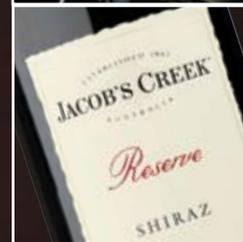
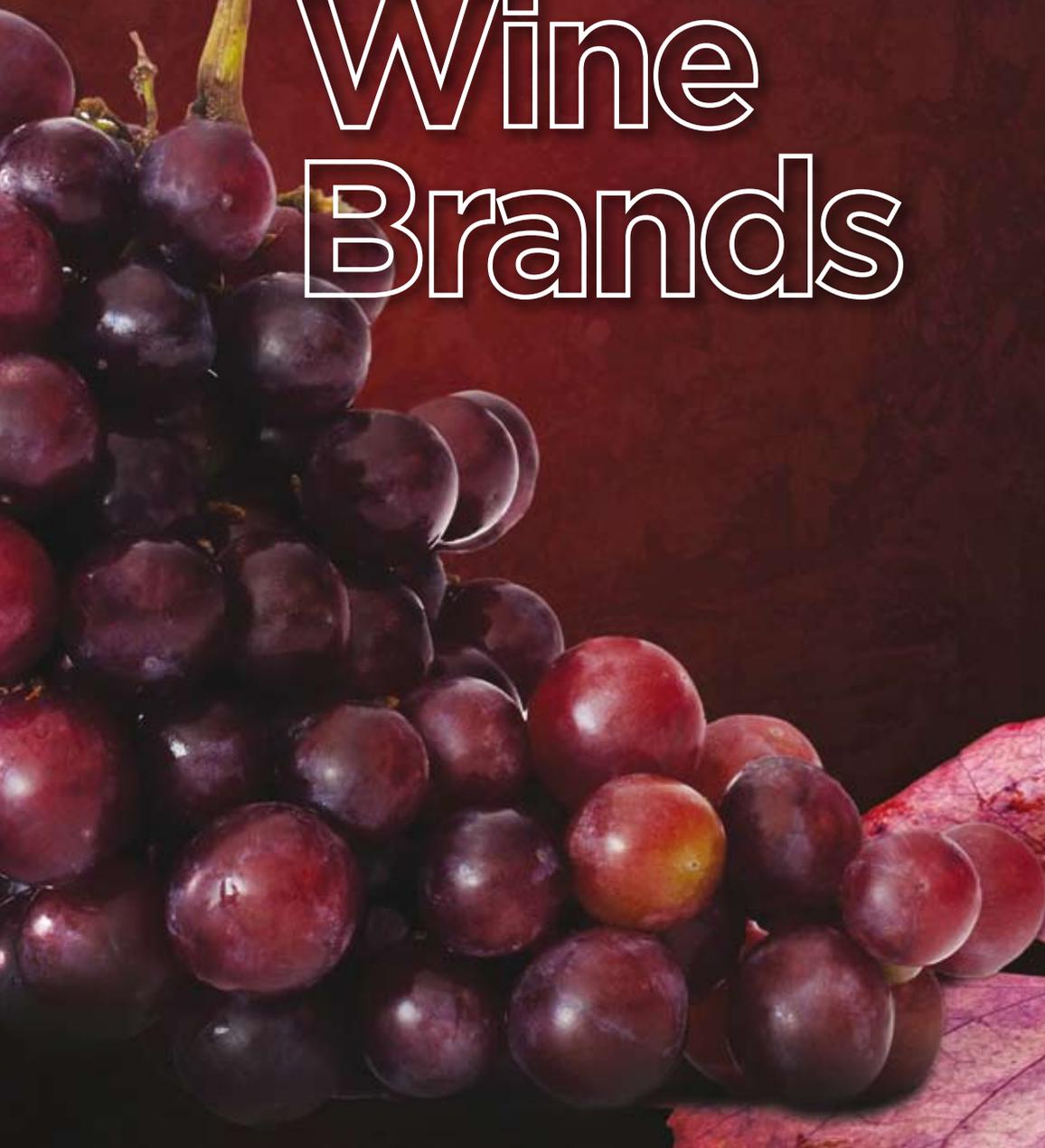


World's

# Most Admired Wine Brands



**Drinks**  
INTERNATIONAL

[www.drinksint.com](http://www.drinksint.com)

## HOW WE DID IT

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A breakdown of top wines by region

Cover image: Shutterstock/Carballo

## A salute to producers

**I**t has sometimes been remarked that the wine industry is not well suited to brands. There are too many variables: the weather, the availability of the right fruit, the skills of the winemaking team, the ability to ship wine in the right conditions, and the willingness of the retailer to actually stock it.

Yet great brands have emerged. The earliest attempt to codify them came in 1855, when the chateaux of Bordeaux were ranked for the first time. Since then, producers from all around the world have developed names that mean something to wine drinkers – names which give a reassurance of quality and a reliable indication of style.

Modern viticultural practices and increasingly sophisticated techniques in the winery mean that it's possible to achieve greater consistency than ever before, even when weather conditions are lousy, or head winemakers retire.

The wine world, thankfully, is still a place where small artisanal producers can rub shoulders with the big corporations, and consumers have a vast choice of what they can drink. But in many cases, these small wineries only get a chance to make a name for themselves because of the pioneering work of their predecessors – wines which have gone on to become big brands in their own right.

*Drinks International's* Most Admired Wine Brands project was conceived as an opportunity to salute the producers whose products have done the most to put regions on the map, to popularise wine drinking and to spread best practice throughout the industry. We explain how we set about this on pages four and five.

The results aren't quite as epoch-making as the 1855 classification. But we feel this is the most thorough and democratic exercise of its kind, and a fascinating glimpse into the way the international wine industry regards its leading producers.

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**Agile**  
Media Ltd

**Bubbling under -  
brands which missed  
the top 50**

Domaine de la Romanée Conti	<b>France</b>
Guigal	<b>France</b>
Augusti Torello	<b>Spain</b>
Ridge Vineyards	<b>US</b>
Sutter Home	<b>US</b>
Santa Rita	<b>Chile</b>
Lang & Reed	<b>US</b>
Franzia	<b>US</b>
Jackson-Triggs	<b>Canada</b>

# How wo

**I**t's fairly straightforward to rank wines in terms of production volumes, Parker points, or how much they fetch at auction. But how do you set about measuring how much admiration there is for each brand?

*Drinks International* approached 60 trusted members of the global wine community earlier this summer and invited them to consider which wine brands they most admired. They included Masters of Wine, consultants, winemakers, critics, retailers, educators, buyers and analysts.

We asked them to nominate up to five wine brands. We emphasised that this was not necessarily a competition to reward the best-selling wines in the market, or those with the most critical acclaim. We suggested they used the following criteria when casting their votes:

- wines should be of consistent or improving quality
- they should reflect their region or country of origin
- they should respond to the needs and tastes of their target audience
- they should be well marketed and packaged
- they should have strong appeal to a wide demographic.

# e did it

To make the task more straightforward, we supplied a list of more than 80 well-known brands and producers, but also allowed the option of free choices – names not included on our list.

When the results were collated, the top 50 brands were fairly clear cut, though in a few instances there was a tie for places. Where this was the case, a small jury of voters was assembled to decide the final positions. It should be emphasised that this did not affect the positioning of any of the brands in the top 10.

Inevitably, this type of project is open to interpretation and we have had to take a pragmatic approach to the way we have handled certain businesses. For example, Concha y Toro is, strictly speaking, a company rather than a brand. Gallo has a plethora of brands with distinct personalities. Other brand owners put their names to products in more than one country.

No system is perfect, but we have tried to assign votes in a way that makes sense to the widest number of people and reflects the way in which suppliers and their products are regarded internationally.

It was a secret ballot, and participants (other than the few jury members mentioned above) have not seen the final results until now.



**Sixty wine professionals took part in the judging. All were given the option of anonymity but the following voters were happy for their names to be published. Participants were not permitted to vote for brands with which they are associated**

Lucy Anderson (Australia) *Asia director for Wine Australia*

Alexander Anson Esparza (Switzerland) *Buying and merchandising director at The Nuance Group*

Tony Aspler (Canada) *Consultant and author*

Caspar Auchterlonie (UK) *Consultant*  
Richard Bampfield MW (UK) *Wine trainer and educator*

Neil Barker (UK) *Former commercial director for UK & Ireland for Foster's Group*

Anne Burchett (UK) *Managing director of Sopexa UK & Ireland*  
Miguel Chan (South Africa) *Group sommelier at Southern Sun Hotels*

Michael Cox (UK) *UK director of Wines of Chile*

Christian Davis (UK) *Editor of Drinks International*

Erica Donoho (US) *US country manager at Wine Intelligence*

Jourdan Guillaume (France) *Director of VitaBella wine marketing agency*

Neil Hadley MW (Australia) *Consultant at Taylors Wines*

Sam Harrop MW (UK) *Winemaking consultant; director of Litmus Wines*

Michael Hill Smith MW (Australia) *Winemaker at Shaw & Smith*

Justin Howard-Sneyd MW (UK) *Global wine director of Direct Wines*

Claire Hu (South Africa) *Wine writer*

Olivier Humbrecht MW (France) *Winemaker at Domaine Zind Humbrecht, Alsace*

Dan Jago (UK) *Category director of beers, wines and spirits at Tesco*

Brett Jones (UK) *Owner of The Wine Maestro*

Wilhelm Lerner (Germany) *Consultant*

Peter Marks MW (US) *Vice president for education at Constellation Wines*

Peter McCombie MW (UK) *Wine consultant and communicator*

Tuomas Meriluto MW (Finland) *Managing director of Winestate Oy importers*

Charles Metcalfe (UK) *Author, wine competition judge and speaker*

Wendy Narby (France) *Chef d'entreprise at Insider Tasting*

José Manuel Ortega (Spain) *Director, O Fournier*

Bruwer Raats (South Africa) *Owner of Raats Family Wines*

Grant Ramage (Australia) *General manager for Vintage Cellars at Coles Group*

Stephen Rannekliev (Netherlands) *Analyst at Rabobank*

Bill Rolfe (UK) *Director of 10 International*

Lynne Sherriff MW (South Africa) *Consultant*

John Skupny (US) *Owner of Lang & Reed Wine Company*

Godfrey Spence (UK) *Wine educator and writer*

Joan Torrents (UK) *Group wine buyer at Mitchells & Butlers*

Bruce Tyrrell (Australia) *Managing director of Tyrrell's Wines*

Jean-Michel Valette MW (US) *Chairman of Vinfolio*

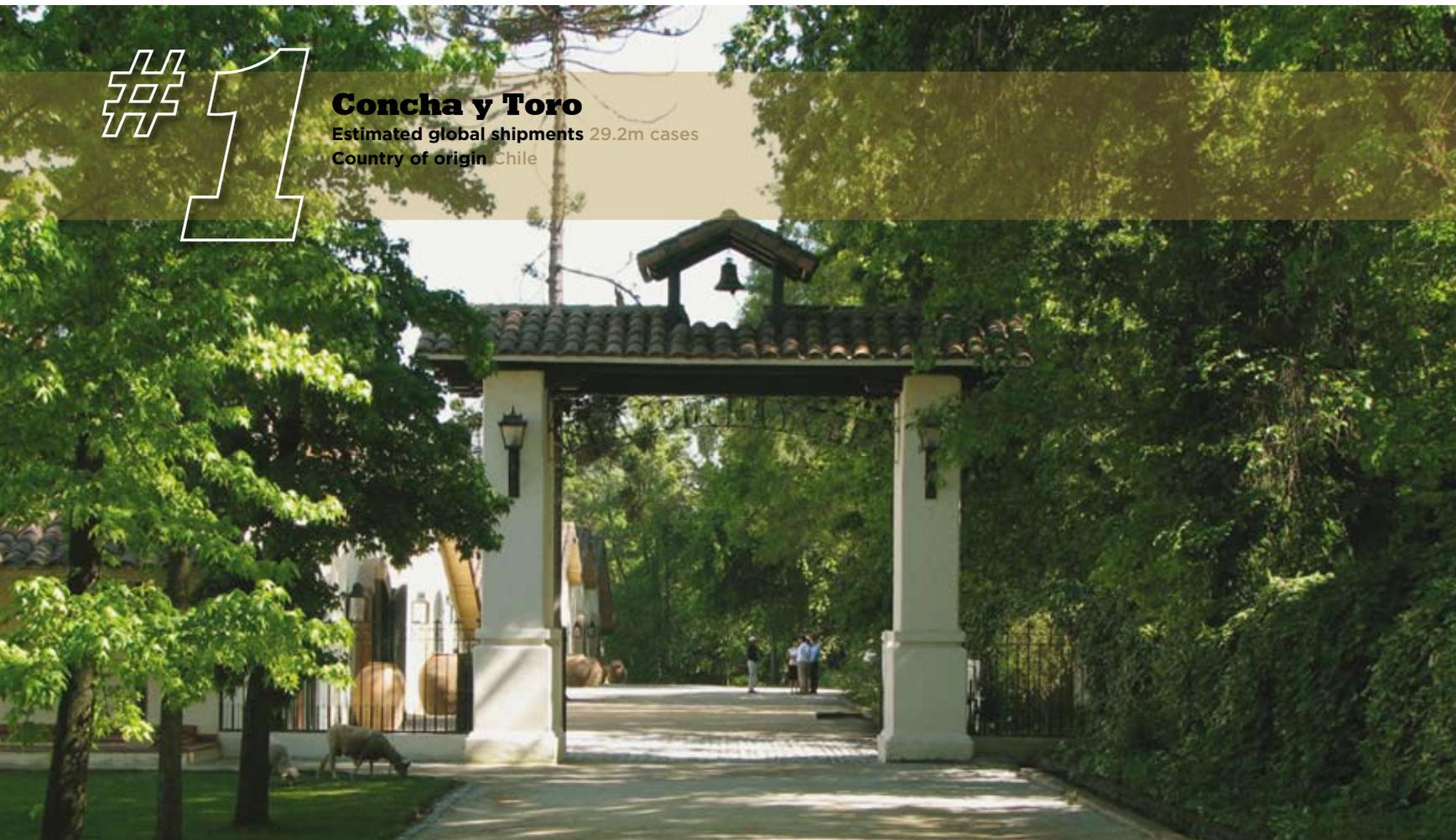
Ronn Wiegand MW MS (US) *Consultant and writer*

# #1

## Concha y Toro

Estimated global shipments 29.2m cases

Country of origin Chile



**W**ith sales in 135 countries, Concha y Toro has become an ambassador for Chile around the world. Its brands encompass everything that Chile does best: consistent, flavoursome wines priced within reach of connoisseurs and casual consumers alike.

The Concha y Toro portfolio includes the flagship Casillero del Diablo, which by itself sells 3 million cases and recently signed a partnership deal with Manchester United football club.

Cono Sur has been included in the votes cast for Concha y Toro, but even without these being added the brand was a clear winner in our international poll.

Sales in 2010 for the business as a whole rose 14.3% to US\$735m, and volumes were up 3.9%. The company reports increasing success in most of its regions, especially Asia, where a surge in interest from Japan, China and Korea contributed to a 21.4% increase in volume, although the going has proved a little more challenging in the US of late, where volumes fell 1.7%. Fifty-one per

cent of exports went to Europe.

Concha y Toro has achieved acclaim not just as a result of its sheer size, but also its approach to its business. Chief executive Eduardo Guislausti has won plaudits for pushing for a 10% price increase this year at a time when many producers are experiencing severe margin pressure, and backing it with a commitment to increased quality so consumers can see some extra value.

Founded in 1883 at Pirque in the Maipo Valley by local businessman Don Melchor Concha y Toro, with grapevines imported from Bordeaux, the company's vineyard interests have grown into some of the most significant holdings in the world.

It owns (or has long-term leases on) 8,445ha in Chile, most of them in Maule, Colchagua and Cachapoal, but also in areas such as Limari, Casablanca and Curico. In Argentina it operates 1,068ha in Mendoza.

Concha y Toro claims to have the "widest variety of wine varieties in the Chilean wine industry", which is possible

because of the diversity of soils and climates in its estates.

Like all large-scale wine producers, it talks about its commitment to recognising the different characteristics of all its sites, and preserving the freshness and personality of the grapes they produce. But the acclaim regularly bestowed on the company by usually hard-nosed critics – including many who are usually dubious about big brands – suggests the mission statement is more than just a marketing claim.

It was telling that in March this year, when Concha y Toro bought Fetzer from Brown-Forman for \$238m in a deal which also included Bonterra, the reaction from the media and other specialist observers was generally positive. Had the Californian vineyard and winery fallen into the hands of any other multinational the response might have been very different. But Concha y Toro's reputation for fair dealing, honesty and quality preceded it. Few in the global wine trade will be surprised to see it taking the top position in our countdown of the world's most admired wine brands.



# #2

## Torres

Estimated global shipments 24m cases

Country of origin Spain

Owner Torres SA



**M**iguel Torres, who represents the fourth generation of his family to run the business, is unquestionably wine trade royalty. Few, if any, figures in the drinks industry are held in such high regard. Those who meet him are struck by his knowledge and modesty. The wines his company produces speak for themselves.

Torres was founded in Penedès in 1870 and was soon exporting its wines to Cuba, thanks to family connections with an oil company in central America. After the disruption of the Spanish Civil War, modern production started in earnest in the 1950s when Torres's father (also called Miguel) decided to focus on bottled wine rather than the bulk shipments he had previously favoured.

Torres Jr headed off to France for the first of two momentous study trips and returned with ideas and knowledge that were to reshape the family business. New grape varieties were planted; innovative vineyard techniques were introduced; barrel maturation became a feature of the Torres business; the fermentation systems were overhauled.

Wine critic Tim Atkin MW once wrote: "Every time you drink a bottle of modern Spanish white wine, be it from Rueda, Penedés, Rioja, Navarra or Rías Baixas, you should toast the man who brought Iberian blancos into the modern age by introducing temperature-controlled fermentation and stainless steel vats."

In 1979, 20 years after Torres had returned from his first round of French studies, Torres Gran Coronas Mas La Plana 1970 was voted the best Cabernet Sauvignon in the "wine Olympics" organised by French magazine *Gault-Millau*. It was a major jolt for the French, and if the world hadn't been paying attention to the Torres revolution until then, it was now.

Mas la Plana remains Torres's most prestigious red wine, produced from vines in a 29ha plot in Penedés exclusively planted with Cabernet Sauvignon – a first for Spain. It has won a string of awards since its famous victory in France and cemented Torres's reputation for premium wine production.

But the company has established a solid reputation for consistently good,

and affordable, wines such as Viña Sol and Sangre de Toro. Its most familiar brand names include De Casta, Coronas, Atrium and Viña Esmeralda. Torres is also noted for its ground-breaking laboratory work and spends millions of euros each year on better understanding rootstocks and vineyard health.

Torres now has vineyards and wineries across Spain, and has gradually colonised areas such as Jumilla, Ribera del Duero, Priorat and Rioja. Varietal labelling has become a feature of much of the range, representing another novelty for Spain.

International expansion has also played a key role in the company's development. It invested in Chile as early as 1979, where it operates in the Central Valley, and has a joint venture retail business in China, named Everwines, where Torres has shrewdly spotted a major growth opportunity.

Despite its scale, Torres has an image quite unlike many of its large rivals: a successful corporation, naturally, but one which portrays a friendly face to the world and shares its expertise, and enthusiasm, with its peers and customers.



**Wine trade royalty:**  
Miguel Torres

# Most Admired Wine Brands

## #3

### Jacob's Creek

**Estimated global shipments** 7.8m cases  
**Country of origin** Australia  
**Owner** Pernod Ricard

Jacob's Creek epitomises everything that has made Australia a powerhouse of international wine brands. The marketing is slick but never brash; the wine itself produced on an almost unimaginable scale, but with quality control that might be more readily associated with a winery of far more modest proportions than the one on the vast Rowland Flat in the Barossa Valley.

The winery can trace its roots back to Johann Gramp, a Bavarian immigrant who arrived in the valley in 1847. The Jacob's Creek name first appeared in 1976.

Now under the stewardship of Pernod Ricard, the brand is under margin pressure in its main export market, the UK, but has won the respect of its peers for being prepared to sacrifice volumes in the interests of sustainable profits.

Jacob's Creek has made some major advances into the Asian market, notably China, and future growth is likely to be achieved in this region as some of the brand's more traditional markets reach maturity.



**JACOB'S CREEK HAS MADE SOME MAJOR ADVANCES INTO THE ASIAN MARKET, NOTABLY CHINA, AND FUTURE GROWTH IS LIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED IN THIS REGION**

### 4 Antinori

**Estimated global shipments** n/a  
**Country of origin** Italy  
**Owner** Antinori

Wine companies usually make great marketing capital out of staying in family ownership for three or four generations. Antinori is now in its 26th, having been



founded in 1385 by Giovanni di Piero Antinori. The company, based in Umbria and Tuscany, is now run by Marchese Piero Antinori, assisted by daughters Albiera, Allegra and Alessia.

Although Antinori did not actually produce the first "super Tuscan", it is generally associated with creating the blend which sparked a real winemaking revolution in the Chianti region. Tignanello appeared in 1971, containing the banned Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes as well as the regulation Sangiovese. Marketed as an IGT wine, it cheerfully broke the rules, leading to a far more open and experimental approach which quickly won admirers around the world.

Since then, Antinori's expansion programme has taken it into Piemonte, California (at Atlas Peak) and Hungary.

### 5 Penfolds

**Estimated global sales** 2.6m cases  
**Country of origin** Australia  
**Supplier** Treasury Wine Estates

Some wine brands start with everyday products then gradually try to introduce



premium versions; with Penfolds, it was the other way around. The company will forever be associated with Grange, the original icon wine from Australia, which was first produced in the 1950s and is now described by Robert Parker as "a leading candidate for the richest, most concentrated dry table wine on planet earth".

It was at first made in secret by winemaker Max Schubert, whose paymasters at the time were sceptical about the viability of a dry red wine.

Penfolds has gradually extended down a ladder, allowing consumers on all budgets to experience some of its winemaking magic.

As well as the numbered Bin ranges, Koonunga Hill and Rawson's Retreat have both proved successful in the mass market.

During Southcorp's ownership of the brand, plans were hatched to transform Penfolds into a 5 million-case product, a strategy which risked embroiling the brand in the kind of discounting whirlwind which can encourage suppliers to take quality shortcuts.

Mercifully, the project was abandoned and Penfolds stands aloof from rivals which were more tempted to play the numbers game.

### 6 Cloudy Bay

**Estimated global shipments** 100,000 cases  
**Country of origin** New Zealand  
**Owner** LVMH

Cloudy Bay recently celebrated its 25th anniversary – an event that effectively signalled a similar milestone for its region of origin. The iconic Sauvignon Blanc put Marlborough on the map as one of the best known wine-producing regions in the world, inspiring a generation of wine producers to develop their own versions of the style.

It's a style which is now synonymous with New Zealand as a whole and mimicked, but rarely bettered, in other parts of the world.

"Cloudy Bay is a brilliant piece of marketing," says Tim Atkin MW. "In the early days it was a great and groundbreaking wine, too."

Famously, the brand was in such demand that merchants jealously competed for an allocation, which helped to keep prices up. Today, the brand is less scarce than it was, but LVMH is careful not to allow volumes to grow unchecked. The almost mythical aspect of Cloudy Bay endures.

# #7-10



## 7 Chateau Lafite

**Estimated global shipments**

45,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Principal territories** International

**Owner** Domaines Barons de

Rothschild

Lafite's reputation as a global wine superstar has been assured since at least 1855 when it was named in the first ever classification of Bordeaux premiers crus. The estate's history dates back to the 17th century and it spent time in Dutch and English ownership before coming into Rothschild hands in 1868.

The property is located north of Pauillac and produces wines dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, including its second wine, Carruades de Lafite.

Lafite has enjoyed particular success in the Far East of late, a phenomenon which has contributed to inflation in en primeur prices and definite irritation among buyers in more traditional territories. Some have joked that this is due to Chinese speakers finding Lafite easier to pronounce than some of its first growth rivals (it's regularly called "Lafay" in Shanghai and Beijing). But this overlooks the efforts that Lafite has made in reaching out to the Chinese market, including investment in a joint venture business and labels designed for a Chinese audience.

## 8 Vega Sicilia

**Estimated global shipments**

n/a

**Country of origin** Spain

**Owner** The Alvarez family

Vega Sicilia had been making wines in its present location long before it was joined by other hopefuls and the Ribera del

Duero DO was established. The family-owned producer is an undisputed global superstar, making some of the most acclaimed wines in Spain which reflect its almost obsessive levels of quality control (taking no chances with corks, it rejects two out of every three that are supplied, and charges producers for the returns).

Anyone expecting the flagship Unico wines to be extraordinarily powerful and intense will be surprised at how elegant they usually are, the product of 10 years of ageing in French oak. The 200ha of vineyard are planted with old vine Tinto Fino (the local strain of Tempranillo) as well as some Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec.

Michael Broadbent toasts Vega Sicilia as "the Lafite of Spain". The comment reflects the high regard in which Vega Sicilia is held by the world's leading wine critics – but not, perhaps, the individuality of this great estate.

## 9 Marqués de Riscal

**Estimated global shipments**

1m cases

**Country of origin** Spain

**Owner** Vinos de los Herederos del Marques de Riscal

The creation of Ciudad del Vino (City of Wine), a Frank Gehry-conceived development housing the Rioja winery as well as a hotel, spa and conference centre, fits in nicely with Marqués de Riscal's philosophy of challenging the status quo through innovation.

As long ago as 1858 it became the first Rioja producer to use Bordeaux techniques, and in 1972 it single-handedly pioneered modern production in Rueda, now regarded as one of Spain's most



exciting regions. As well as working with the indigenous Verdejo, it introduced Sauvignon Blanc to the area – another French-inspired innovation.

The region is dominated by white wines, but true to form Marqués de Riscal has developed red wines from the area too.

Marqués de Riscal exports its products in more than 70 countries. The 2005 Reserva caused a stir in the US when Robert Parker's Spanish critic Jay Miller awarded it 90 points.

## 10 Château Latour

**Estimated global shipments**

30,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** Groupe Artemis

Latour's reputation is based not only on its Grand Vin, made from grapes immediately surrounding its 77ha property on the south eastern tip of Pauillac, but also its second wine, Les Forts de Latour.

Widely regarded as being worthy of classified growth status in its own right, this wine is generally a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Merlot, sourced from specific vineyards rather than representing grapes deemed unworthy of the Grand Vin.

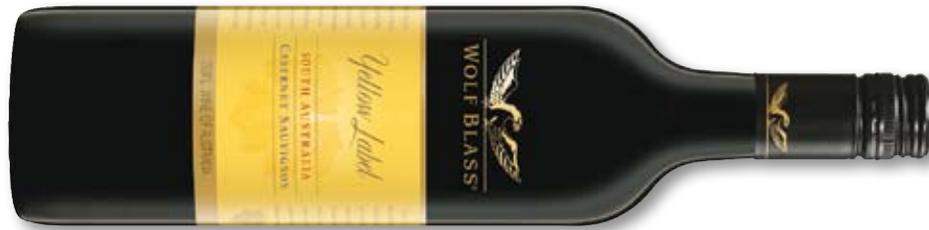
A third wine, Pauillac, is made from younger vines and has also developed a following.

Latour's reputation has been beyond question since the 1855 Bordeaux classification, but its prestige also stems from its ability to produce quality wines in unpromising vintages. For many critics, it's the most consistent of all the first growths.

Owned by Francois Pinault's Artemis business since 1993, Latour is run by president Frédéric Engerer, who has overseen a series of technical investments which have further consolidated the winery's international standing.



# #11-14



## 11 Wolf Blass

**Estimated global shipments**

4m cases

**Country of origin** Australia

**Owner** Treasury Wine Estates

Wolfgang Blass, the man, is one of the most liked personalities in the wine world – famous for his humour, enterprising spirit and considerable ability. He may no longer own the wines that bear his name (he sold to Mildara in 1991) but it's telling that subsequent owners have been keen to retain his services as a figurehead for the business.

Blass produced his first vintage in the Barossa Valley in 1966 and by 1973 owned 2.5 acres and an old army shed which became the HQ of Wolf Blass International Wines.

From 1974 to 1976, Black Label won three consecutive Jimmy Watson Trophies for Best Australian Red Wine at the Royal Melbourne Wine Show.

It triumphed again in 1999, a feat which remains unsurpassed in the competition's history. Today, it's questionable whether the 3,000 awards Wolf Blass has won would fit inside that tin outbuilding.

Now owned by Treasury, the winemaking team is headed by Chris Hatcher who oversees a range extending from luxury wines such as Platinum Label, Black Label and Grey Label to everyday wines such as Yellow Label and Red Label.

## 12 Château Margaux

**Estimated global shipments**

30,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** Corinne Mentzelopoulos

The grand, imposing edifice of the chateau building leaves no doubt that this is one of the world's most fêted fine wine producers.



Set in 262ha in the commune which shares its name, Margaux is one of the original premiers crus of Bordeaux.

Its second wine, Pavillon, accounts for something like 235,000 bottles, a small proportion of which is white and sold as generic Bordeaux (Sauvignon Blanc is not recognised as a Margaux appellation grape).

Château Margaux is noted for a certain perfumed quality that adds a feminine edge to wines that are actually more complex and robust than they might originally seem.

Robert Parker describes Margaux as "a modern-day legend", adding that the 1996 vintage "continues to give every indication of being one of the all time great clarets".

## 13 Château Ste Michelle

**Estimated global shipments**

6.7m cases

**Country of origin**

US

**Principal territories**

US

**Owner** UST

At a time when Pacific North West wines have earned something of a global reputation, it's possible to overlook the pioneering work that was done in the 1950s, 60s and 70s by Château Ste Michelle, Washington state's largest wine producer.

The company was originally called American Wine Growers, itself a merger of the national Wine Company and Pommerelle, a fruit wine producer in Seattle.



Ste Michelle, which has a number of brands including Columbia Crest and Erath – the Oregon producer noted for its Pinot Noir – also jointly owns Stag's Leap in Napa Valley and has worked on Riesling projects with Ernst Loosen.

Its growth has been driven by the acquisition of small wineries, creating what it likes to call a "string of pearls".

Although widely regarded as a premium producer, with Parker points to prove it, the range is broad and also includes wines at mainstream prices.

## 14 Château Haut-Brion

**Estimated global shipments**

13,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** Domaines Clarence Dillon

Haut-Brion stands apart from the original first growths of the 1855 classification as the only premier cru from outside Médoc.

Long before that list was drawn up, the wine was being enjoyed by Charles II and Samuel Pepys, who in 1663 wrote that he had drunk "a sort of French wine called Ho Bryen that hath a good and most particular taste I never met with".

Thomas Jefferson was similarly impressed when he tried Haut-Brion in 1787.

Some 350 years later, Haut-Brion continues to garner such favourable reviews. The property stands in 45ha of vineyards, with a 37% Merlot component against a 45% Cabernet Sauvignon quotient.

The property produces a second wine, Bahans-Haut-Brion, which is also in high demand.

# #15-18



Château Musar's Serge Hochar

## 15 Louis Latour

**Estimated global shipments**  
n/a

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** The Latour family

Family owned since the 17th century, Louis Latour is one of the great wine dynasties. The company is renowned for its Burgundy and has deep roots in Aloxé-Corton. But Latour has also succeeded in making great Chardonnay and Pinot Noir wines in the Ardèche, Coteaux de Verdon and Provence, where it has built a reputation for making Burgundy-style wines at more affordable prices.

Latour produces around 150 different wines, bottled in the same recognisable bottles. Domaine Louis Latour is responsible for wines from Louis Latour's own land in Burgundy, including 17ha of Grand Cru Corton and nearly 10ha of Grand Cru Corton Charlemagne.

The negociant arm, Maison Louis Latour, includes wines from the Ardèche and the Var.

## 16 Oyster Bay

**Estimated global shipments**  
2 million cases

**Country of origin** New Zealand

**Owner** Delegat's

Oyster Bay was named best Sauvignon Blanc in the 1991 International Wine Challenge. It wasn't the last award the wine was destined to win, but it was the one that really put it on the map as a global player.

The family-owned producer was one of the first to exploit the potential of New Zealand's Marlborough region, now recognised as one of the best places on the planet for Sauvignon.

It has extended its vineyard interests to



Hawke's Bay, a region it now describes as its "second home".

Winemaking philosophy is always at risk of being over-elaborate, but at Oyster Bay the ambition is simply "to produce elegant and assertive wines with glorious fruit flavours". It's a philosophy that is also applied to the Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Noir and sparkling wines that make up the Oyster Bay portfolio.

## 17 Château Musar

**Estimated global shipments**  
50,000 cases

**Country of origin** Lebanon

**Owner** The Hochar family

Wine production is tough enough work without the added trauma of a civil war. Yet that's what Serge Hochar had to contend with between 1975 and 1990, and during that time only two vintages were lost.

But Musar, founded in 1930 by Gaston Hochar on the Mediterranean coast at an elevation of 1,000m, has done more than simply triumph in the face of adversity.

It produces wines from Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault and Carignan (the blend changes according to the vintage) which have seduced the critics with their pure flavours.

In 1979, Michael Broadbent declared Musar the find of the Bristol Wine Fair and the praise has flowed steadily ever since.

Serge Hochar wants his wines to reflect nature. "I believe it should be a priority to seek to drink what is true rather than what is good," he says.

"I once produced a wine that was technically perfect, but it lacked the charms of imperfection."

## 18 Fetzer

**Estimated global sales** 3m cases  
**Country of origin** US

**Owner** Concha y Toro

California, 1968. The summer of love is still influencing an idealistic generation and in Mendocino County, Fetzer Vineyards is beginning its life.

The owners worked in harmony with nature from the start, but it was only in 1984 that Fetzer committed itself to totally sustainable grape production.

Fetzer was ahead of its time in other ways, too. It was a pioneer of Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer and Riesling in California and in 1992 the drinks giant Brown-Forman was sufficiently impressed by the business model to buy the company.

Now part of the Concha y Toro empire, Fetzer's range has grown to encompass varieties such as Pinot Grigio, Shiraz, Moscato and white Zinfandel.

Despite its position in the corporate big league, Fetzer still inspires the kind of critical and consumer affection that eludes many top wine brands.



# #19-22

## 19 Duboeuf

**Estimated global shipments**

2.5m cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** The Duboeuf family

Few wine company owners have the energy and vision of Georges Duboeuf, whose passion for – and influence over – the Beaujolais region is almost legendary. The company was one of the prime movers in the creation of Beaujolais Nouveau, one of the most successful marketing ideas ever created in the wine industry.

Duboeuf has worked with others in the region to make Beaujolais a name that even casual wine drinkers have heard of. His devotion to modern techniques has given his wines a fresh, fruity character that has become the benchmark for the region.

Such is the company's success, it has been able to spread its investment into areas further south, where its wines are made with the same painstaking approach.

## 20 Château Pétrus

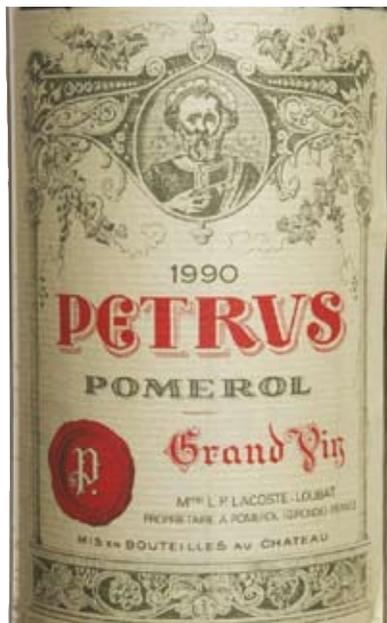
**Estimated global shipments**

3,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** JP Moueix

A Merlot-dominated blend fermented in cement vats doesn't sound like a



promising description for a product that is expensive even by Bordeaux standards (a bottle of the 1982 is on sale for £8,995 in Harrods), but the concentrated flavours of this remarkable wine are prized by collectors and aficionados everywhere.

Limited production also plays a part in pushing prices sky high: the estate is so small that all the grapes can be harvested in a morning.

Inevitably, wine of this quality and this restricted sale becomes a plaything of oligarchs and the obscenely rich, but those privileged to taste Pétrus for themselves can see why there is such a clamour. Indeed Robert Parker has awarded it a perfect 100 on seven occasions – more than any other wine he's reviewed.

## 21 Campo Viejo

**Estimated global shipments**

1.5m cases

**Country of origin** Spain

**Owner** Pernod Ricard

Campo Viejo claims to be the best-known wine brand in Spain and the most widely consumed Rioja in the world. Created in 1959, the brand has achieved huge export success with its modern, easy-going style.

The wine was given something of an overhaul in 2005, after former owner Allied Domecq was swallowed by Pernod Ricard, as part of a strategy to make it more accessible and reliable – though the winemaking team would argue the wine remains an authentic Rioja.

Not every European brand owner has responded to the New World challenge as dynamically as Campo Viejo. The millions of euros invested in marketing by a multinational owner have certainly helped its cause, but at the heart of it all is a wine which has proved it has massive consumer appeal.



## 22 JP Chenet

**Estimated global shipments**

8m cases

**Country of origin** France

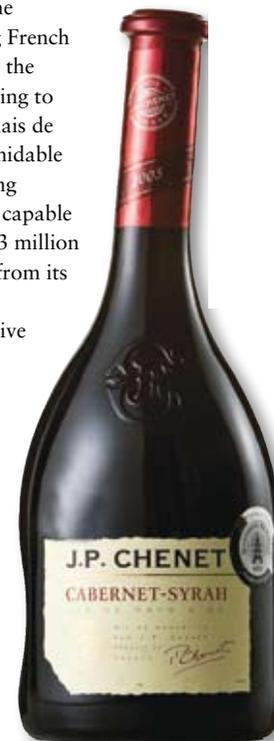
**Owner** Les Grand Chais de France

Launched in 1984, JP Chenet has become the biggest-selling French wine brand in the world, according to Les Grand Chais de France, a formidable wine-producing conglomerate capable of producing 3 million bottles a day from its six sites.

The distinctive bottle shape, designed by Joseph Helfrich and named Joséphine, was a marketing masterstroke, creating an instant point of difference on shelves which can look wearily uniform to grocery shoppers. The innovative approach justified the investment required in a custom-built bottling line to handle Joséphine's curves.

Taking its cue from New World brands, JP Chenet opted for varietal labelling and sourced its wine from southern co-operatives.

Germany was the first to embrace the brand, followed by the Netherlands and Scandinavia. Joséphine now graces the shelves of retailers in 160 countries.



# #23-26



Jess Jackson

## 23 Kendall-Jackson

**Estimated global shipments**

4m cases

**Country of origin** US

**Owner** Jackson Family Wine Estates

This year saw the death of Jess Stonestreet Jackson who, in 1974 with his wife Barbara Banke, converted a pear and walnut orchard in Lakeport, California, into a vineyard.

The Kendall-Jackson brand was born in 1982 when the couple decided to market their own wine rather than just supply grapes to others.

Kendall-Jackson was the best selling Chardonnay in the US for two decades

and provided much of the thrust behind the company's expansion (Jackson Family Wine Estates is now the owner of 35 wineries and dozens of wine brands).

Jackson himself, a former policeman, farmer and lawyer, is widely regarded as a pioneer of sustainable agriculture. He is also credited with the idea of combining grapes from various sites to achieve a desired blend, rather than sourcing everything from one locality.

## 24 Black Tower

**Estimated global shipments**

1m cases

**Country of origin** Germany

**Supplier** Reh Kendermann

Black Tower started life in 1967 as a Liebfraumilch in a ceramic bottle. It quickly became a best-seller in the UK and US and is now sold in more than 50 countries, reinventing itself periodically to try to keep pace with consumer trends.

In 1997 Black Tower was relaunched as a Rivaner and the range now includes the likes of Riesling, Pinot Grigio and Pinot Noir as well as generic entry-level Fruity White. The bottle too has moved on, though the distinctive high-shouldered shape remains.

Times are not easy for German brands in the international wine market and Black Tower is no longer on the crest of a wave. But it is widely admired for the huge role it played in recruiting millions of consumers to the wine category.

## 25 Mateus

**Estimated global shipments**

1.7m cases

**Country of origin** Portugal

**Owner** Sogrape

Like Black Tower, Mateus is a brand to which almost all successful wine brands owe something of a debt. Launched in 1942, its sweet, easy-drinking formula won over legions of consumers who had never tried wine before and quickly caught the bug.

The flask-shaped bottle has become a minor design classic too.

Although the brand fell out of



favour somewhat as consumers graduated to drier and arguably more sophisticated wines, Mateus has proved resilient even in the most testing times.

Indeed it's possible that a renaissance is happening as a new generation of wine drinkers explore light, sweet blush wine styles that fit in neatly with the Mateus flavour profile. The brand's global volumes rose 5.9% in 2010, suggesting the theory may be accurate.

## 26 Villa Maria

**Estimated global shipments**

500,000 cases

**Country of origin** New Zealand

**Owner** Sir George Fistonich

Fistonich, a Croatian by birth, founded Villa Maria in Auckland in 1961. The company has since expanded into Hawke's Bay, where it has a second winery, and also bought the Esk Valley winery in Napier.

Villa Maria was one of the key brands in building New Zealand's reputation for quality in export markets. Fistonich has been astute in his understanding of the country's terroir and the effect it has on viticulture and ultimately wine styles. Villa Maria was reputedly the first New Zealand wine company to agree payment for grapes based on quality rather than a flat contract price.

Villa Maria, which claims to be New Zealand's most awarded wine, was also the first to abandon corks in 2004.



# #27-30



## 27 Cheval Blanc

**Estimated global shipments**

8,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** Bernard Arnault and Baron

Albert Frère

This 37ha plot in St-Emilion, on the fringes of Pomerol, marries Cabernet Franc and Merlot to create a world classic.

The 1947 vintage is declared by many to be the greatest wine ever made. It has “such a thick texture it could double as motor oil”, according to Robert Parker. “The huge nose of fruitcake, chocolate, leather, coffee and Asian spices is mind-boggling. The unctuous texture and richness of sweet fruit are amazing.

“This wine is, technically, appallingly deficient in acidity and excessively high in alcohol. Its volatile acidity levels would be considered intolerable by modern-day oenologists. Yet how can they explain that the wine is still remarkably fresh, phenomenally concentrated, and profoundly complex? It has to make you wonder about the direction of modern day winemaking.”

## 28 Château d'Yquem

**Estimated global shipments**

8,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** LVMH

Chateau d'Yquem is certainly the world's most acclaimed sweet wine, produced using botrytised fruit from just under 100ha of Sauternes vineyard. Yields are tiny; the grapes (Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc) are pressed three times before ageing in new oak.

Even with the estate's famously rigorous approach to viticulture, there are years in which the entire crop is deemed unworthy of the Yquem name and no



wine is made. This last happened in 1992.

Yquem has a reputation for producing wines with huge longevity; some critics have described them as “indestructible”, although the sweetness gives way to complex secondary flavours as the decades go by.

The 1811 vintage is another contender for the best wine ever produced, and was awarded 100 points by Robert Parker when he tasted it in 1996.

## 29 Château Mouton-Rothschild

**Estimated global shipments**

20,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** Rothschild

In the 1855 Bordeaux classification, Mouton was listed as a second-growth wine, and not promoted to premier cru status until 1973.

In a way, this helped Mouton's cause: the indignation they felt at being excluded from the top table encouraged its owners to work harder on the marketing, and led to the tradition of commissioning leading artists to create label artwork for each vintage. Salvador Dali, Francis Bacon and Henry Moore have all appeared.

The wines are typically rich and concentrated in flavour, built around Cabernet Sauvignon with Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot playing supporting roles.

Mouton-Rothschild, which



has been in the Rothschild family since 1853, was the first Bordeaux estate to commit itself to chateau bottling.

## 30 Yellowtail

**Estimated global shipments**

7.5m cases

**Country of origin** Australia

**Owner** Casella Wines

Yellowtail has achieved global success without the backing of a multinational drinks giant's marketing funds. The Casella family originally farmed just 16ha in Riverina, and grew in scale after hitting on a taste formula and packaging design that was an instant hit with casual wine consumers, particularly in the US.

Its colonisation of Asia has been no less impressive; the strategy has been to recruit a network of importers and distributors with no detailed knowledge of wine (many are essentially beer companies) but with good access to key accounts.

The business now produces 12 million bottles a year, which encompasses a range of varieties and sparkling styles. To many, Yellowtail represents the ultimate lesson in successful wine branding.

# #31-35



## 31 Marqués de Cáceres

**Estimated global shipments**

n/a

**Country of origin** Spain

**Owner** Cristina Forner

Marqués de Cáceres was established in 1970 by Henri Forner, guided by Emile Peynaud. The winery is based in Rioja Alta and owns no vineyards of its own, sourcing grapes from local growers.

Widely regarded as one of the most progressive Rioja producers in the business, Marqués de Cáceres has enlisted the services of Michel Rolland to help create fresh, fruity wines that drink well while young.

The reservas and gran reservas are certainly no lightweights, however, and are in demand in international markets for their combination of juicy red fruit and spicy notes.

## 32 Chateau Le Pin

**Estimated global shipments**

600 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** The Thienpont family

The modern history of this tiny Pomerol estate dates back to 1980, when it came into the hands of the Belgian Thienpont family who saw the potential of the site and extended it to five hectares. The low-yielding vineyards are dominated by Merlot, though some Cabernet Franc is also grown.

Dany Rolland is a consultant to the winery, producing wines which exhibit formidable depth and complexity, aided by up to two years in new oak. The limited production helps to push prices sky high, making Le Pin one of the world's most sought-after and expensive wines.



## 33 Brancott Estate

**Estimated global shipments**

1.2m cases

**Country of origin** New Zealand

**Owner** Pernod Ricard

Brancott started life as Montana in 1934 and was one of the original Marlborough producers. A year ago it was renamed Brancott Estate, a name already used for the brand in the US.

The range has been instrumental in forging New Zealand's reputation (Pernod Ricard estimates it accounts for 10% of all wine exports) and is indisputably one of the reasons Marlborough is held in such high regard.

Sauvignon Blanc is the key variety, but the range also includes acclaimed Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio and Cabernet Sauvignon.

## 34 Beringer

**Estimated global shipments**

5m cases

**Country of origin**

US

**Owner** Treasury

**Wine Estates**

Beringer claims to be Napa's oldest wine estate, having been founded in St Helena in 1876. It's been owned by big business for 40 years (Nestle, Foster's, Treasury) but has retained an association with earthy, pioneering viticulture.

The range is large, encompassing wines at everyday prices as well as



super-premium Private Reserve wines. Beringer specialises in Chardonnay, which is considered by many to be among the best in California, as well as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot with the ability to age for decades. Critics have applauded the consistent vein of quality that runs through all tiers of the Beringer portfolio.

## 35 Gallo

**Estimated global shipments**

80m cases

**Country of origin** US

**Supplier** E&J Gallo

Gallo is part of wine industry legend and folklore and, even though the company is less insular than it once appeared, the mythology is undiminished. Employees are encouraged to read the official biography of Ernest and Julio Gallo; a controversial unauthorised version of events was reportedly bought up and pulped.

From the beginning, Gallo has been unashamedly populist in its marketing, though wary of giving outsiders too much of a peek inside a corporation which now operates some 60 brands in 90 countries.

The company, which employs some 5,000 people, remains resolutely family owned, with Joseph Gallo – the son of Ernest Gallo – running the business.

# #36-40



## 36 O Fournier

**Estimated global shipments**  
100,000 cases

**Country of origin** Spain, Argentina, Chile

**Owner** O Fournier

Created in 2000 by the exuberant José Manuel Ortega (above), a former banker, O Fournier owns wineries in Mendoza and Ribera del Duero and has vineyard holdings in Maule, Chile. Ortega's business brain and passion for creating world-class wine have proved a potent combination and the group has set itself an ambitious target of an annual output of 1.5 million bottles.

In 2009 Robert Parker remarked that Ortega appeared to be having more fun in Spain, Argentina and Chile than he did on Wall Street and confidently predicted that "the best is yet to come at O Fournier".

## 37 Faustino

**Estimated global shipments**  
n/a

**Country of origin** Spain

**Owner** Grupo Faustino

Founded in 1861, Faustino remains a family business. Although its bottles look traditional and conservative, the company is more dynamic than it may appear, as anyone who has visited the futuristic new Foster-designed winery in Ribera del Duero will attest.

The group has seven wineries in Spain, including three in its Rioja heartland where it produces three principal brands: Faustino 1 (the gran reserva), Faustino 2



(the reserva) and Faustino 7 (the crianza). The style is designed to emphasise the fruit character of grapes grown in Faustino's own estates – the company claims to own more vineyards than any other bodega.



## 38 Peter Lehmann

**Estimated global shipments**  
600,000 cases

**Country of origin** Australia

**Owner** The Hess Collection

Born in 1930, Lehmann is no longer part of the day-to-day running of the company which bears his name, but the Baron of the Barossa's influence is still keenly felt. Lehmann has spent a career championing the region, convincing any detractors with a string of awards and a growing international following for his wines.

Peter Lehmann Wines was established in 1979 and has used the queen of clubs – the gamblers' card – as its emblem, symbolising the risk that Lehmann was taking when he started out. The business was sold to Hess in 2003 and Lehmann retired from his post as managing director last year.



## 39 Château Ausone

**Estimated global sales** 2,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** The Vauthier family

This 7ha estate in St-Emilion, planted with equal quantities of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, has a long and proud history, though it's generally agreed it did not produce distinguished wines (by its own high standards) for much of the middle part of the 20th century.

The return to form began in the late 1970s when new regisseur Pascal Delbeck

arrived and, more recently, the style has been influenced by the services of Michel Rolland. Jancis Robinson, praising the 2010, referred to the wine's "almost supernatural fruit". The blend has recently been dominated by Cabernet Franc.

## 40 Berberana

**Estimated global shipments** n/a

**Country of origin** Spain

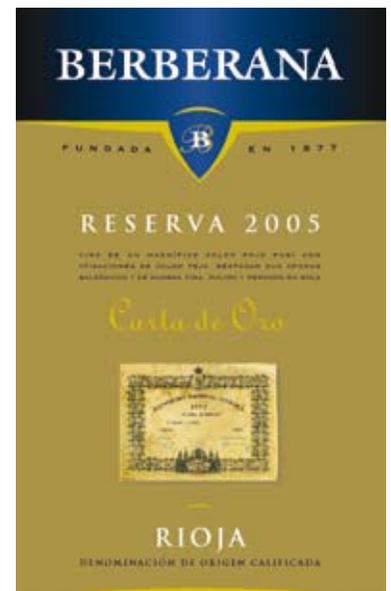
**Owner** United Wineries

Founded in Rioja Alta in 1877 by Don Miguel Martínez Berberana, the brand claims to be Spain's biggest selling wine export.

In 1994 the business broke with tradition by starting production of Vinos de la Tierra, making it the first of the traditional Rioja houses to take such a step.

The Carta de Plata range has become an important element of Berberana's portfolio.

The Berberana line-up has diversified into a number of styles and price brackets, generally winning acclaim from trade buyers and critics and, most crucially of all, consumers.



# #41-45

## 41 Arniston Bay

**Estimated global shipments**

700,000 cases

**Country of origin** South Africa

**Owner** The Company of Wine People

Arniston Bay has caught the attention of the global wine trade, not just as a result of its successful export strategy but also for the way in which it does business. The brand's owner, The Company of Wine People, does not own any of its own vineyards, yet through judicious partnerships with growers is able to maintain a consistent quality for its range. It's also been innovative with packaging, pioneering a pouch which offers environmental benefits as well as consumer convenience.

The brand has become one of the most recognisable mainstream brands in its key market, the UK, thanks to an imaginative marketing strategy.

## 42 Woodbridge

**Estimated global shipments**

7m cases

**Country of origin** US

**Owner** Constellation Wines

Woodbridge is the winery built by Robert Mondavi in Lodi, 13 years after he had established his main headquarters in the Napa Valley in 1966. While the original project focused on premium fare, Woodbridge – formed after Mondavi bought out a cooperative of local grape growers – set about creating a range of wines for more general enjoyment.

Although the Woodbridge range of varietal wines takes its place within the mainstream of the wine market, it regularly wins favourable reviews when



Kumala winemaker  
Bruce Jack

pitted against wines of a supposedly higher pedigree, with Jancis Robinson among the critics who have been impressed by its Chardonnay.

## 43 Lindeman's

**Estimated global shipments**

8.4m cases

**Country of origin** Australia

**Owner** Treasury Wine Estates

When Henry Lindeman, a Hampshire-born doctor, set sail for Australia in 1840 he could never have imagined the international success his Cawarra winery would go on to achieve. The original vineyard has long gone, replaced by vast plantings in the Barossa Valley, Coonawarra and Padthaway.

Lindeman's is one of many high-profile brands that gets caught up in promotional price fighting, making it a victim of its high consumer appeal. Yet its wines rarely get savaged by critics in the same way as high-profile rivals – indeed Robert Parker has praised its Chardonnay for its exceptional value.

## 44 Michel Chapoutier

**Estimated global shipments**

420,000 cases

**Country of origin** France

**Owner** Chapoutier

Braille labels have become something of a trademark for this progressive Rhône winery and negociant, which is a noted producer of top-level Hermitage. But the company is also famous for its preference

for single-variety wines: several of its Châteauneuf-du-Papes contain only Grenache, while its Côte-Rôties are purely Syrah, with no Viognier.

Chapoutier has also drawn attention to itself with its biodynamic viticulture and by broadening its horizons beyond the Rhône and southern France into Portugal and Australia, where it has joint venture projects.

Its current chief executive, Michel Chapoutier, took over the running of the business in 1990, aged 26, and is widely credited with revitalising the family firm.

## 45 Kumala

**Estimated global shipments**

2.6m cases

**Country of origin** South Africa

**Owner** Accolade Wines

Kumala did more than any other wine to popularise – indeed rehabilitate – South African wine as the apartheid regime crumbled. Developed by Western Wines, a now defunct UK wine business, Kumala gave British consumers a taste of the Cape which set out a path for many other rivals to follow.

The brand later lost its way a little as volumes spiralled and consistency suffered. New owner Constellation gave the brand an overhaul, installing Bruce Jack as head winemaker, and Kumala has got itself back on track. Today, as part of newly-formed Accolade, it is still widely perceived as a shining example of how South Africa can create credible, crowd-pleasing wine brands.



# #46-50



## 46 Blue Nun

**Estimated global shipments**

500,000 cases

**Country of origin** Germany

**Owner** Langguth Wines

Blue Nun will forever be associated with off-dry German wines, but the brand has been extended in recent times to include offerings from Spain, Italy and France. There is a Blue Nun from the Medoc, an organic Rivaner and Sangiovese, and a Riesling eiswein in the range.

Like Black Tower, the brand was a recruiting sergeant for the wine category in the days before the category had mass appeal in markets such as the US and the UK. Langguth continues to have faith in the main Blue Nun style, which has continued to evolve over the years and has been the subject of various makeovers. The range is sold in more than 100 countries.

## 47 Brown Brothers

**Estimated global shipments**

1.1m cases

**Country of origin** Australia

**Owner** The Brown family

Few wine producers retain such an appetite for experimentation as Brown Brothers, which somehow manages to produce 45 varietal wines at Milawa, many of them made at the mini Kindergarten winery. Some are exclusively cellar door products, but the range in mainstream distribution is also impressively broad and includes fortified and sparkling styles. The top end wines are marketed under the name Patricia.

Established in 1885 by John Francis



Brown, the company is today led by Ross Brown and selects grapes from an eclectic group of vineyards, with differing terroir and microclimates. It is a member of Australia's First Families of Wine, an alliance of some of Australia's most prestigious producers.

## 48 Inniskillin

**Estimated global shipments**

n/a

**Country of origin**

Canada

**Owner** Constellation Wines

Inniskillin is synonymous with ice wine, which it first made in Niagara in 1984, nine years after the winery was founded. Until this pivotal moment in its history – and indeed the history of Canadian wine – founders Karl Kaiser and Donald Ziraldo had focused on table wines.

As Inniskillin grew, the Canadian wine industry grew with it, and Ziraldo was instrumental in forming the Vintners Quality Alliance scheme – Canada's answer to an appellation system. The scheme was soon extended to British Columbia where, in 1994, Inniskillin set up a winemaking venture in partnership with the indigenous Inkameep people at Okanagan.



## 49 Oxford Landing

**Estimated global shipments**

n/a

**Country of origin** US

**Owner** Yalumba

Oxford Landing was established in 1958 by Wyndham Hill Smith. The vineyards, managed as 130 separate five-hectare blocks, border the Murray River near Waikerie in South Australia and produce lush, quintessentially Australian wines that have won admirers across the globe.

Since 2002 Oxford Landing has tried to use minimal pesticides and its increased commitment to the environment went on to include the purchase of 600ha of land to offset the carbon emissions of the winery.

The land has been returned to native scrub with the intensive planting of thousands of trees and bushes.

## 50 Blossom Hill

**Estimated global shipments** n/a

**Country of origin** US

**Owner** Diageo

Blossom Hill goes against almost every theory that wine critics put forward, yet its popularity with consumers in northern Europe has been phenomenal.

The wine's easy-drinking, fruity style, relatively high in residual sugar, was an almost instant hit in the UK. The idea of putting a tasting note on the front label proved to be a masterstroke.

Both the style and the packaging of Blossom Hill have inspired a host of imitations and arguably created a seismic shift in the UK market and beyond. Perhaps everyday consumers really do crave sweeter, less complicated wines than the market has been offering.



# North America

Unsurprisingly, California claims the lion's share of the vote, with eight of the top 10 positions, though it's a Washington State winery which claims the number one spot.

Canada is represented by Inniskillin, although Jackson Triggs, based in Ontario and British Columbia, just misses the cut, despite picking up some votes.

There's no place for some of the most premium

California wines on the list. The likes of Opus One, Beaulieu, Saintsbury, Bonny Doon and Stag's Leap don't feature among the most supported brands in our vote, which is not to say they are not widely admired.

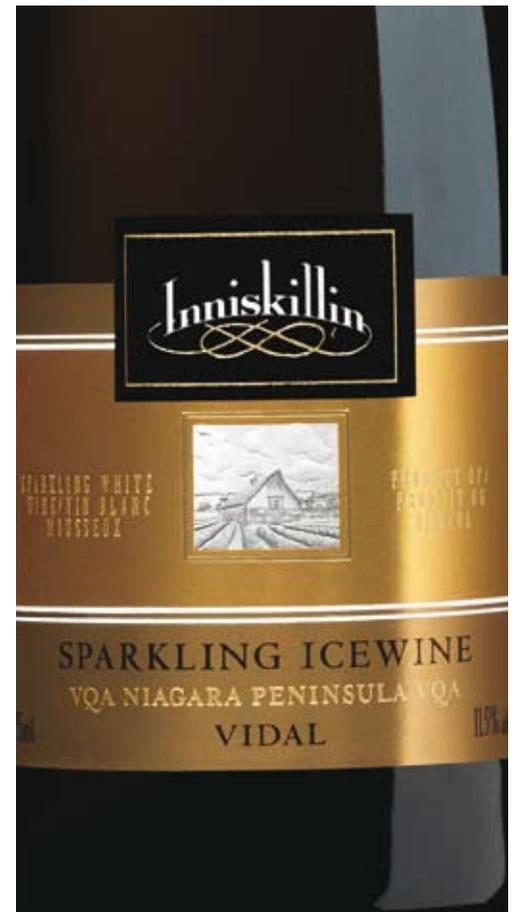
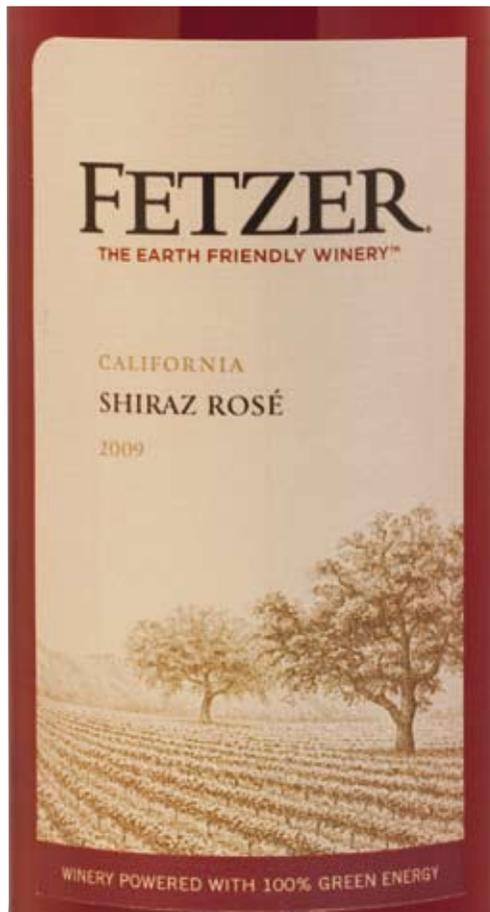
Judges have rewarded producers whose brands have a more mass-market appeal and which have served as important ambassadors for American winemaking around the world.



Gallo vineyards

## Top North America Wines

- 1 Château Ste Michelle
- 2 Fetzer
- 3 Kendall-Jackson
- 4 Beringer
- 5 Gallo
- 6 Woodbridge
- 7 Inniskillin
- 8 Blossom Hill
- 9 Ridge Vineyards
- 10 Sutter Home



# South America



O Fournier's cellars

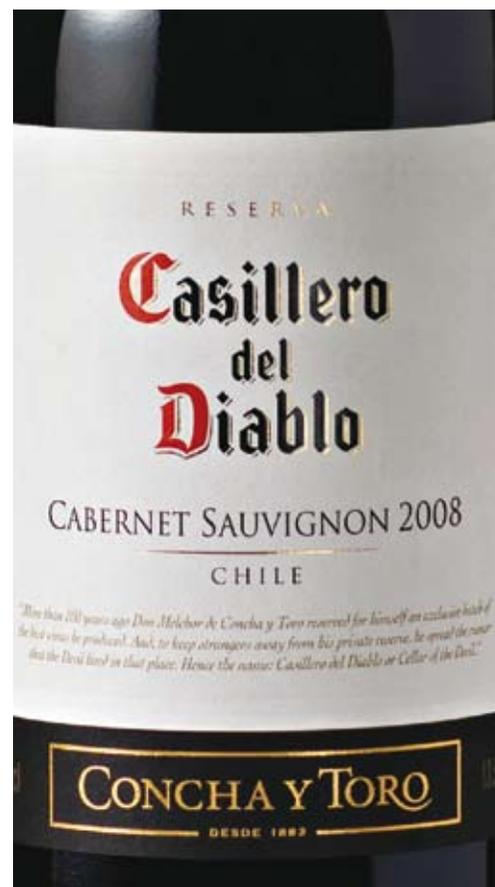
It's striking that, despite the huge admiration that exists globally for South American wines, only three brands have been nominated by our voting panel.

This doesn't necessarily reflect poorly on producers. For many in the trade, Chile and Argentina are brands in themselves such is their reputation for consistent quality.

Another factor could be that, in many parts of the world, there is still something of a novelty factor to South America and its brands have not yet entered the collective consciousness in a way that has already happened with Europe, Australia and the US.

## Top South America Wines

- 1 Concha y Toro
- 2 O Fournier
- 3 Santa Rita



## Top Bordeaux Wine Brands

- 1 Lafite
- 2 Latour
- 3 Margaux
- 4 Haut-Brion
- 5 Pétrus
- 6 Cheval Blanc
- 7 d'Yquem
- 8 Mouton Rothschild
- 9 Le Pin
- 10 Ausone

# Bordeaux and

When the first Bordeaux classification was drawn up in 1855, only four wines were deemed worthy of premier cru status: Lafite, Latour, Margaux and Haut-Brion.

Astonishingly, more than 150 years later, those same four chateaux are still the most widely admired in the region.

A wine merchant from the mid-19th century would be familiar with all of

these wines with the exception of Le Pin and, perhaps, Pétrus, which was a less impressive concern at that stage of its history than it is today.

The list shows that, despite the advent of Parker points and escalating en primeur prices, Bordeaux is still the most traditional (and conservative) of all sectors of the wine market.

It may be some time before the likes of Pavie break into the top 10.



Lafite's circular cellars



Château d'Yquem



Louis  
Fabrice  
Latour

# 1 European



**F**rance has to settle for just one place in the top four European brands and, unsurprisingly, it goes to Lafite, arguably its best known as well as its most admired brand.

It's interesting to note that although the first four French positions all go to top Bordeaux houses, the judges have decided that Louis Latour and Duboeuf both rank higher than Petrus, Cheval Blanc, d'Yquem, Mouton, Le Pin,

Ausone et al. They might not fetch such eye-watering prices at auction, but both brands are admired for the way they have represented regions of France outside of Bordeaux.

Spain claims three of the top five places, which is a similarly impressive achievement. Italy's sole representative is Antinori, but there is no room for German, Austrian or east European contenders.

## Top European Wine Brands

- 1 Torres
- 2 Antinori
- 3 Lafite
- 4 Vega Sicilia
- 5 Marques de Riscal
- 6 Latour
- 7 Margaux
- 8 Haut-Brion
- 9 Louis Latour
- 10 Duboeuf



Le Grand Chai at Mouton

# Australia/NZ

## Top Australia and NZ Wines

- 1 Jacob's Creek
- 2 Penfolds
- 3 Cloudy Bay
- 4 Wolf Blass
- 5 Oyster Bay
- 6 Villa Maria
- 7 Yellowtail
- 8 Brancott Estate
- 9 Peter Lehmann
- 10 Lindeman's

Australia six, New Zealand four is how the scores pan out in the Oceania top 10. Brown Brothers and Oxford landing just miss the cut and some big names such as Hardys, Tyrrell's and Rosemount are also absent.

Neither Australia nor New Zealand has quite the same class system that is found in parts of Europe and California, meaning that some of their most prestigious names (such as Penfolds) also operate on a commercial scale.



Penfolds' Peter Gago

