard. **Popular:** Stellenrust 50 Barrel Fermented Chenin Blanc ([stellenrust.co.za](http://stellenrust.co.za))





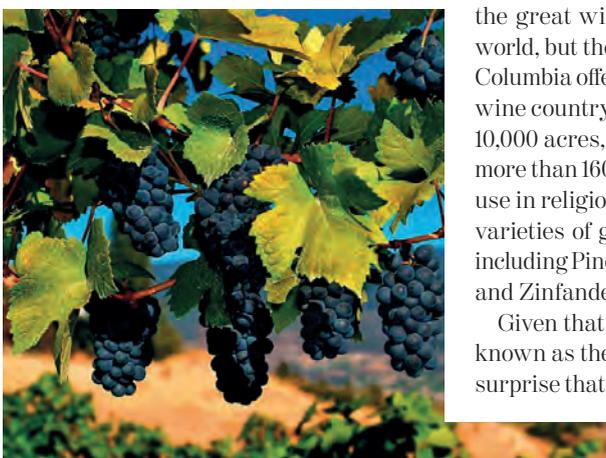
## *Okanagan Valley, Canada*

Canada might not be the first place that comes to mind when you think about the great wine producing regions of the world, but the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia offers some of the most beautiful wine country you'll ever see. In an area of 10,000 acres, grapes have been grown for more than 160 years; originally planted for use in religious ceremonies, more than 60 varieties of grape are grown here today, including Pinot Noir, Riesling, Chardonnay, and Zinfandel.

Given that the country is affectionately known as the "Great White North", it's no surprise that the Okanagan is also famous

for its sweet ice wines – wine produced from grapes that have frozen on the vine. There are numerous companies that offer tours of the wineries that dot the landscape, but for a rather unique experience sign up for a tour with Eleanor from Vintage Wine Tours ([vintagewinetours.ca](http://vintagewinetours.ca)). The secret is that she's not a person but a classic, cherry red, 1956 Cadillac. For C\$150 per person, you are taken to see lesser-known wineries, enjoy a picnic of seasonal produce in the middle of a vineyard, and go home with a classic Polaroid souvenir snap.

**Popular:** Spierhead Pinot Noir Cuvée ([spierheadwinery.com](http://spierheadwinery.com))





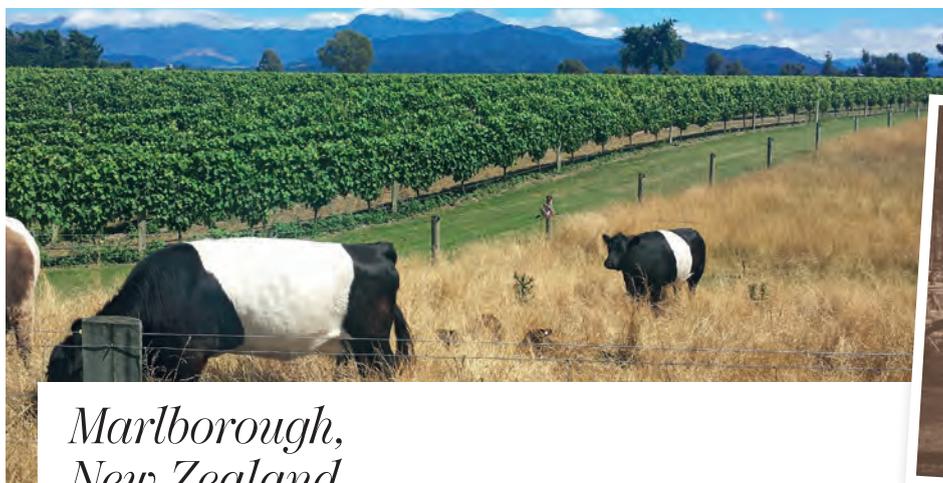
## *Barcelona, Spain*

Part of Spain, although culturally and linguistically separate from the rest of the country, Catalonia is most famous for producing one wine: Cava. While Champagne was the first sparkling wine, Cava – made using the exact same method – has achieved a similar level of fame. The first Cava was made at the Codorníu estate outside of Barcelona in the early 1870s and took its name from the cellar that was dug to keep the alcohol cool during the winemaking process. With more than 450 years of history, that estate is still open today and can be explored on 90 minute tours costing €9 and including a visit to the underground cellars, family home,

impressive gardens, museum, and a tour by mini train ([visitascodorniu.com](http://visitascodorniu.com)).

In the south of Catalonia is the Penedès region, home to hundreds of winemakers, including both small, independent labels and larger, internationally-known names, such as the family-run Torres ([torres.es](http://torres.es)) that is famed for the red wine Sangre de Toro, which comes in a bottle dangling a small plastic bull. While also excellent, the focus here is definitely on Cava. Learn how the bubbly is made and take home a personalized bottle by touring Artcava ([artcava.com](http://artcava.com)).

**Popular:** Anna de Codorniu Brut ([codorniu.com](http://codorniu.com))



## *Marlborough, New Zealand*

Now one of the world's most famous winemaking countries, the Land of the Long White Cloud (more familiarly known as New Zealand) owes its reputation to the region of Marlborough on the northeast coast of the South Island. When quality Sauvignon Blanc was first produced here in the 1970s, the world took notice, and today it is said to produce the world's best, due to the ideal terroir and perfect sunny and dry climate – the indigenous Maoris know it as “The place with the hole in the cloud.” Producing almost 75 percent of the country's wines – which includes smaller amounts of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir as

well as Sauvignon Blanc – and covering more than 56,000 acres, Marlborough's vineyards are concentrated around Renwick, Cloudy Bay, and the capital city of Blenheim. With such beautiful weather, it makes sense that the best way to tour is on two wheels, such as with Wine Tours By Bike ([winetoursbybike.co.nz](http://winetoursbybike.co.nz)), a family-run company that, for the price of NZ\$45, puts together a personalized, self-guided tour – the cost includes the bicycle hire, pick-up and drop-off service at your accommodation, and full breakdown care. **Popular:** Te Whare Ra Toru ([twrwines.co.nz](http://twrwines.co.nz))

