

# Argentina Uncorked with Oz Clarke

WINE	PRODUCER	POINTS	OZ' TASTING NOTES
<b><u>COSTA &amp; PAMPA CHARDONNAY 2018</u></b>	<u>TRAPICHE</u>	97+	Up there with the best Chardonnays I have tasted from Argentina. The vineyards are on the coast just south of Buenos Aires – an experiment, a risk, a dream – and it works; this beauty swirls with oatmeal, hazelnut, soft white apple flesh, peach and honey. It's scented with apple blossom and honeysuckle and its lemon acidity is as subtle as the cotton that threads through a silken bedsheet.
<b><u>TRAPICHE TERROIR SERIES COLETTA 2015</u></b>	<u>TRAPICHE</u>	97	Outstanding single vineyard wine from one of the most extreme sites in the Uco Valley. It's over 5 years old and still very young, smelling of dried herbs and leather and peppercorns, but tasting ripe and juicy and exotic, spices roiling with fruit that begins as dark red cherry and raspberry and then marches on into the nether world of the black fruit, chocolate, and perfume too.
<b><u>SUSANA BALBO SIGNATURE WHITE BLEND 2019</u></b>	<u>SUSANA BALBO WINES</u>	96+	Great example of how Argentine white varieties lend themselves to blending, particularly when led by Semillon. This benefits from opening. It starts out with appetising lemon blossom freshness and fluffy apple and green pear pips fruit, but slowly develops a more tropical character of pomegranate and passion fruit fattened up with a splash of white chocolate, before grapefruit pith and a slight sting of nettles close the wine out.
<b><u>COLOMÉ ESTATE MALBEC 2018</u></b>	<u>BODEGA COLOMÉ</u>	96	The red colour of this clings to the side of the glass, and the flavour follows a similar path. This is a proud, dark argument between plum and earth, chocolate and rock. It's serious, but it's young – this style really needs 3 - 5 years to let the fruit and perfume, the earth and the rock all start to soften up and join arms. Then, it'll be a belter.
<b><u>DOÑA PAULA ALTITUDE 1350 2017</u></b>	<u>DOÑA PAULA</u>	96	Lovely red, showing the delights of high altitude fruit and the joys of blending different varieties. This is a big red, still not quite mature, with a beautiful warm raspberry fruit, a little violet, and a waxy chocolate richness with just enough tannin and an irresistible freshness from its Gualtallary birthplace.

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<b><u>FINCA NOTABLES CAB. FRANC 2015</u></b>	<u>EL ESTECO</u>	96	Great example of how high altitude fruit makes reds which mature beautifully, and of how Cabernet Franc is beginning to really shine right across Argentina. This is a broad, flowing red, smelling of leather and raspberries, and tasting almost lush, mushy raspberries mixing with cocoa dust, grilled beef fat and a smattering of dried herbs.
<b><u>KAIKEN ULTRA MALBEC 2018</u></b>	<u>KAIKEN</u>	95+	Really good. Vista Flores fruit making its mark straight away with an intriguing mix of spice and menthol and a kind of savoury cocoa dust. Then the fruit piles in, dark and ripe, but not too dense, appetisingly chewy, and wrapped round with chocolate, brownies and flapjack.
<b><u>CLOS DE LOS SIETE 2015</u></b>	<u>CLOS DE LOS SIETE</u>	95	Michel Rolland has kept this brand's quality and also style going brilliantly over the years. This mature example is a delight, its deep soft plum fruit mixing with fig jam and liquorice, its vanilla oak marrying sweetly with a touch of menthol and a hint of warm scent.
<b><u>CARA SUCIA CEPAS TRADICIONALES 2018</u></b>	<u>DURIGUTTI FAMILY WINEMAKERS</u>	95	Excellent stuff. What a good use of the warm climate fruit of Eastern Mendoza. This is mellow but ripe, warm but fresh, not too rich, with a juicy mix of red plum, ripe apple and ripe cranberry fruit. Fabulous easy-going Sunday lunch wine. Let's have more like this.
<b><u>KAIKEN ULTRA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2018</u></b>	<u>KAIKEN</u>	95	Excellent Cabernet. It's rich and dark, but not too dense and not over-extracted. The flavour mixes the sweet and the savoury in a classical kind of way – blackcurrant and chocolate and sweet prunes easily marrying with black olive and autumn undergrowth.

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<b><u>COLOMÉ TORRONTES 2020</u></b>	<u>BODEGA COLOMÉ</u>	94	This is good wine, but not what I was expecting. It's almost as though it were performing the job of Sauvignon Blanc substitute. I expect Calchaqui Torrontes to have uplifting scent. Is climate change playing a part, or are winemakers finding ways to avoid what makes Torrontes unique? Well, this is good wine – again, it's in screwcap, so open it and give it a shake – and it has a hint of blossom along with rosemary herb, mint leaf, and a refreshing flavour of pear flesh and grapefruit pith.
<b><u>CRIOS TANNAT 2018</u></b>	<u>SUSANA BALBO WINES</u>	94	Good sturdy, muscular stuff. Waxy weight, a very nice dark fruit verging on black plum and blueberry, with a teasing nip of bitterness and an equally teasing whiff of floral scent.
<b><u>AMALAYA BLANCO 2020</u></b>	<u>BODEGA AMALAYA</u>	93	This is in screwcap and is a classic example of screwcap wines needing to be opened and given a good shake. It started out rather tasting as though someone was determined to tame the Torrontes. An hour or two later it was floral, lime zesty with real Riesling acid and an appetising whiff of petrol, some lees weight and a really zingy finish.
<b><u>DON DAVID RESERVE 2018</u></b>	<u>EL ESTECO</u>	93	Rich, round dark wine with deep, ripe blackcurrant fruit, just a little violet scent, and a bit more black chocolate heart.
<b><u>KAIKEN ULTRA CHARDONNAY 2018</u></b>	<u>KAIKEN</u>	93	Delightfully scented – is it jasmine? – honeyed, with a bright melon and pale peach fruit, mellowed by brazil nut and sweetened and made chewy by beeswax and a random crunch of apple pips. Classy Chardonnay.

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<b><u>MARCELO PELLERITI SIGNATURE MALBEC 2015</u></b>	<u>MARCELO PELLERITI WINES</u>	93	Lovely wine – and a delight to find an Uco Malbec with some maturity. Alluring texture, scented with menthol and flowers, flowing with ripe red chery and red plum fruit.
<b><u>PETIT CARO 2017</u></b>	<u>BODEGAS CARO</u>	92	Rich, soft, mellow style whose deep ripe fruit and liquorice chew is delightfully lifted by fresh acidity.
<b><u>TRIVENTO PRIVATE RESERVE MALBEC 2019</u></b>	<u>TRIVENTO</u>	92	Very nice style with attractive blue plum and blueberry fruit, some liquorice depth and some lingering scent.
<b><u>LUIGI BOSCA MALBEC 2018</u></b>	<u>BODEGA LUIGI BOSCA</u>	91	Very attractive easy-going Malbec, spicy, almost honeyed, a little grainy tannin brightening up the plum and chocolate softness.
<b><u>FINCA SOPHENIA ESTATE RESERVE MALBEC 2018</u></b>	<u>FINCA SOPHENIA</u>	91	The texture of this wine is lovely – that appetising high altitude feel. The flavour is still closed, but violet and menthol scent is just beginning to show, along with black plum fruit and chocolate. Good, will be much better in 2 - 3 years.

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<b><u>TRIVENTO GOLDEN RESERVE MALBEC 2018</u></b>	<u>TRIVENTO</u>	91	Strong, dark, deep, with its blackcurrant fruit still smothered by almond paste and cocoa. It may develop some violet scent, it is balanced, but it needs at least 2 years aging, if not 5.
<b><u>LUIGI BOSCA PINOT NOIR 2018</u></b>	<u>BODEGA LUIGI BOSCA</u>	90	Slightly reduced, but attractive soft smooth texture; fair strawberry fruit dusted with salt and brushed with fresh leather.
<b><u>CARO 2017</u></b>	<u>BODEGAS CARO</u>	88	Dark, strong and chunky. There's just a bit too much oak and tannin which turns the deep black fruit somewhat jammy. May age, but seems a bit hollow to me.
<b><u>CHAKANA NUNA VINEYARD ROSÉ 2020</u></b>	<u>CHAKANA</u>	88	Good, soft, fresh style. Just a little full on the palate (? a touch of residual sugar?), but enjoyable strawberry and fluffy apple fruit and a hint of scent.
<b><u>CRIOS TORRONTÉS 2019</u></b>	<u>SUSANA BALBO WINES</u>	88	This is a good, snappy, lemony, perhaps grapefruity dry white with a pithy chewiness and a suggestion of elderflower running through the wine. It's screwcap, so does open up after half an hour, but it still seems to be a little shy of showing Torrontes' aromatic side.

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<b><u>TERRAZAS RESERVA MALBEC 2017</u></b>	<u>TERRAZAS DE LOS ANDES</u>	88	Rather old style, and I thought it gave off a bit of brett – which is fine if backed up by lots of flavour, but this was quite rich with a hint of attractive greenness yet just not exciting.
<b><u>PENEDO BORGES EXPRESIÓN TERROIR BLEND 2017</u></b>	<u>BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS OTAVIANO</u>	87	I'm absolutely in favour of producers trying out different blends in Mendoza, and this is a very interesting one, but it's still too dominated by a toffeeish oak, which is a pity since the fruit beneath is good and dark and probably very interesting.
<b><u>CHAKANA ESTATE SELECTION TORRONTÉS 2020</u></b>	<u>CHAKANA</u>	87	Nice, lemony, fresh, just a little scent, but really needs more. It may develop it in a few months, but for now it is a bit restrained although attractively balanced .
<b><u>PENEDO BORGES EXPRESIÓN TERROIR CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2017</u></b>	<u>BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS OTAVIANO</u>	86	A bit too toasty oaky. Old style and even a little brett in a wine that could be attractively balanced but is too oaked.
<b><u>SOPHENIA SYNTHESIS MALBEC 2017</u></b>	<u>FINCA SOPHENIA</u>	86	Too much oak, making the wine too dry and indistinct. Good fruit hiding in there but probably too dried out by the oak