





WHEN WE THINK ABOUT WINES FROM URUGUAY, WE THINK ABOUT TANNAT—THAT INTENSE AND ROBUST RED VARIETY THAT HAS BECOME A FLAGSHIP FOR URUGUAYAN VITICULTURE THAT NOT ONLY SHOWS ITS STRENGTHS, BUT IT'S DIVERSITY OF STYLES AS WELL. WITH URUGUAYAN TANNAT, EVERYTHING IS JUST FINE.

Over the past five years, however, and especially with the onslaught of the new Atlantic wines summed up in the plantations around Maldonado Bay, Uruguay's white wines have put an exclamation point on the South American wine scene. Delicious chardonnays, to be sure, as well as juicy albariños that are now close to rivaling the quality and character of their Old World counterparts in Galicia. Blame it on the gentle Atlantic breezes.

In the **2022 Descorchados Report**, we take a look at the idea that "Uruguay is a land of whites," a phrase that's been going around in our heads for a while now. We also look at the traditional Uruguayan wine known as *clarete* as well as the best wines of the year from the country's best producers. Enjoy!

Cheers!

Patricio Tapia.







URUGUAY, land of whites

CHOCO TEJERA IS A FISHERMAN FROM GORRITI ISLAND, JUST ACROSS FROM THE MALDONADO BAY. HE FISHES WITH JUST A ROD, WITH NO REEL, AND HIS ROD IS 10 METERS LONG. WITH THAT, HE FISHES EVERYTHING THAT THAT PART OF THE ATLANTIC SENDS HIS WAY, BUT BETWEEN AUGUST AND JANUARY, WHAT HE CATCHES MOST ARE SARGO (SILVER PORGY, A SEABREAM), WHICH CAN WEIGH A KILO AND A HALF IN THE HEIGHT OF THE SEASON IN NOVEMBER.

Leonardo Larramendi—the owner and soul of the Leonardo Etxea Restaurant in Punta del Este—tells us this story as we devour a basket full of miniaturas, the bite-sized bits of battered sargo that are a specialty along the Uruguayan coast. He and Choco fished for them together. And Leonardo has prepared them sublimely—crunchy on the outside and tender on the inside.

Sargo are just one of the fish to be found along the country's coast, Leonardo tells me. His work is to spread the word about that diversity so that people—Uruguayans and tourists alike—don't limit themselves

to the more famous brótola, or forkbeard fish. "It's very delicious, but it's not the only one. For a Uruguayan, when there's no brótola on the menu, it's as if there were no fish at all," he complains.

It must be said, however, that the Uruguayans' greatest culinary pleasure is meat. Just like their Argentine neighbors to the south, they love a barbecue—the cow and every part of it that can be put on a grill. And the beef they produce is of excellent quality. It's no exaggeration to say that the cows that roam the gentle Uruguayan hills give beef that's every bit as good as that of Argentine cows. However, although a good part of the country looks over the wide Río de la Plata or the immense Atlantic Ocean, seafood takes a discrete second place in the interests of local palates.

The same happens, to a certain degree, with the wine. Since we first visited Uruguay more than two decades ago, the accent they have placed on tannat, that astringent red meant to accompany their grilled meats, has always been far more important than any of their other varieties. At one time, when Uruguayans had just begun to show their wines to





the world, they also had sauvignon blanc, and there were some friendly examples, although they still had a long way to go to reach the level that their whites have today. In short, what they needed to do was start planting vineyards in and around Maldonado Bay, where the cool influence of the Atlantic that would make the wines very different.

We believe that Uruguay is a land of white wines. And we've been saying so for a number of years now, as the vineyards in zones such as Garzón or José Ignacio have been maturing and offering delicious, marine whites full of freshness. There are also the pinot noirs, and, of course, the tannats from the Atlantic climate that have proven to be delightful. But, according to our tastings for *Descorchados* in recent years, what strikes us the most is the rise of albariño, of those juicy sauvignon blancs, and, of course, the enormous advance that chardonnay has undergone when planted on the granitic-clay hillsides that are bathed by ocean breezes.

Bouza has a lot to say on the subject. This year, they won the prize for the Best Red, but we must not forget that they were the ones whose Galician roots drove them to import the first albariño vines in 2004 and plant them on the clay and calcareous soils of Las Violetas—the land of tannat. Today albariño is the third white variety in terms of hectares planted (79) and is only surpassed by sauvignon blanc (131 hectares) and chardonnay (103 hectares), all of which remains far behind the 1,607 hectares of tannat.

Bouza's first steps were soon followed by other key figures in the modern era of Uruguayan wine. The Garzón winery now has 40 hectares of albariño and is the largest producer of the variety in South America. And then there's Cerro del Toro, with its spectacular vineyard that directly faces the Atlantic and grows on hillsides that drop down to the charming seaside city of Piriápolis. And the new project of businessman Leo McLean with culinary impresario Juan Pablo Clerici, the Deicas family, and Gerardo and Manuel Michelini—the Compañía Uruguaya de Vinos del Mar (the Uruguayan Company of Wines of the Sea), which gets its wines from different places along the Atlantic. They have good pinots, but it's their albariños that are turning heads.





And you can add to them the efforts of Bodega Oceánica José Ignacio, headed up by winemaker Santiago Degásperi with Hans Vinding-Diers (Bodega Noemia in the Argentina Patagonia) consulting. They make dense and juicy albariños with tremendous aging potential.

And there shouldn't be anything odd about this at all. The Uruguayan coast, with its cool Atlantic breezes, granitic soils, and the area's humid conditions, has all characteristics that albariño likes, although other varieties such as sauvignon and chardonnay like them too, of course.

The Maldonado Bay was first planted some 20 years ago, and today the mature vines are returning their results. And although the influence of the Atlantic on its red wines is seen through new flavors that are very unlike those we have traditionally found in Uruguay, it's in the whites that we see a major change. It's high time we think of Uruguay as a country of white wines—and delicious and diverse seafoods.

THE **best whites** of URUGUAY IN **Descorchados 2022**

- 96 | CERRO DEL TORO Alquimia Corte Único Blanco 2021 | Maldonado
- 95 | BODEGA OCÉANICA JOSÉ IGNACIO José Ignacio Albariño 2021 | Maldonado
- 95 | BOUZA Bouza Albariño 2021 | Melilla/Las Violetas
- 95 | BOUZA Cocó Chardonnay, Albariño 2019 | Montevideo
- **94** | **CERRO DEL TORO** Albariño Sobre Lías Albariño 2021 | Maldonado
- 94 | CERRO DEL TORO Singular Fósiles de Mar Chardonnay 2021 | Maldonado
- 94 | CIA. URUGUAYA DE VINOS DE MAR Sierra de las Palmas Albariño 2020 Maldonado
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyard Subsuelo Chardonnay 2021 | Maldonado
- 94 | GARZÓN Single Vineyard S. Blanc 2021 | Garzón
- 94 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 27 Albariño 2021 | Garzón
- 94 | VIÑA EDÉN Chardonnay Chardonnay 2019 | Pueblo Edén









THE RETURN of Clarete

WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FIND MORE INFORMATION ON THE STYLE OF CLARETE (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH FRENCH CLARET) THAT WAS MADE IN URUGUAY IN THE PAST. BUT THERE ISN'T MUCH OUT THERE. WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT IT WAS A LIGHT STYLE OF FRUITY WINES WITH NO OTHER AMBITION BUT TO BE DRUNK AS A THIRST QUENCHER OR BE SLURPED DOWN WITH FOOD—FAR REMOVED FROM ANY NOTION OF "THE RIPER AND MORE CONCENTRATED, THE BETTER." THEY WERE MADE WITH TANNAT, OF COURSE, AND PERHAPS WITH THE MORE DELICATE AND UNJUSTLY FORGOTTEN FOLLE NOIRE AS WELL. THEY WEREN'T 100% RED, BUT RATHER WERE MADE BY COMBINING THE FEW VINES OF WHITE GRAPES THAT WERE PLANTED IN THE SAME VINEYARD, WHICH IS HOW CLARETE IS MADE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE OLD WORLD, SUCH AS RURAL SPAIN AND FRANCE, AS WELL AS PIPEÑO IN CHILE, AND, AT ONE TIME, PATERO WINE IN ARGENTINA.

The idea of bringing the style back is a recent and emerging phenomenon in Uruguay. We have tried some examples that may be similar, such as the pioneering **Mayúsculas Maceración Carbónica** that Pizzorno has been making since 2000, along with Pablo Fallabrino's **Anarkía**, which completed its sixth vintage in 2021, or the new **Tannat Verano** from Familia Bresesti, or the **Suelto Tannat** by Proyecto Nakkal. All of these tannats are fresh, light, very fruity, and made to be drunk without overthinking them.

It would be interesting to bring back the clarete style for exactly that reason, for the idea of going against the current and showing that reds from the Atlantic coast can (and in truth should) be juicy and refreshing wines. But another reason is that there's a history to the style—it has roots in the area and constitutes a cultural heritage. When Chile began recovering the país variety through its pipeño style, it attracted a great deal of attention from opinion leaders. Many people who had never been drawn to Chilean wine soon began to pay attention to those smooth and juicy pipeños with lots of history behind them. Uruguay could do the same—Just an idea...



BOUZA

Monte Vide Eu
Tannat, Merlot,
Tempranillo 2019

MONTEVIDEO



95

BRACCOBOSCA

Gran Ombú Cabernet Franc 2021 ATLÁNTIDA



94

BIZARRA EXTRAVAGANZA

Bizarra Extravaganza Expresso Tannat 2021 SAN JOSÉ



94

FAMILIA DEICAS

Extreme Vineyard
Subsuelo
Tannat 2020
MALDONADO



96

GARZÓN

Balasto Tannat, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Marselan 2020





94

FAMILIA DEICAS

Single Vineyard Garzón, Maldonado 2020 MALDONADO



95

BOUZA

Viñedo Pan de Azúcar *Tannat 2019* PAN DE AZÚCAR



95

GARZÓN

Petit Clos Block 212 *Tannat 2020* GARZÓN



94

BOUZA

Parcela Única B28

Tannat 2019

LAS VIOLETAS



94

PROYECTO NAKKAL

Anfor (Antigua Fórmula) Merlot, Tannat, Marselan 2021 URUGUAY



JU

CERRO DEL TORO
Alquimia Corte Único 2021

MALDONADO



95

BODEGA OCÉANICA JOSÉ IGNACIO

José Ignacio
Albariño 2021

MALDONADO



95

BOUZA

Bouza Albariño 2021

MELILLA/LAS VIOLETAS



95

BOUZA

Cocó
Chardonnay, Albariño 2019
MONTEVIDEO



95

FAMILIA DEICAS

Extreme Vineyard Subsuelo
Chardonnay 2021
MALDONADO



94

CIA. URUGUAYA DE VINOS DE MAR

Sierra de las Palmas *Albariño 2020* MALDONADO



94

VIÑA EDÉN

Viña Edén Chardonnay *Chardonnay 2019* PUEBLO EDÉN



94

CERRO DEL TORO

Albariño Sobre Lías Albariño 2021 MALDONADO



94

GARZÓN

Petit Clos Block 27 *Albariño 2021* GARZÓN



94

GARZÓN

Single Vineyard
Sauvignon Blanc 2021
GARZÓN



BEST red

TIED

BOUZA

MONTE VIDE EU

Tannat, Merlot, Tempranillo 2019 | MONTEVIDEO

MONTE VIDE EU has been produced since 2005 and is the top of the winery's range. This year it's 50% tannat, 30% merlot, and the rest is tempranillo, and most of it (about 70%) comes from Las Violetas, in Canelones, one of the most traditional (perhaps the most traditional) zones for Uruguayan red wine and that's responsible for austere and firm tannats from the local calcareousclay soils. In this case, it's from a selection of barrels that shows a pronounced herbal side and rich in minty tones due to the rather cool season. The fruit is black, ripe, and succulent—as dictated by the house style—but behind it, there's juicy acidity and spicy tones. In the style of the house's ripe and succulent wines, this seems like a fresh exception.

BEST **reds** OF THE YEAR

- 95 | BOUZA Viñedo Pan de Azúcar Tannat 2019 | Pan de Azúcar
- 95 | BRACCOBOSCA Gran Ombú C. Franc 2021 | Atlántida
- 95 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 212 Tannat 2020 | Garzón
- 94 | BIZARRA EXTRAVAGANZA Bizarra Extravaganza Expresso Tannat 2021 San José
- 94 | BOUZA Parcela Única B28 Tannat 2019 | Las Violetas
- 94 | CANTERA MONTES DE OCA Terroir Series Especial Tannat 2021 Canelones
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Single Vineyard Progreso 2020 | Canelones
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Single Vineyard Garzón, Maldonado 2020 Maldonado
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyards Guazuvirá 2021 | Las Sierras
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyard Suelo Invertido Tannat 2020
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyard Subsuelo Tannat 2020 | Maldonado
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Massimo Deicas Tannat 2020 | Uruguay
- **94 | GARZÓN** Petit Clos Block 487 Marselan 2019 | Garzón
- **94** | **GARZÓN** Single Vineyard Petit Verdot 2019 | Garzón
- 94 | GARZÓN Single Vineyard Tannat 2020 | Garzón
- 94 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 560 C. Franc 2018 | Garzón 94 | PABLO FALLABRINO Angel's Cuvée Tannat 2018 | Atlántida
- 94 | PROYECTO NAKKAL WINES Anfor (Antigua Fórmula) Merlot, Tannat, Marselan 2021 | Uruguay
- 93 | COMPAÑÍA URUGUAYA DE VINOS DE MAR Sierra de las Palmas P. Noir 2020 | Maldonado



BEST red

TIED

GARZÓN BALASTO

Tannat, C. Franc, Petit Verdot 2020 | GARZÓN

BALASTO IS Garzón's top wine and comes from a selection of the best blocks in the vineyard planted on granitic soils on hillsides in the interior of Maldonado Bay. In this new edition, they passed over the merlot and the marselan to give a more important role to the two varieties that give them the best results: 42% tannat, 41% cabernet franc, and the rest is petit verdot. With this trio, they have obtained a red wine with a very predominant tannic load, which sounds logical in a year of accentuated ripeness, a year in which the alcohol could turn the textures cloyingly sweet. But that's not the case here—it has a very well-built wall of tannins that provides solidity and a certain austerity that contrasts with the aromas and flavors of ripe and enveloping red and black fruits. Make room in your cellar because this wine has plenty of time in the bottle ahead of it. 🖜

BEST **reds** OF THE YEAR

- 95 | BOUZA Viñedo Pan de Azúcar Tannat 2019 | Pan de Azúcar
- 95 | BRACCOBOSCA Gran Ombú C. Franc 2021 | Atlántida
- 95 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 212 Tannat 2020 | Garzón
- 94 | BIZARRA EXTRAVAGANZA Bizarra Extravaganza Expresso Tannat 2021 San José
- 94 | BOUZA Parcela Única B28 Tannat 2019 | Las Violetas
- 94 | CANTERA MONTES DE OCA Terroir Series Especial Tannat 2021
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Single Vineyard Progreso 2020 | Canelones
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Single Vineyard Garzón, Maldonado 2020 | Maldonado
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyards Guazuvirá 2021 | Las Sierras
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyard Suelo Invertido Tannat 2020 Canelones
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyard Subsuelo Tannat 2020 | Maldonado
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Massimo Deicas Tannat 2020 | Uruguay
- 94 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 487 Marselan 2019 | Garzón
- 94 | GARZÓN Single Vineyard Petit Verdot 2019 | Garzón 94 | GARZÓN Single Vineyard Tannat 2020 | Garzón
- 94 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 560 C. Franc 2018 | Garzón
- 94 | PABLO FALLABRINO Angel's Cuvée Tannat 2018 | Atlántida
- 94 | PROYECTO NAKKAL WINES Anfor (Antigua Fórmula) Merlot, Tannat, Marselan 2021 | Uruguay
- 93 | COMPAÑÍA URUGUAYA DE VINOS DE MAR Sierra de las Palmas P. Noir 2020 | Maldonado





BEST White

CERRO DEL TORO ALQUIMIA CORTE ÚNICO BLANCO

Chardonnay, Albariño, Viognier 2021 | MALDONADO

THE BASE of this wine is 60% chardonnay—the same chardonnay that goes into Singular Fósiles—and comes from a parcel rich in calcareous soils, and 10% is albariño, from the best of the blocks of the variety in Cerro del Toro's vineyard above the town of Piriápolis, in Maldonado. The rest is viognier. The blend works wonderfully, with the deep, dense chardonnay setting the tone, while the viognier brings floral notes to a heavy, concentrated wine. A new frontier is established here for Uruguayan whites in a wine that also shows the intense and vertical acidity that comes from the proximity of the sea, along with the lushness of a highly concentrated wine, almost like a red. Attention here

BEST **whites** OF THE YEAR

- 95 | BODEGA OCEÁNICA JOSÉ IGNACIO José Ignacio Albariño 2021 Maldonado
- 95 | BOUZA Bouza Albariño 2021 | Melilla/Las Violetas
- 95 | BOUZA Cocó Chardonnay, Albariño 2019 | Montevideo
- 94 | CERRO DEL TORO Albariño Sobre Lías Albariño 2021 | Maldonado
- 94 | CERRO DEL TORO Singular Fósiles de Mar Chardonnay 2021 Maldonado
- 94 | CIA. URUGUAYA DE VINOS DE MAR Sierra de las Palmas Albariño 2020 Maldonado
- 94 | FAMILIA DEICAS Extreme Vineyard Subsuelo Chardonnay 2021 Maldonado
- 94 | GARZÓN Single Vineyard S. Blanc 2021 | Garzón
- 94 | GARZÓN Petit Clos Block 27 Albariño 2021 | Garzón
- 94 | **VIÑA EDÉN** Viña Edén Chardonnay 2019 | Pueblo Edén





BEST rosé

GARZÓN GARZÓN FIELD BLEND ROSÉ

Mourvèdre, Grenache, Cinsault 2021 | GARZÓN

THIS IS the new rosé from Garzón, a winery that has placed a special emphasis on style. It's a field blend, with one third of each variety harvested together and co-fermented, in the style of wines from Bandol. The result is first and foremost a light-bodied summery wine rich in notes of tart and juicy red fruits but that also has firm acidity that traces the contours of the tongue. It's one of those Provence-style rosés, but one that goes beyond just color and summer aromas. This also has very good body—one to consider with meals. ••

BEST **rosés** of the year

- 92 | BODEGA OCEÁNICA JOSÉ IGNACIO José Ignacio Rosé P. Noir 2021 Maldonado
- 92 | CERRO DEL TORO Rosé Reserva P. Noir 2021 | Maldonado
- 92 | FAMILIA DEICAS Ocean Rosé Familia Deicas 2021 | Maldonado
- 92 | GARZÓN Reserva Rosé P. Noir 2021 | Garzón
- 91 | CERRO DEL TORO Cerro del Toro Pinot Rosé P. Noir,P. Gris 2021 Maldonado
- 91 | MARICHAL Reserve Collection Rosé P. Noir, Chardonnay 2021 Canelones
- 90 | BRACCOBOSCA Ombú Rose Syrah Syrah 2021 | Atlántida
- 90 | EL CAPRICHO WINERY El Capricho Tannat Rosé Tannat 2021 | Durazno
- 90 | FAMILIA DEICAS Atlántico Sur Reserve Rosé P. Noir, Marselan 2021 Uruguay
- 90 | GARZÓN Garzón Estate Rosé de Corte P. Noir, Marselan, Caladoc 2021 Garzón
- 90 | SPINOGLIO Diego Spinoglio Tannat 2021 | Montevideo



Sparkling wine

TIED

EL VIAJE

ZULMA CERO DOSAGE Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanco 2020 SOUTHERN URUGUAY

FOR Zulma, El Viaje makes a blend of 50% pinot noir and 50% pinot blanc, an unusual combination in the world of sparkling wine. Made by the traditional method of the second fermentation in the bottle, where it forms foam inside a corked bottle (for greater aromatic complexity and smooth bubbles), 18 months of aging on its lees and no dosage (it has 1.5 grams of residual sugar), this stands out for its green apple acidity and flavors of tart white fruits in a tense and nervy, electric wine that's ideal for raw seafood macerated with lemon. Start with some oysters.

BEST **sparkling wines** of the YEAR

- 93 | EL VIAJE Zulma Millesime Cero Dosage Chardonnay 2018 | Uruguay
- 92 | EL VIAJE Paa! Brut Magnum 1.5 Chardonnay, P. Noir, Trebbiano 2019 Sur de Uruguay
- 92 | GARZÓN Rosé Brut Nature P. Noir 2020 | Garzón
- **92** | **GARZÓN** Sparkling Extra Brut Chardonnay, P. Noir N/V | Garzón
- 92 | LOS CERROS DE SAN JUAN Lahusen E. Brut Rosé P. Noir, Chardonnay 2020

Colonia

- 91 | EL VIAJE Paa! Brut Rosé P. Noir, Chardonnay N/V | Sur de Uruguay
- 91 | PIZZORNO FAMILY ESTATES Reserva Brut Nature 2020 | Canelón Chico
- 91 | VARELA ZARRANZ Varela Zarranz Brut Nature Chardonnay, Viognier 2020

Canelones

- 90 | CERRO CHAPEU Castel Pujol Folklore Pet Nat Trebbiano, Malvasía 2021 Cerro Chapeu
- 90 | EL VIAJE Paa! Extra Brut Chardonnay, P. Noir, Trebbiano N/V Sur de Uruguay
- 90 | FAMILIA DEICAS Castelar Extra Brut Chardonnay, Viognier 2019 Canelones
- 90 | FAMILIA DEICAS Castelar Brut Reserve P. Noir, Pinot Meunier 2019 Canelones
- 90 | PROYECTO NAKKAL WINES Simple PetNat Blanco Muscat Ottonel 2021
- 90 | PROYECTO NAKKAL WINES Simple PetNat Rosé Tannat 2021 | Canelones
- 90 | VARELA ZARRANZ María Zarranz Extra Brut Chardonnay, Viognier 2021

Canelones



BEST sparkling wine

VIÑA EDÉN MÉTHODE CHAMPENOISE

BRUT NATURE Chardonnay, P. Noir 2019 | PUEBLO EDÉN

THE AREA where the Viña Edén vineyards are located seems to have a lot of potential for whites, especially for chardonnay. Both their still chardonnay and this sparkling wine based on 85% of the variety with 15% pinot noir clearly speak of whites that are fresh and fruity and delicious in their expression, but that at the same time have a density that seems to characterize them. This one has creamy foam, tropical fruits, pastry notes (from aging on its lees), and the acidity that refreshes everything in its path. An example of one of the best Atlantic sparkling wines in South America. 🖜

BEST **sparkling wines** of the YEAR

- 93 | EL VIAJE Zulma Millesime Cero Dosage Chardonnay 2018 | Uruguay
- 92 | EL VIAJE Paa! Brut Magnum 1.5 Chardonnay, P. Noir, Trebbiano 2019 Sur de Uruguay
- 92 | GARZÓN Rosé Brut Nature P. Noir 2020 | Garzón
- 92 | GARZÓN Sparkling Extra Brut Chardonnay, P. Noir N/V | Garzón
- 92 | LOS CERROS DE SAN JUAN Lahusen E. Brut Rosé P. Noir, Chardonnay 2020
- 91 | EL VIAJE Paa! Brut Rosé P. Noir, Chardonnay N/V | Sur de Uruguay
- 91 | PIZZORNO FAMILY ESTATES Reserva Brut Nature 2020 | Canelón Chico
- 91 | VARELA ZARRANZ Varela Zarranz Brut Nature Chardonnay, Viognier 2020 Canelones
- 90 | CERRO CHAPEU Castel Pujol Folklore Pet Nat Trebbiano, Malvasía 2021 Cerro Chapeu
- 90 | EL VIAJE Paa! Extra Brut Chardonnay, P. Noir, Trebbiano N/V Sur de Uruguav
- 90 | FAMILIA DEICAS Castelar Extra Brut Chardonnay, Viognier 2019 Canelones
- 90 | FAMILIA DEICAS Castelar Brut Reserve P. Noir, Pinot Meunier 2019 Canelones
- 90 | PROYECTO NAKKAL WINES Simple PetNat Blanco Muscat Ottonel 2021 Canelones
- 90 | PROYECTO NAKKAL WINES Simple PetNat Rosé Tannat 2021 | Canelones
- 90 | VARELA ZARRANZ María Zarranz Extra Brut Chardonnay, Viognier 2021 Canelones

TIED





winery OF THE YEAR

BODEGA BOUZA

BOOKS ON the modern history of Uruguayan wine cite the Bouza family as one of the pillars that the country's new viticulture was founded upon. And they'll certainly say that they were the first to start planting albariño in these lands influenced by the Atlantic, a white grape variety that now has the greatest potential in Uruguay. It's no coincidence. The Bouzas arrived from Galicia in 1955 to settle in the area of Las Piedras, in Cannelloni.

They originally had a bread bakery and then started making pasta. They only ventured into wine in 2002, and then, of course, albariño was a logical choice. But Bouza not only makes very good albariños (among the best in South America), they have also been building a portfolio of highly consistent wines over the years. Reds that were super concentrated and full bodied at first have shifted toward wines with greater balance in more recent vintages. And we at Descorchados have noted and applauded this evolution. Today Bouza is about albariño, but they are much more than that. They are also doing an in-depth study on the possibilities of tannat and, with its new vineyards facing the Atlantic, they are one of the most authoritative voices in Uruguay's new marine wines.





winemaker of the YEAR

GERMÁN BRUZZONE

THIS YEAR'S winemaker of the year carries one of the most ambitious projects of modern South American wine on his shoulders. The Garzón winery burst onto the scene in this part of the world with a large investment in vineyards and the winery, but also with wines that began to draw attention not only toward its own work, but also toward a country like Uruguay that had not yet managed to make an impact on the world market at that time (a decade ago). With the counsel of the Italian enologist Alberto Antonini, Germán's wines have managed to outshine-in the best way possible-the imposing Garzón winery and its sea of vineyards on the slopes facing Maldonado Bay. Germán is no attention seeker. He's a humble, easy-going guy, and, we might guess, reflective. He's also a man of contrasts. It's hard to imagine that this winemaker who presents his wines with an unruffled demeanor has been skydiving for more than two years and now has 300 jumps under his belt. He escapes every weekend to literally launch himself into the void. And that gives him a special depth of character. Germán's work with Garzón's impeccable portfolio speaks for him, but his fondness for one of the most extreme sports gives him greater dimension. ightharpoonup





winemaker revelation OF THE YEAR

SANTIAGO DEGÁSPERI

WE'VE HAD our eye on Santiago Degásperi for a while now. He's just over 30, but he already has a good catalog of wines that he can boast about. He graduated from the Uruguayan School of Viticulture in 2007, and from 2008 to 2019 he was the winemaker in charge of Varela Zarranz wines, one of the wineries that's key to understanding the recent evolution of Uruguayan wines. After leaving Varela, he began a new stage in his professional life. First with Nakkal, a joint project with winemaker Nicolás Monforte and viticulturist Bruno Bresesti that was last year's Descorchados Revelation Winery and whose brief but intense portfolio offers wines with great personality and no disguises, just pure fruit and a fresh take on Uruguayan wine. And then he was signed as the winemaker for Oceánica José Ignacio, a winery that has dazzled us with juicy, refreshing whites and reds, directly influenced by the Atlantic. Along with consultant Hans Vinding-Diers, Santiago is in charge of cultivating that influence. A fresh and youthful take on South American wine.





winery revelation OF THE YEAR

CANTERA MONTES DE OCA

THE LOS TEROS establishment was founded in 2006 under the supervision of the husband-and-wife team composed of the agronomist Fernanda Montes de Oca and the systems engineer Julio Cantera. Its raw material is blueberries, which they grow on three properties in the Canelones and Montevideo zones. Los Teros is the mother company that gave rise to Cantera Montes de Oca in 2006, and it caught our attention in *Descorchados* this year for its consistency and character. With very young vineyards, they have achieved delicious wines that we could call classic "Rioplatense" style, influenced by the Río de la Plata and grown on calcareous clay soils. The wines are austere on the nose, but deep on the palate—monolithic reds and deep whites. Behind them is the hand of José Lez, one of the fundamental winemakers in the recent history of Uruguayan wine and who was in charge of Establecimientos Juanicó (Deicas Family) for years. José had been away from the winemaking limelight, concentrating on his role as president of INAVI, but he's back now, supporting this couple and offering wines with a profound sense of place.

