

# Mixed Cellar Club

## 2022 Bodega Colome' Torrontés

**Nose:** The 2022 Colomé Torrontés presents an exquisite aromatic profile, showcasing a bouquet of jasmine, orange blossom, and white peach, complemented by subtle notes of lychee, citrus fruits, and a hint of geranium.

**Palate:** On the palate, this wine exhibits a refreshing and vibrant character with a medium body and crisp acidity. The flavor profile is dominated by juicy peach, grapefruit, and green apple, accompanied by delicate herbal nuances and a pleasant bitter finish. The wine's texture is smooth and supple, with a well-balanced structure that leads to a long, expressive finish.

**Vineyard & Vintage:** Bodega Colomé, located in the Calchaquí Valley of Argentina's Salta region, is known for its high-altitude vineyards. The Torrontés grapes for this wine are sourced from vineyards at 1,700 and 2,300 meters above sea level, contributing to the wine's unique character and freshness. The 2022 vintage benefited from ideal growing conditions, resulting in a wine that showcases the true expression of high-altitude Torrontés, with its characteristic aromatics and balanced acidity.

## 2019 Luca Old Vine Malbec

**Nose:** The 2019 Luca Old Vine Malbec is a captivating expression of Argentina's signature grape. On the nose, it offers an enticing bouquet of blackberry, Luxardo cherry, and plum, interwoven with seductive spice notes and a hint of espresso. The aromatic profile is further enhanced by layers of black and red cherry, with subtle chocolate undertones.

**Palate:** This wine showcases a full body with a lively acidity, creating a perfect balance. The flavor profile bursts with juicy blackberry and blueberry, complemented by notes of violet and unsmoked tobacco. A rich, velvety texture envelops the palate, leading to an incredibly long finish with a subtle vanilla oak essence. The wine's concentration and balance make it both bold and elegant.

**Vineyard & Vintage:** Luca Wines, founded by Laura Catena in 1999, is located in the Uco Valley of Mendoza, Argentina. The winery focuses on creating small-batch, high-quality wines from low-yield, high-elevation vineyards. This Old Vine Malbec is sourced from family-owned vineyards situated above 3,000 feet, where cool nights and significant temperature variations contribute to the wine's complexity and acidity.

The 2019 vintage benefited from ideal growing conditions, resulting in a wine of exceptional depth and intensity. This vintage has garnered significant acclaim, earning the 21st spot in Wine Spectator's Top 100 wines of 2021 and high scores from critics (95 points from James Suckling, 93 points from Wine Spectator).

# Welcome

Greetings to all our wine club members! We are excited to share two exceptional wines this month: the Colomé Torrontés and 2019 Luca Old Vine Malbec.

Both wines showcase the remarkable range and quality of Argentinian winemaking. Along with detailed tasting notes and cheese pairings, we'll delve into the history of winemaking in Argentina and explore the unique characteristics of the vineyards behind these outstanding selections.

## History of Winemaking in Argentina

Argentina's winemaking history dates back to 1556 when Spanish missionaries planted the first vines. For centuries, wine production remained artisanal, focusing on high-yielding Criolla grapes for local consumption.

The industry transformed in the 19th century with European immigration, bringing new techniques and grape varieties. A pivotal moment came in 1853 when French agronomist Michel Aimé Pouget introduced French varieties, including Malbec, now Argentina's flagship grape.

The arrival of the Transandine Railway in 1885 boosted wine exports to Buenos Aires, accelerating industry growth. However, political instability in the 1960s led to a focus on bulk wine production.



The 1990s marked a renaissance for Argentine wine. Neoliberal policies attracted foreign investment, modernizing winemaking techniques and shifting focus to quality over quantity. This period saw the rise of high-altitude vineyards in Mendoza, producing more concentrated wines.

Today, Argentina is a top global wine producer, with Malbec leading exports. The industry continues to innovate, exploring new terroirs and varieties while gaining international recognition for its quality wines.

Notable producers like Catena Zapata and Achaval-Ferrer have achieved perfect 100-point scores, cementing Argentina's place in the fine wine world.



# Red Cellar Club

## 2019 Graffito Cabernet Franc

**Nose:** The 2019 Graffito Cabernet Franc presents delicate floral notes intertwined with aromas of raspberry, cherry, and sweet pepper. The nose is further enhanced by subtle hints of herbs and spices, reflecting the varietal's distinctive character.

**Palate:** The mouthfeel is velvety and smooth, supported by ripe tannins and medium acidity. Flavors of fresh red berries dominate, accompanied by nuanced notes of thyme, mint, and well-integrated oak. The wine's texture is plush and succulent, leading to a fresh and subtle finish that lingers pleasantly.

**Vineyard & Vintage:** Graffito wines are crafted by winemaker Jimena Lopez in Mendoza, Argentina. The Cabernet Franc grapes for this wine are hand-harvested from vineyards in Perdriel, Lujan de Cuyo, planted in clay and loam soils. The vineyard's elevation of 3,050 feet contributes to the wine's unique character. After fermentation, the wine is aged for 15 months in second and third-use French oak barrels, imparting subtle oak influences.

The 2019 vintage in Mendoza provided excellent growing conditions, resulting in a wine that beautifully expresses the terroir and varietal characteristics, showcasing the winemaker's skill in balancing fruit expression with elegant oak integration, creating a wine that is both approachable and complex.

## 2019 Luca Old Vine Malbec

**Nose:** The On the nose, it offers an enticing bouquet of blackberry, cherry, and plum, interwoven with seductive spice notes, a hint of espresso and subtle chocolate undertones.

**Palate:** This wine showcases a full body with a lively acidity, creating a perfect balance. The flavor profile bursts with juicy blackberry and blueberry, complemented by notes of violet and unsmoked tobacco. A rich, velvety texture envelops the palate, leading to an incredibly long finish with a subtle vanilla oak essence. The wine's concentration and balance make it both bold and elegant.

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Greetings to all our wine club members! We are excited to share two exceptional wines this month: the 2019 Luca Old Vine Malbec is a captivating expression of Argentina's signature grape, and the 2019 Graffito Cabernet Franc ethereal expression of Argentinian winemaking excellence

Both wines showcase the remarkable range and quality of Argentinian winemaking. Along with detailed tasting notes and cheese pairings, we'll delve into the history of winemaking in Argentina and explore the unique characteristics of the vineyards behind these outstanding selections.

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The arrival of the Transandine Railway in 1885 boosted wine exports to Buenos Aires, accelerating industry growth.



However, political instability in the 1960s led to a focus on bulk wine production. The 1990s marked a renaissance for Argentine wine. Neoliberal policies attracted foreign investment, modernizing winemaking techniques and shifting focus to quality over quantity. This period saw the rise of high-altitude vineyards in Mendoza, producing more concentrated wines.

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# Premium Cellar Club

## 2019 Mendel Finca Remota Malbec

**Nose:** Presents a highly complex and intense bouquet, featuring exotic spices, violets, and lavender, intertwined with fresh and ripe fruits such as black cherries, plums, and blueberries. As the aroma develops, notes of vanilla, chocolate, and blonde tobacco emerge, hinting at its 20-month aging in new French oak.

**Palate:** Offers a fulfilling entry with a touch of sweetness from ripe, velvety tannins. The mouthfeel is fleshy and meaty, with fine, present tannins and well-integrated acidity that adds freshness to the wine. The flavor profile is dominated by intense red and black fruit flavors, underlined with superbly integrated French oak notes, leading to a long, spicy finish.

**Vineyard & Vintage:** Mendel Wines, is known for producing prestigious and elegant wines under the guidance of celebrated winemaker Roberto de la Mota. The Finca Remota comes from a small parcel in Paraje Altamira, Uco Valley, situated at over 1,100 meters altitude. This high-altitude terroir, with its temperate days and cool nights, creates a long ripening period, resulting in grapes harvested nearly 25 days later than in other areas.

The 2018 vintage benefited from these ideal growing conditions, producing a wine that beautifully expresses the unique characteristics of high-altitude Malbec. This vintage has garnered significant acclaim, including 96 points from Robert Parker, cementing its status as a world-class Malbec.

## 2016 Decero Amano

**Nose:** On the nose, it presents a captivating bouquet of violet aromatics, intertwined with layers of complex fruit and subtle oak notes.

**Palate:** With exceptional balance, elegance, and a silky profile, the mouthfeel is characterized by a fulfilling entry with velvety tannins and well-integrated acidity, providing freshness and structure. Flavors of raspberry, dried cherry, and plum tart dominate, complemented by sweet spices and hints of cocoa powder. The wine's texture is smooth and refined, leading to a long, toasty finish with savory notes.

**Vineyard & Vintage:** Finca Decero, located in the Remolinos Vineyard in Agrelo, Mendoza, is dedicated to crafting single vineyard wines with a "handcrafted from scratch" philosophy. The Amano, meaning "by hand," epitomizes their sensitive, world-class approach to winemaking. The vineyard's unique terroir, characterized by alluvial soils and the Remolinos (whirlwinds) that give the vineyard its name, contributes to the wine's distinctive character.

The 2016 vintage benefited from ideal growing conditions, resulting in a wine of exceptional balance and elegance. The blend, which varies by vintage, typically includes Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, and Tannat. Aged for 20 months in French oak barrels, this wine showcases meticulous selection and craftsmanship.

With its complexity and ageability, the 2016 Decero Amano is a testament to Argentina's potential for producing world-class wines.

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Greetings to all our wine club members! We are excited to share two exceptional wines this month: the 2018 Mendel Finca Remota Malbec a captivating expression of high-altitude Argentinian winemaking, and the 2016 Decero Amano, an ethereal creative expression of Argentinian winemaking excellence.

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## Pairing Corner

### Coffee Rubbed Flank Steak



#### Ingredients:

1/3 cup strong brewed coffee  
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar  
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil  
1 tablespoon oregano  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 teaspoon whole black peppercorn, crushed  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 lb flank steak, trimmed of fat

#### Directions:

Whisk coffee, vinegar, oil, oregano, garlic, peppercorns and salt in a glass dish large enough for meat to lie flat. Add steak and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours.

Heat grill to high.

Remove steak from marinade (discard marinade). Lightly oil grill rack (see Tip). Place steak on grill and cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side for medium-rare. Transfer steak to a cutting board and let rest for 5 minutes. Slice thinly across the grain and serve.

Tip. To oil a grill rack: Oil a folded paper towel, hold it with tongs and rub it over the rack. Do not use cooking spray on a hot grill.



### Affinois Truffle Double Cream

Fromager d'Affinois Truffle Noire is a luxurious French double-cream cheese that marries the indulgent creaminess of soft-ripened cheese with the earthy allure of black truffles. Crafted by the renowned Guilloteau dairy in the Rhône-Alpes region, this cheese begins with pasteurized cow's milk, which undergoes a unique ultra-filtration process. This technique concentrates the milk proteins, resulting in an exceptionally smooth and silky texture. During production, finely chopped black truffles (*Tuber melanosporum*) are carefully folded into the curd, infusing the cheese with their distinctive aroma and flavor. The cheese is then shaped and aged for about two weeks, developing a thin, bloomy rind. The result is a sumptuous cheese with a ivory-colored paste dotted with black truffle specks, offering a harmonious blend of delicate dairy notes and intense truffle essence. Its velvety texture melts effortlessly on the palate, making it a true delicacy for cheese connoisseurs.

### Aged Gouda

Originally a Dutch cheese, versions of Gouda are now made by artisan cheesemakers throughout the world, like Michigan's Old Europe Cheese. Old Europe's Smoked Gouda is aged 60 days prior to smoking. It's also unique in another respect and, if you have had other smoked Goudas, we think you'll taste the difference: It's smoked using a "cold smoke" process. A fire is lit and burns voraciously until the smoke house is filled with smoke, at which time the fire is allowed to go out. Then wheels of Gouda are placed in the house and "cold smoked" for over 16 hours. Most smoked cheeses makers use a hot smoke—produced by an ongoing fire—which means the cheese is, in effect, cooked twice. That causes the cheese to crack and dry out and the flavor that results is more of a beef jerky than a cheese flavor. The subtle Gouda flavor of your Old Europe Cheese Smoked Gouda will still predominate. Smoked Gouda is a bit nuttier tasting than the regular Gouda. Containing 45% butterfat, it's buttery, creamy and smooth with sweet and salty notes. As with all cheeses, be sure to enjoy it at room temperature and it will literally melt on your tongue.