

19 Values from Argentina

Mendoza Malbecs and more, including Torrontés and Chardonnay, all priced at \$25 or less

[James Molesworth](#)

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These days, Argentine Malbec needs little introduction: The grape offers juicy raspberry and boysenberry flavors with round, lush structure and is winning hearts and minds of American consumers in spades. There's also scads of value-priced offerings. While there's a lot out there from Argentina these days, you do need to tread with some caution to find the best value bottles.

Bodega Norton's new Privada Malbec headlines this group. Sourced from a single vineyard of 50- to 80-year-old vines, it's aged in 100 percent new oak for 16 months and offers a ripe, tasty profile, with plenty of fruit and grip.

There's more from established names including the latest from Clos de los Siete, [Viña Doña Paula](#), Andeluna and Bodegas y Viñedos O. Fournier, along with wines from new faces Alcazar, Viñedos Urraca and Bodega Goulart.

And Argentina isn't just about Malbec. This report includes a sprinkling of whites, including some Torrontés, which makes a lively spice- and orange-filled wine ideal for serving with steamed crabs, along with Viognier, Chardonnay and more.

The best part is that this entire list is comprised of wines that cost no more than \$25 a bottle, with some offerings boasting single-digit prices.

BODEGA NORTON Malbec Mendoza Privada 2006 Score: 91 | \$24

Quite ripe and heavily toasted, with lots of coffee and dark ganache up front, followed by a big core of plum, melted fig and black licorice. Ample grip on the finish, with a strong, well-embedded graphite edge. Drink now through 2012. 500 cases made. —*J.M.*

VIÑEDOS URRACA Malbec Agrelo 2008 Score: 90 | \$25

Ripe and rich, but stylish, with a big core of plum sauce and fig paste flavors woven with a hint of grilled mesquite. Black tea, melted licorice and toast frame the dense but polished finish. Drink now through 2011. 1,075 cases imported. —*J.M.*

CLOS DE LOS SIETE Mendoza 2008 Score: 89 | \$19

Quite ripe, but focused and juicy, with blueberry, acai berry and bramble notes laced with fruitcake and spice hints. Nice briary edge keeps the finish honest. Malbec, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Petit Verdot. Drink now. 30,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

BODEGA GOULART Malbec-Cabernet Mendoza Reserva 2008 Score: 89 | \$17

Nicely focused, with raspberry, mesquite and cedar notes backed by a long, iron-tinged finish. Nice hint of cocoa powder too. Drink now. 5,000 cases made. —*J.M.*

ALCAZAR Malbec Tupungato Valley Tupun Reserva 2007 Score: 88 | \$12

Dark and slightly muscular, with blackberry, Black Mission fig and black currant paste fruit flavors layered with espresso and graphite notes. Nice drive on the finish too. Drink now. 1,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

ANDELUNA Chardonnay Tupungato Reserve 2006 Score: 88 | \$20

Very ripe and stylish, with full-bodied pear tartine, fig, green almond and melon flavors that stay lush and pure through the very inviting finish. A not-shy style, but stays balanced. Drink now. 1,568 cases made. —*J.M.*

ANDELUNA Malbec Tupungato 2008 Score: 88 | \$11

Ripe and mouthfilling, with a juicy, fleshy core of crushed red currant, raspberry and blackberry fruit notes kept lively by licorice and briar hints on the finish. Drink now. 12,117 cases made. —*J.M.*

ANDELUNA Malbec Tupungato Reserve 2006 Score: 88 | \$20

Very polished, with lots of mocha and roasted vanilla leading the way for the lush melted fig, anise and plum sauce notes. Broad, fleshy finish lets the toasty side linger. Drink now. 6,637 cases made. —*J.M.*

VIÑA DOÑA PAULA Malbec Mendoza 2008 Score: 88 | \$16

Rounded and medium-weight, with a nice core of plum, currant and fig laced with smoke and mesquite hints. Fruitcake notes chimes in on the finish. Drink now. 40,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS LA ESPERANZA Malbec Uco Valley Finca El Origen Reserva 2008 Score: 88 | \$12

Solid with a mix of blueberry, plum and blackberry fruit laced with sweet toast and spice notes. Nice latent grip gives the finish some length and definition. Drink now. 18,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS O. FOURNIER Malbec-Tempranillo Uco Valley Urban 2008 Score: 88 | \$11

Fresh, with nice forward black cherry, raisin, roasted vanilla bean and sandalwood notes backed by a juicy, medium-weight finish. Drink now. 3,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

BODEGAS Y VIÑEDOS SANTIAGO GRAFFIGNA Malbec San Juan Grand Reserve 2006 Score: 88 | \$18

Solid, with nice underlying grip to the dark currant, fig and bittersweet cocoa notes followed by a toasty slightly muscular finish. Drink now through 2011. —*J.M.*

FAMILIA RUTINI Malbec Mendoza 2006 Score: 88 | \$20

Dense but forward, with layers of raspberry and boysenberry fruit pushed by melted licorice and fruitcake notes on the medium-weight finish. Drink now. 1,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

FINCA AGOSTINO Familia Mendoza 2007 Score: 87 | \$22

Rounded and fleshy, with a mocha note weaving in on the raspberry, plum and blackberry fruit. Nice hint of licorice snap on the finish. Malbec, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now. 350 cases imported. —*J.M.*

ALCAZAR Malbec Tupungato Valley Tupun 2008 Score: 87 | \$9

Quite ripe, with lush raspberry and red cherry fruit, but stays racy, with licorice and fruitcake notes extending through the finish. Drink now. 400 cases imported. —*J.M.*

ANDELUNA Cabernet Sauvignon Tupungato Reserve 2006 Score: 87 | \$20

Juicy and forward, with slightly jammy raspberry, red currant and boysenberry flavors laced with licorice and sweet toast notes. Slightly raisined edge on the finish. Drink now. 4,935 cases made. —*J.M.*

BODEGA LUIGI BOSCA Viognier Luján de Cuyo Finca La Linda 2009 Score: 87 | \$11

Plump, slightly muscular style, with bitter almond and blood orange hints leading the way for anise, fennel and melon rind flavors. Nice, ripe, rounded finish. Drink now. 1,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

TRIVENTO Torrontés Mendoza Reserve 2009 Score: 87 | \$11

Ripe and juicy, with nice weight to the tangerine, clementine, chamomile and lemon verbena notes, which stay bouncy and fresh through the finish. Really solid. Drink now. 13,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

FAMILIA ZUCCARDI Malbec Mendoza Serie A 2008 Score: 87 | \$14

Polished, forward style, with ripe boysenberry and raspberry fruit framed with mocha and licorice notes. Drink now. 4,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*