





AFTER THE AVALANCHE OF BRAZILIAN WINES WE TASTED LAST YEAR, WE DECIDED TO REDUCE OUR SCOPE A BIT THIS YEAR. THE BRAZILIAN SCENE, ESPECIALLY THE SERRA GAUCHA (WHERE ABOUT 80% OF BRAZIL'S WINE PRODUCTION IS CONCENTRATED), IS EXCITING.

But while the quality of its sparkling wines has reached a very good level and consistency, its still reds and whites continue to struggle to express their fruit clearly in a climate that doesn't always make that possible. And therefore, this year we only invited those producers that have performed well in recent editions of **Descorchados** and bypassed the rest.

The result is a very significant selection in which the sparkling wines continue to shine, although there are also still wines from other areas that emerge, most notably toward the extreme south near the Uruguayan border, as well as others that use the inverted pruning technique in tropical climates that produce more than one harvest per year.

New directions are opening up in Brazilian viticulture, and we'll show you some of them in this new **2022 Descorchados Brazil** Report. Settle in and enjoy the read.

Cheers!

Patricio Tapia.







AN ACT of Humility

THINGS DIDN'T GO WELL IN BRAZILLAST YEAR. APART FROM TASTING MANY VERY GOOD SPARKLING WINES (NOT A NOVELTY AT THIS POINT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRAZILIAN WINE), WE ALSO WANTED OUR 2021 EDITION OF DESCORCHADOS TO FOCUS ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE COUNTRY'S STILL WINES. AND WE REACHED A RECORD WITH 396 SAMPLES OF NON-SPARKLING WINES, MOSTLY FROM THE SERRA GAÚCHA, WHICH IS WHERE MORE THAN 80% OF BRAZIL'S WINE PRODUCTION IS CONCENTRATED.

It's not that the results took us by surprise. We knew we needed to contain our expectations, given the Serra's climate conditions. And in the end, of those 396 samples, we only included 46 wines that scored more than 80 points, which is the minimum for us to select a wine in *Descorchados*. A very low number in the context of our guide.

We know that these results created controversy in the Brazilian scene. Our job, however, is not to please, but rather to do something much simpler—to relate, according to our perspective, what is going on. And what was happening last year was that the quality of the still wines from

the Serra Gaúcha—as well as from other humid areas of Brazil—did not meet the level of the other countries that we cover for *Descorchados*. There were exceptions, to be sure, but the averages were not high.

With regard to the still wines, that is, non-sparkling wines, this year we decided to sharpen our aim and invite only producers who had shown us interesting things since 2017 (the year we started tasting that style at *Descorchados*)—wines that proposed new paths, reds and whites that were not just based on oak, on over-extraction, or on over-ripeness to show quality.

This year, for the 2022 Descorchados, we tasted 274 still wines, 86 of which were included in the selection. Almost double, an increase that was related to a focus on warmer areas in southern Brazil along the Uruguayan border, primarily in the Campanha Gaúcha, and on reds from tropical zones, but from vineyards that are reverse pruned—a technique that has shown very auspicious results and that we will talk about in the course of this edition of Descorchados, when we discuss the wines that were made with that technique.





To learn more about the possibility of obtaining good red and white wines in the Serra Gaúcha, we spoke with Daniel Dalla Valle, winemaker and technical director of Casa Valduga, one of the leaders in the sparkling category in Brazil and, by extension, also in South America. "Leaving aside the eventual changes that the climate can cause and that produced warm, dry conditions in 2018, 2020, and now in 2022, I think that the Serra Gaúcha's true vocation is sparkling wines. And in terms of red, we have been gradually concentrating on the south, toward Campanha Gaúcha," he says.

Meanwhile, Flavio Zílio, the winemaker at Aurora—a cooperative of producers in southern Brazil that has 1,100 members and comprises more than 2,800 hectares of vineyards—assures that "The Serra is the natural place for sparkling wines as well as for white wines that ripen without problems. But the weather makes it very difficult for certain styles of red wines."

Zílio's words coincide with the results of our tastings. And there's something interesting there—"certain styles of red wines." If the Serra has a future with red wines, it's with the light and juicy, refreshing style—and none at all with those super-extracted reds that producers insistently try to achieve. Is it possible to make concentrated and ripe reds

under the same conditions in which some of the best sparkling wines in South America are produced? Is it possible push a terroir that far?

This year we have tasted still reds and whites that have delighted us. And they all share the idea of freshness and ease of drinking. Last year, not without some controversy for having chosen the **Clarete** from Era Dos Ventos as the best red of the year—a light, refreshing, and unambitious wine—we wanted to make our point clear. It is possible to make delicious wines in the Serra, but perhaps wines that are far from the model that many producers have in mind when they think of a great red wine.

The best red didn't come from the Serra Gaúcha this year, but from the Serra de Canastra, far north of São Paulo and no less than 1,600 kilometers north of Caxias do Sul, where the winemaker, Alejandro Cardozo, vinifies those grapes after two long days of travel. The result is the **2021 Sacramentos Sabina Syrah**, a wine that comes from a region that could have two harvests a year, but thanks to the inverted pruning technique, the first is discarded in favor of this, the second harvest, which has produced a delicious red fruit juice—a thirst-quenching wine full of fruit and flowers in a medium body with very soft tannins. One to drink by the liter.



It's along the same lines as the Era Dos Ventos **Clarete**, although perhaps a bit more concentrated, this red shows a new face for Brazilian viticulture. And we applauded it when it was presented to us with the label exposed, and then again in the finals, when it fruit shone with in the blind tasting we always do to corroborate our first impressions. A syrah to quench your thirst.

This year's best white is also backed by the hand of Alejandro Cardozo, chosen the best winemaker for the second consecutive year in *Descorchados*, this time, precisely because of his work in bringing renewed value to Brazil's red and still white wines. The best white in the *2022 Descorchados* is the **2020 Super Alvarinho Safra Centenária** from Bodega Enos Vinhos de Boutique, which has its vineyards in Nova Prata, in the Serra. And yes, we have Flavio Zílio's words in mind when he says that while the Serra Gaúcha may not be the best place for red wines, but it is the best for sparkling wines and whites. Focused on ripeness, this succulent and almost sweet albariño comes from vineyards planted about 800 meters above sea level. With no barrel aging, but with intense aging on its lees, it's creamy and opulent. The herbal aromas of albariño are almost imperceptible, but it's the ample and ripe fruit that predominates. And it's a real treat.

And to wrap up, a bit of reflection. We have already spoken about Brazilian sparkling wines many times. As the author of *Descorchados*, I have had the good fortune to try them long before 2015, when we began including them in the guide. And from that privileged position, I have been able to see the evolution of the Brazilian style in its sparkling wines—and the diversity as well. On the one hand, they have Geisse and its sparkling wines full of complexity, an example of the high-altitude terroir of Pinto Bandeiras, wines that are both delicate and tense at the same time. And at the other extreme, the work of Adolfo Lona in his search for dense, ripe wines that are very much in line with a vinous style that we like so much around here. And, in the middle, the solid work of Daniel Dalla Valle and his sparkling wines for Casa Valduga.

It's the human hand, of course. The hand that's building a style of wines that must necessarily adapt (there's no way around it) to the characteristics of a difficult, complex terroir, a Serra where "it rains about 1,600 mm per year and 120 mm per month during the grape ripening period," as the winemaker Cardozo told us.

From Descorchados, and taking into account our eight years of experience of including Brazilian wines in our guide, the message we can give is simple: listen to nature. There's nothing simpler than that. An act of humility.

A TASTING AT Enoteca Saint VinSaint

IT'S IN OUR GENES. WE LOVE THE IDEA OF TASTING WINES THAT COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES, WINES THAT SEEK DIFFERENT PATHS, WHETHER THEY ORIGINATE IN UNUSUAL PLACES OR SHOW ENOLOGICAL ROUTES THAT ARE FAR FROM CONVENTIONAL. AND AS AN APOLOGY, WE CAN SAY THAT THESE GENES HAVE A LOT TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT WE ARE JOURNALISTS AND, AS SUCH, WE LIKE THE NEWS—THINGS THAT ARE NEW, THINGS THAT ARE TO COME. THIS YEAR, AS WE HAVE ALREADY SAID, WE HAVE RESTRICTED OUR TASTINGS. WE HAVE ONLY INVITED THOSE WINERIES THAT HAVE HISTORICALLY PERFORMED WELL IN DESCORCHADOS.

We made this decision based on the idea that it would be good to wait for a producing nation like Brazil, which is still looking for its destiny in still wines. And having said that, there's an important matter in the world of Brazilian wine—its natural wines, a growing community of producers who approach their work thinking that the human hand has little to do with what ends up in the bottle... after all, they are wines made with minimal intervention.

Brazil has many producers who ascribe to this line. In fact, it may be the South American country where the idea of little or minimal intervention has taken off the most. For the 2020 edition of *Descorchados* three years ago, we met with some producers who belong to the "vinhos naturebas" movement, and it was a very important experience for us to begin to get to know that world. We listened to them, learned about their take on the world, and also enjoyed some of their wines.

For this edition, we contacted Liz Cereja and Leo Reis, the partners of Enoteca Saint VinSaint, a restaurant in São Paulo that has been ground zero for natural wine in Brazil since 2008. Liz and Leo put together a total of 86 samples of wines with minimal intervention for us, some of them selected for their own wine list, which is generous in natural wines from around the world. We tasted the samples at the restaurant, accompanied by the Saint VinSaint cuisine, which is consistent with the selection of wines and that favors dishes made with organic products.

As on the previous opportunity, the tasting was a very educational way of diving back into the universe of the country's natural wines, but the experience also left us with an impression that was similar to the first. Without being able to access the range of conventional enological





products, and with a climate that's generally humid in Brazil (except in the south, along the Uruguayan border), the challenge of obtaining properly ripened healthy grapes is a major issue—which is why we only selected 10 of the 86 we tasted. The rest showed obvious enological problems that are unacceptable at this point in the world's natural wine movement (as well as in the world of, shall we say, conventional wines). And why is that?

As we have already said on numerous occasions, the idea of making wines from organic or biodynamic vineyards with little intervention—reds and whites made solely from grapes and nothing else—is something to applaud. However, that narrative gets muddled when what's inside the bottle lacks quality. And we're not talking about a style

of wine that you may or may not like, but rather about enological defects that can be objectively analyzed. We like to compare this problem to the idea of a writer who has great stories to tell but serious spelling problems.

One of the producers that most impressed us was Arte Da Vinha, a pioneer in Brazil's low-intervention wine movement and that has won this year's award for Revelation Winery in *Descorchados*. Furthermore, Bellaquinta, Dominio Vicari and Casa Agora are also names that you should add to those that we tasted in this year's "official" tastings for the guide, such as Era dos Ventos, by Luiz Enrique Zanini, and Vinha Unna, by Marina Santos, both of whom are brilliant vintners who offer us delicious wines made with healthy grapes... Producers with very good spelling.



ADEGA REFINARIA

Otto Sur Lie Nature *Chardonnay 2016* SERRA GAÚCHA



93

ERA DOS VENTOS

Peverella 2019
BENTO GONÇALVES



93

ESTRELAS DO BRASIL

Tradicional Nature N/V
FARIA LEMOS



93

GEISSE

Cave Geisse Leveduras Autóctones Nature 2015 PINTO BANDEIRA



93

CASA VALDUGA

130 Brut Rosé

Pinot Noir, Chardonnay N/V

VALE DOS VINHEDOS



IU

N O



CAVE CEISS

93

GEISSE CAVE

Geisse Terroir Nature

Pinot Noir, Chardonnay 2018

PINTO BANDEIRA



93

CASA VALDUGA

Sur Lie Nature

Chardonnay, Pinot Noir N/V

VALE DOS VINHEDOS



93

ESTRELAS DO BRASIL

Pedro Antônio Uno Nature Rosé *Pinot Noir 2020* FARIA LEMOS



93

ESTRELAS DO BRASIL

Tradicional Nature Rosé

Pinot Noir N/V

FARIA LEMOS



93

SACRAMENTOS VINIFER

Sacramentos Sabina Syrah
Syrah 2021
SERRA DA CANASTRA





BEST sparkling wine

ADEGA REFINARIA
OTTO SUR LIE NATURE 2016

Chardonnay | SERRA GAÚCHA

THIS IS one of the best expressions of a Brazilian sparkling wine made in the "sur lie" style (unfiltered, with its lees in suspension). From 10-year-old vineyards and aged since 2016, this is a sparkling wine with a lot of complex flavors. Tones of ripe fruit and nuts, spices, and touches of pastry are mixed. The body is generous, the acidity has not lost its crispness, and the bubbles are creamy. Today it's a delight, but it would be interesting and educational to see how this sparkling wine from Serra Gaúcha expresses itself after more time in the bottle, to see how those lees continue doing their job and give even more complexity. ❖

BEST **sparkling wines** of the YEAR

- 93 | CASA VALDUGA Sur Lie Nature N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 93 | CASA VALDUGA 130 Brut Rosé N/V Pinot Noir, Chardonnay Vale dos Vinhedos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Nature Rosé N/V Pinot Noir Faria Lemos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Nature N/V | Faria Lemos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Zero Nature 2019 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Riesling | Faria Lemos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Pedro Antônio Uno Nature Rosé 2020 Pinot Noir | Faria Lemos
- 93 | GEISSE Leveduras Autoctones Nature 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Pinto Bandeira
- 93 | GEISSE Terroir Nature 2018 Pinot Noir, Chardonnay | Pinto Bandeira





BEST brut

CASA VALDUGA

130 BRUT ROSÉ N/V Pinot Noir, Chardonnay

VALE DOS VINHEDOS

ONE OF the pinnacles of sparkling rosé wines in South America, this is 80% pinot noir and the rest is chardonnay, all from Vale dos Vinhedos, and much of it comes from a warm vintage like the one in 2018. That may be why this new version seems so opulent, so full of ripe fruit, and so exuberant in its fruity flavors. The wine is young, and the acidity is intense and radiant. For the same reason, you'll need to be patient. There's wine here for 10 years, maybe more, although this rosé is also so seductive that—if your budget allows it—you could buy it by the case for your next vacation.

BEST **bruts** OF THE YEAR

- 92 | ADEGA REFINARIA Otto Blanc de Blanc Brut 2017 | Serra Gaúcha
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Brut Método Tradicional N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Garibaldi
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Trinta 2016 Merlot, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Garibaldi
- 92 | CASA VALDUGA 130 Brut N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 92 | CASA VALDUGA 130 Blanc de Noir Brut N/V Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 92 | CAVE DE PEDRA Blanc de Blancs Brut N/V Chardonnay Vale dos Vinhedos
- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Blanc de Blanc Brut 2019 Chardonnay Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Blanc de Noir Brut 2019 Pinot Noir Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | LUIZ ARGENTA Cave Brut 48 meses 2016 Chardonnay | Altos Montes
- 92 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Biografia Brut Rosé 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 92 | PONTO NERO Icon Brut N/V Chardonnay | Serra Gaúcha

BEST extra brut

TIED

CAVE DE PEDRA BLANC DE NOIR EXTRA BRUT N/V

 $Pinot\,Noir$ | vale dos vinhedos

AGED FOR 36 months on its lees and made following the traditional method of second fermentation in the bottle, this 100% pinot noir comes from fruit purchased from third parties, from vineyards planted on basalt soils in Vale dos Vinhedos. It shows a lot of complexity, with an oxidative character, nuts, and a soft texture along with voluptuous body and rich acidity. One for beef tartare.

BEST **extra bruts** OF THE YEAR

- 91 | AURORA Pinto Bandeira Método Tradicional 12 Meses Extra Brut N/V Pinto Bandeira
- 91 | CASA VALDUGA Premivm Extra-Brut N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- ${\bf 91}$ | ${\bf ESTRELAS}$ DO BRASIL Tradicional Trebbiano N/V Trebbiano | Faria Lemos
- 91 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Biografia Extra Brut 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Extra Brut Rosé N/V Pinot Noir Faria Lemos
- 90 | GUATAMBU Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut 2021 Chardonnay Campanha Gaúcha



BEST extra brut

TIED

GEISSE

CAVE GEISSE EXTRA BRUT ROSÉ 2018

 $Pinot\,Noir$ | pinto bandeira

THIS IS 100% pinot noir from grapes grown on the clay soils of Pinto Bandeira, in the Serra Gaúcha. It spent three years in contact with its lees, a long aging that doesn't seem to have affected the freshness of its flavors of tart and tense red fruits. Its bubbles are creamy, and the acidity prickles on the contours of the tongue, providing both tension and freshness. One of those rosés you'd like to drink every day of the summer. 🖜

BEST **extra bruts** OF THE YEAR

- 91 | AURORA Pinto Bandeira Método Tradicional 12 Meses Extra Brut N/V Pinto Bandeira
- 91 | CASA VALDUGA Premivm Extra-Brut N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Trebbiano N/V Trebbiano | Faria Lemos
- 91 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Biografia Extra Brut 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Extra Brut Rosé N/V Pinot Noir Faria Lemos
- 90 | GUATAMBU Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut 2021 Chardonnay Campanha Gaúcha







BEST moscatel

CASA VALDUGA

PREMIVM MOSCATEL ESPUMANTE N/V

Moscato ∣ SERRA GAÚCHA

MOSCATELS FROM southern Brazil is one of the best kept secrets of South American enology. Wines with 70 grams of sugar, but with very high acidity and that are generous in floral, fruity, herbal flavors. This combination may not seem entirely appetizing on paper, but in practice, it offers delicious sparkling wines, even for those who, like us, are not fans of sweet wines with bubbles. In this case, there's less sugar (about 60 grams, and therefore at the limit of Brazil's sparkling moscatel category), although with the same amount of fruits and flowers and creamy bubbles, resulting in an easy-drinking delight that's enchanting on the nose and seductive on the palate. Among the top wines in this style on this side of the world.

BEST **moscatels** of the YEAR

- 91 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Vezzi per Boschi Ganimedes 2019 | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | MONTE PASCHOAL Moscatel Rosé Espumante N/V Moscato Farroupilha
- 90 | CASA PEDRUCCI Occasione Moscatel Espumante 2021 Moscato, Malvasía | Farroupilha
- 90 | CASA PERINI Casa Perini Moscatel Espumante N/V Moscato Vale Trentino
- 90 | MONTE PASCHOAL Moscatel Espumante N/V Moscato | Farroupilha
- 90 | PONTO NERO Live Celebration Moscatel Espumante Rosé N/V Serra Gaúcha
- 89 | CAVE DI POZZA Cave di Pozza Moscatel Espumante N/V Moscato Giallo | Caxias do Sul
- 89 | PONTO NERO Live Celebration N/V Moscatel Blanco, Malvasía Serra Gaúcha
- 89 | YOO WINES Yoo Moscatel Espumante N/V Moscatel Blanco Caxias do Sul





BEST nature

ADEGA REFINARIA
OTTO SUR LIE NATURE 2016

Chardonnay | SERRA GAÚCHA

sparkling wine made in the "sur lie" style (unfiltered, with its lees in suspension). From 10-year-old vineyards and aged since 2016, this is a sparkling wine with a lot of complex flavors. Tones of ripe fruit and nuts, spices, and touches of pastry are mixed. The body is generous, the acidity has not lost its crispness, and the bubbles are creamy. Today it's a delight, but it would be interesting and educational to see how this sparkling wine from Serra Gaúcha expresses itself after more time in the bottle, to see how those lees continue doing their job and give even more complexity.

BEST **natures** OF THE YEAR

- 93 | CASA VALDUGA Sur Lie Nature N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Nature Rosé N/V Pinot Noir Faria Lemos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Tradicional Nature N/V | Faria Lemos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Zero Nature 2019 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Riesling | Faria Lemos
- 93 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Pedro Antônio Uno Nature Rosé 2020 Pinot Noir | Faria Lemos
- 93 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Leveduras Autoctones Nature 2015 Pinto Bandeira
- 93 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Terroir Nature 2018 Pinot Noir, Chardonnay Pinto Bandeira



BEST sparkling rosé

TIED

CASA VALDUGA 130 BRUT ROSÉ N/V

Pinot Noir, Chardonnay | VALE DOS VINHEDOS

ONE OF the pinnacles of sparkling rosé wines in South America, this is 80% pinot noir and the rest is chardonnay, all from Vale dos Vinhedos, and much of it comes from a warm vintage like the one in 2018. That may be why this new version seems so opulent, so full of ripe fruit, and so exuberant in its fruity flavors. The wine is young, and the acidity is intense and radiant. For the same reason, you'll need to be patient. There's wine here for 10 years, maybe more, although this rosé is also so seductive that—if your budget allows it—you could buy it by the case for your next vacation.

BEST **sparkling rosés** of the YEAR

- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Extra Brut Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir | Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Trinta 2016 Merlot, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Garibaldi
- 92 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Biografia Brut Rosé 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Orus Pas Dosé Nature Rosé 2016 | Garibaldi
- 92 | CASA PEDRUCCI Fatto a Mano Sur Lie Nature Rosé 2021 Pinot Noir, Merlot | Garibaldi
- 92 | CASA VALDUGA Sur Lie Nature Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 92 | CAVE DI POZZA Nativitá Nature Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir | Caxias do Sul
- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Terroir Nature Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | YOO WINES Yoo Nature Rosé Clássico N/V Pinot Noir | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | CASA VALDUGA Premivm Brut Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | GUATAMBU Isadora Edição III Nature 2021 | Campanha Gaúcha
- 91 | LUIZ ARGENTA Cave Rosé Nature 48 Meses N/V Pinot Noir Altos Montes
- 91 | MONTE PASCHOAL Moscatel Rosé Espumante N/V Moscato Farroupilha
- 91 | SOPRA Santé Brut Rosé 2017 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Campos de Cima da Serra
- 91 | VINHA UNNA Terroir de Chuva Blush Nature 2021 Teroldego Pinto Bandeira



BEST sparkling rosé

ESTRELAS DO BRASIL TRADICIONAL NATURE ROSÉ N/V

Pinot Noir | FARIA LEMOS

THIS ROSÉ is a combination of different vintages, specifically 2016, 2017, and 2018, with 30% of the base wine aged for a year in barrels followed by three months of aging in bottles with its lees, all under the traditional method of the second fermentation in the bottle. Despite all that aging, what predominates is the tart red fruit—this is a fruity wine with nervy acidity. It seems much younger than it really is and has a delicious and fruity finish that recalls sour cherries. A wine full of tension.



- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Extra Brut Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir | Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Trinta 2016 Merlot, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Garibaldi
- 92 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Biografia Brut Rosé 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Orus Pas Dosé Nature Rosé 2016 | Garibaldi
- 92 | CASA PEDRUCCI Fatto a Mano Sur Lie Nature Rosé 2021 Pinot Noir, Merlot | Garibaldi
- 92 | CASA VALDUGA Sur Lie Nature Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 92 | CAVE DI POZZA Nativitá Nature Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir | Caxias do Sul
- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Terroir Nature Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | YOO WINES Yoo Nature Rosé Clássico N/V Pinot Noir | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | CASA VALDUGA Premivm Brut Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | GUATAMBU Isadora Edição III Nature 2021 | Campanha Gaúcha
- 91 | LUIZ ARGENTA Cave Rosé Nature 48 Meses N/V Pinot Noir Altos Montes
- 91 | MONTE PASCHOAL Moscatel Rosé Espumante N/V Moscato Farroupilha
- 91 | SOPRA Santé Brut Rosé 2017 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Campos de Cima da Serra
- 91 | VINHA UNNA Terroir de Chuva Blush Nature 2021 Teroldego Pinto Bandeira





BEST sparkling rosé

TIED

ESTRELAS DO BRASIL

PEDRO ANTÔNIO UNO NATURE ROSÉ 2020

Pinot Noir | FARIA LEMOS

PEDRO ANTÔNIO is the new top wine from Estrelas do Brasil, from a selection of their own vineyards in the Faria Lemos zone, all made from clonal material. Made with the traditional method of the second fermentation in the bottle and two years of lees contact, this has a very intensely fruity—even almost sweet—side on the nose. That's not at all the case on the palate, though. The acidity is sharp and marks the contours of the tongue with its cutting sensation, and the flavors are no longer sweet and red, but rather tart and tense. A wine that's a bit bipolar, but delicious.

BEST **sparkling rosés** of the YEAR

- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Extra Brut Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir | Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Trinta 2016 Merlot, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Garibaldi
- 92 | MAXIMO BOSCHI Biografia Brut Rosé 2015 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 92 | ADOLFO LONA Orus Pas Dosé Nature Rosé 2016 | Garibaldi
- 92 | CASA PEDRUCCI Fatto a Mano Sur Lie Nature Rosé 2021 Pinot Noir, Merlot | Garibaldi
- 92 CASA VALDUGA Sur Lie Nature Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Vale dos Vinhedos
- 92 | CAVE DI POZZA Nativitá Nature Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir | Caxias do Sul
- 92 | GEISSE Cave Geisse Terroir Nature Rosé 2018 Pinot Noir Pinto Bandeira
- 92 | YOO WINES Yoo Nature Rosé Clássico N/V Pinot Noir | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | CASA VALDUGA Premivm Brut Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | GUATAMBU Isadora Edição III Nature 2021 | Campanha Gaúcha
- 91 | LUIZ ARGENTA Cave Rosé Nature 48 Meses N/V Pinot Noir
- 91 | MONTE PASCHOAL Moscatel Rosé Espumante N/V Moscato Farroupilha
- 91 | SOPRA Santé Brut Rosé 2017 Chardonnay, Pinot Noir | Campos de Cima da Serra
- 91 | VINHA UNNA Terroir de Chuva Blush Nature 2021 Teroldego Pinto Bandeira



BEST charmat

PONTO NERO
ICON BRUT N/V

Chardonnay | SERRA GAÚCHA

ICON IS Ponto Nero's most ambitious cuvée, a 100% chardonnay aged on its lees for 40 months. That's a long time and not at all common in charmat-style sparkling wines. That has given it extra complexity, fruity notes but also pastry notes. That long aging has also given the bubbles a delicious creaminess. Among the best charmats in South America, and, like almost the entire Ponto Nero catalog, this was made with grapes from local producers, all in the Serra Gaúcha. ❖

BEST **charmats** OF THE YEAR

- 91 | ADOLFO LONA Brut Charmat N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Bento Gonçalves
- **91 | PONTO NERO** Enjoy Brut N/V Gewürztraminer | Encruzilhada do Sul
- 90 | ADOLFO LONA Brut Rosé Charmat N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Bento Gonçalves
- 90 | AURORA Procedências Brut Rosé N/V Pinot Noir, Riesling Itálico Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | CAVE DI POZZA Cave di Pozza Prosecco Brut N/V Glera | Caxias do Sul
- 90 | CAVE DI POZZA Cave di Pozza Brut N/V Chardonnay, Riesling Itálico Caxias do Sul
- 90 | CAVE DI POZZA Cave di Pozza Brut Rosé N/V Pinot Noir, Chardonnay Caxias do Sul
- 90 | ESTRELAS DO BRASIL Brut N/V Chardonnay, Viognier, Trebbiano Faria Lemos
- 90 | PONTO NERO Live Celebration Brut Rosé N/V | Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | PONTO NERO Cult Brut N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Riesling Itálico Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | PONTO NERO Cult Brut Rosé N/V Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Riesling Itálico | Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | VISTAMONTES Brut Rosé N/V Malbec | Bento Gonçalves





BEST White

ENOS VINHOS DE BOUTIQUE SUPER ALVARINHO SAFRA CENTENÁRIA 2020

Alvarinho | NOVA PRATA

FOCUSED ON ripeness, this succulent and almost sweet albariño comes from vineyards in Nova Prata, at an altitude of about 800 meters. Unoaked, but with intense aging on its lees, this is creamy and opulent. The herbal aromas of the albariño are barely perceived, but it's the ample ripe fruit that predominates. A delight.

BEST **Whites** OF THE YEAR

- 91 | ADEGA REFINARIA Otto 2021 Sauvignon Blanc | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | ARTE LIQUIDA Reissen 2019 Riesling | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | ARTESĂ Mar de Morros 2021 Sauvignon Blanc | São Gonçalo do Sapucaí
- 91 | AUDACE WINE Banja 2021 Sauvignon Gris | Caxias do Sul
- 91 | BÁRBARA ELIODORA Bárbara Eliodora 2021 Sauvignon Blanc São Gonçalo do Sapucaí
- ${\bf 91} \mid {\bf CASA} \, {\bf VALDUGA} \, {\bf Gran} \, {\bf Reserva} \, {\bf D.} \, {\bf O.} \, {\bf 2021} \, {\bf Chardonnay} \, | \, {\bf Vale} \, {\bf dos} \, {\bf Vinhedos}$
- 91 | DOMINIO VICARI Dominio Vicari 2021 Albariño | Monte Belo do Sul
- 90 | ADOLFO LONA Adolfo Lona 2020 Chardonnay | Bento Gonçalves
- 90 | AUDACE WINE Contos Galegos 2021 Alvarinho | Nova Prata
- 90 | AURORA Pinto Bandeira 2020 Chardonnay | Pinto Bandeira 90 | CASA VALDUGA Terroir 2021 Chardonnay | Serra Gaúcha
- 90 | CASA VALDUGA Terroir Exclusivo 2021 Viognier | Serra do Sudeste
- 90 | DE LUCCA De Lucca Peverella 2020 | Peverella
- 90 | GUATAMBU Luar do Pampa 2021 Chardonnay | Campanha Gaúcha
- 90 | GUATAMBU Luar do Pampa 2021 Sauvignon Blanc | Campanha Gaúcha
- 90 | MONTE REALE Valdemiz 2020 Sauvignon Blanc | Altos Montes



BEST rosé

LUIZ ARGENTA

L.A. JOVEM ROSÉ 2021 Pinot Noir, Petite Sirah

ALTOS MONTES

THIS UNUSUAL blend of pinot noir and petite sirah comes from vineyards about 885 meters above sea level in the Altos Montes zone, where Luiz Argenta has been growing grapes since the late 1990s.

Whole-cluster fermented, it's lively, juicy, and refreshing, like a sour cherry juice that, in this case, has a certain firm, tense texture, as if it were made of fiber. An ideal rosé to drink in summer to quench your thirst, but heads up—there's plenty of complexity and balance here, too. This is a poolside wine—although among the most sophisticated.

BEST **rosés** of the YEAR

- 91 | ARTESÃ Mar de Morros Rosé 2021 Syrah | Serra da Mantiqueira
- 90 | ENOS VINHOS DE BOUTIQUE Romeu e Julieta Pinot Rosé 2021 Pinot Noir | Faria Lemos
- 90 | MANUS VINHAS E VINHOS Liberum Manus Rosé 2021 Barbera Serra do Sudeste
- 90 | MANUS VINHAS E VINHOS Liberum Manus Rosé 2020 Nebbiolo Serra do Sudeste
- 90 | SACRAMENTOS VINIFER Sacramentos Sabina Rosé 2021 Syrah Serra da Canastra
- 89 | AUDACE WINE Massilia Rosé 2021 Pinot Noir | Faria Lemos
- 89 | CASA PERINI Drella Rosé 2020 Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Barbera Vale Trentino
- 89 | GUATAMBU Luar do Pampa 2021 C. Sauvignon, Tempranillo Campanha Gaúcha
- 89 | SOPRA Celina Rosé 2021 Pinot Noir | Campos de Cima da Serra







BEST red

SACRAMENTOS VINIFER SACRAMENTOS SABINA SYRAH 2021

Syrah | SERRA DA CANASTRA

FOR THIS syrah, the logistics are almost as important as winemaking. The grapes arrive in Caxias do Sul, where the vinification cellar is located, after traveling some 1,800 kilometers in a refrigerated truck. The journey takes two days, and what arrives is fermented in plastic vats and then briefly clarified in tanks before being bottled. The region of origin has two harvests a year, one in summer, and the other in July. The first is discarded, and after pruning, this second, harvested during the third week of July, gives a delicious red fruit juice. It's a thirst-quenching wine full of fruit and flowers and medium body with very soft tannins. One to drink by the liter.

BEST **reds** OF THE YEAR

- 92 | ARTE DA VINHA Ephemero N/V Nebbiolo | Encruzilhada do Sul
- 92 | ARTESÃ Mar de Morros 2020 Syrah | Serra da Mantiqueira
- 92 | CASA AGORA Kamé 2020 Cabernet Franc | Pinto Bandeira
- **92** | **ERA DOS VENTOS** Clarete 2021 No proporcionados por la bodega Bento Gonçalves
- **92** | **MANUS VINHAS E VINHOS** Manus 2020 Teroldego | Serra do Sudeste
- **91** | **ARTE DA VINHA** Hidro N/V Gamay, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | AURORA Millésime 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon | Serra Gaúcha
- 91 | BELLA QUINTA Anfora 2021 Cabernet Franc, Merlot | São Roque
- 91 | CASA PERINI Crudo Nero di Bianca 2019 Merlot, Moscato Campos de Cima da Serra
- 91 | CAVE DE PEDRA Special Blend 2018 | Serra Gaúcha





winery OF THE YEAR

CASA VALDUGA

SERRA GAÚCHA is responsible for more than 80% of Brazil's wine, and that complex, humid climate on hills made of basalt soils produces some of the best sparkling wines in South America, including those from Casa Valduga. Its winemaker and technical director, Daniel Dalla Valle, has to put together a solid and consistent catalog of wines, especially sparkling wines, that speak of this vocation for bubbles that the Serra has. This is the second time that Descorchados has chosen Casa Valduga as the Winery of the Year in Brazil, and that's precisely due to its focus on sparkling wines. "For still wines, especially for reds, we prefer drier and warmer areas such as Campaña Gaúcha (on the Uruguayan border) because we know that here in Vale dos Vinhedos, what is good is bubbles," Dalla Valle says. And they prove it with a battery of labels that this year show once again that the traditional method of the second fermentation in the bottle is something that they have begun to master, a process that we have followed closely and that we know still has a long way to go. Any Valduga sparkling wine is trustworthy—and that's saying a lot. ••





winemaker of the YEAR

ALEJANDRO CARDOZO

IN A COUNTRY where sparkling wine is king, there are likely to be many kingdoms that pay homage to it. One of them is owned by winemaker Alejandro Cardozo, a Uruguayan who has lived in Brazil for many years and whose curious and energetic spirit has led him to make some of the best sparkling wines that Brazil has to offer. However, the fact that we chose him as the Descorchados Winemaker of the Year for the second year running doesn't necessarily have anything to do with his ability to manage the second fermentation in the bottle, which he has 8and that we love). Another of Cardozo's facets is that's he's becoming increasingly known as a consultant to the wineries that are making the best still wines in the country, a matter in which Brazil still has much work to do. At the Audace, Sacramento Vinifer, and Enos wineries, this winemaker is proving that it is indeed possible to make red (and white) wines in a complex humid climate that's a challenge for grape health and ripeness. It's a difficult route, and Cardozo is ahead of the game.





winery revelation of the YEAR

ARTE DA VINHA

WE MET Eduardo Zenker, who does not have a degree in enology—he's selftaught-when he started his Arte da Vinha project in his garage in Garibaldi. We were impressed by his energy and will, his innovative desires, and his completely unfettered approach to vinification in a Brazilian wine scene that, at that time, more than a decade ago, was plagued by conservatism. But Zenker wasn't. His wines? Odd, defective, and some, even insufferable. But there was something there—not in the glass, but rather in his determination to lead the way, something unusual in the context of South American wine. The Arte de Vinha catalog of wines has been tweaked over the years—it's smaller now and more precise—and it's no longer that bit of madness it was back in the good old days. The idea of making iconoclastic wines continues to reign supreme, but now, the most important thing is to make wines without defects, first and foremost. Zenker knows very well that the message of wines with minimal intervention must be approached carefully. The narrative is not enough. The wine itself has to do the talking. And the wines that Zenker and his wife, biologist Gabriela Schäfer, make now speak more clearly than ever. In a world full of natural producers, as is the case in Brazil, Arte da Vinha is clarity. It is light. 🖜

