

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Nov. 7, 2014 12:16 p.m. ET

## Dark Horse Wines: Great Finds in Odd Places

On a quest for terrific wines from anywhere but the places you might think they were made, Lettie Teague discovers delicious surprises and very good deals By Lettie Teague



**SUCCESS MAY BREED SUCCESS**, but sometimes it simply breeds repetition. Writers get tied to particular genres, actors get stuck in certain roles; even wine regions get pigeonholed.

The shadow of Malbec looms so large, it nearly obliterates everything else, even though Cabernet Sauvignon, Bonarda, Merlot and Pinot Noir are also grown in the country. They “might as well not exist,” according to Ian Dorin, head buyer at the Wine Library in Springfield, N.J. Mr. Dorin estimated the ratio of his Malbec sales to every other bottle of Argentine wine is “100 to one.”

And yet there is a long history of good Argentinian Cabernet, something the locals know well. “Argentines drink a lot of Cabernet, more than Malbec,” said Laura Catena, managing director of Argentina’s Catena Zapata and Luca wineries. Ms. Catena is the daughter of Nicolás Catena, Argentina’s most

famous vintner, credited with creating modern Malbec in Argentina. She is also an emergency-room physician in California who lives part time in Argentina. “We spend a lot of time and effort on our Cabernet,” she said, noting that the most expensive Catena wine is a Cabernet: the Catena Zapata Estiba Reservada Cabernet Sauvignon, not yet available in the U.S., sells in Argentina for the equivalent of \$250.

### 2011 Catena High Mountain Vines Cabernet Sauvignon \$22

Although Argentines are great lovers of their country’s Cabernets, the wines haven’t caught on with most Americans—at least not as much as the Argentine Malbecs have. But this eminently drinkable, plush red—a blend of several high-altitude vineyards—might change a few minds.