

**30+** WINES REVIEWED PAGE 71

URBAN WINERIES PAGE 60

BREWS & BRUNCH PAGE 16

VEGAN PAIRINGS PAGE 64

# WINE ENTHUSIAST

MARCH 2016

## BOLD REDS

FROM THE NEW WORLD

### Washington

Lush Cabernets,  
Merlots and More PAGE 40

### Argentina's

Hottest Young  
Winemakers PAGE 46

### California

Rich Treasures of  
the Sierra Foothills PAGE 54



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# ARGENTINA'S NOW GENERATION

*These forward-looking winemakers are setting the country's course for the future.*

BY MICHAEL SCHACHNER  
PHOTOS BY MARTÍN OROZCO



They grew up in Argentina's vineyards, at the heels of their grape-growing and winemaking fathers and grandfathers. With wine in their blood, becoming winemakers was never seriously in doubt. Today, they comprise Argentina's new guard, making some of the country's best wines and sharing much in common: age, background, experience and outlook. They are the "Now Generation" of winemakers in a nation with a long, rich vinous history that continues to evolve.





## Matías Riccitelli Riccitelli Wines

The cheeky name of one of Matías Riccitelli's Malbecs says it all: The Apple Doesn't Fall Far From The Tree.

Indeed it doesn't. Riccitelli, 35, is the son of Jorge Riccitelli, one of Argentina's most accomplished winemakers and the longtime chief winemaker at Bodega Norton in Mendoza. In 2009, Matías founded Riccitelli Wines, his own boutique operation. It only produces Malbec—and not that much of it.

Born in Cafayate in Argentina's northerly Salta region, Riccitelli grew up both in the north and in Mendoza, where he lives today. In addition to learning from his dad, Riccitelli spent 10 years as the chief winemaker at Fabre Montmayou, a French-owned bodega in Mendoza, where he still consults.

"Cafayate, where I grew up, is a small town, with everybody related to wine," says Riccitelli. "My father worked at one of the two big wineries there, so my life began with wine, guitars and asados [Argentinean barbecues]."

Learning from his father and Hervé Joyaux Fabre, Riccitelli absorbed lessons from two worlds. His dad is a master of the lush, robust style for which Argentina has become renowned. Fabre, being French, has long pursued a more European style.

"The biggest thing I learned from them is that winemaking is not for cowards," he says.

As for Riccitelli's wines, they are now becoming more available in the United States; from Hey Malbec (89 points; \$20 for the 2014) to República del Malbec (92 points; \$75 for the 2012), quality is palpable.

"In 2007, I traveled through much of the wine world," says Riccitelli. "When I came back, I had doubts and certainties. One certainty was that I wanted to make my own wines. Another was that Argentina has the potential to make excellent wines."

"The biggest thing I learned from them [his father and Hervé Joyaux Fabre] is that winemaking is not for cowards."

### Wine to Try

**91** Matías Riccitelli 2013 The Apple Doesn't Fall Far From The Tree Malbec (Mendoza); \$30.

Generous on the palate, with well-oaked blackberry flavors. A touch of heat lends sizzle to the finish. Drink through 2020. Guarachi Wine Partners.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$30