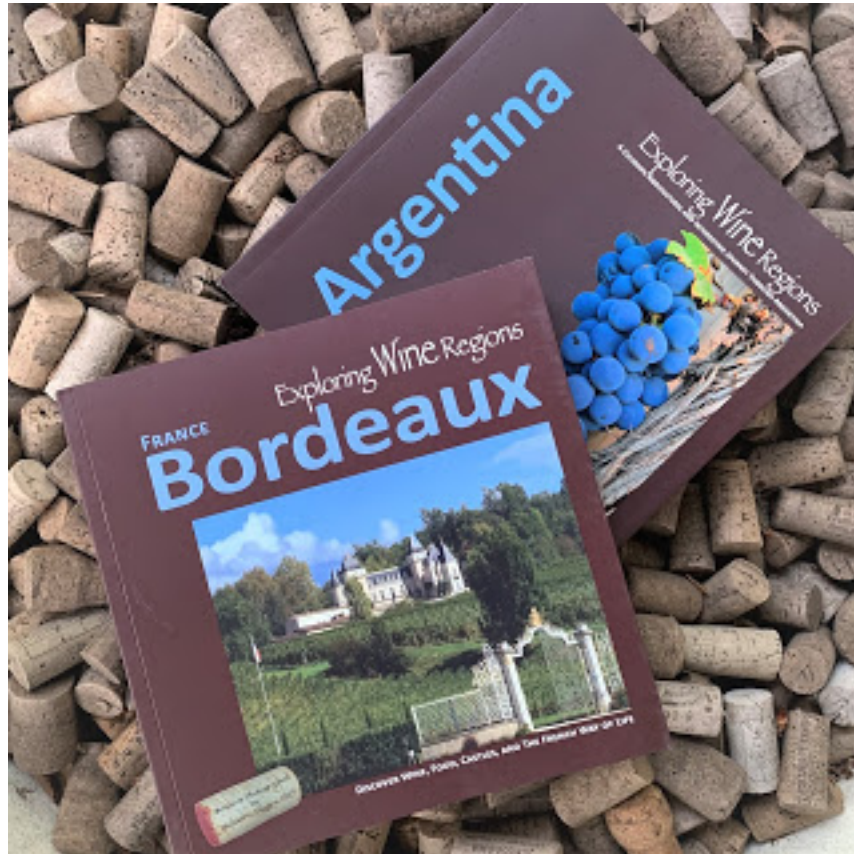


Exploring Wine Regions: Bordeaux and Argentina

by Michael C. Higgins - BOOK REVIEW

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By Gilion Dumas, Reader, Blogger, Sex Abuse Lawyer, Mother of Tabbies...



[Exploring Wine Regions](#) is a new series of wine and travel guides launched by author and photographer Michael C. Higgins. He started the series with a book on Argentina, subtitled *A Culinary, Agricultural, and Interesting Journey Through Argentina*. The second book came out last month on Bordeaux, subtitled *Discover Wine, Food, Castles, and the French Way of Life*.

Both books are meticulously researched, insider accounts of wineries and vineyards in the regions they cover as well as travel guides to the food, special lodging, sights, and history. Higgins did his own research and photography, and his enthusiasm shows on every page.

BORDEAUX

I was drawn to the *Bordeaux* book first because I have never visited the wineries there and I would like to. As Higgins describes, Bordeaux is "the center of the universe for wine." So much of the wine we recognize, no matter where it is now made, is made from Bordeaux varietals like Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

Higgins packs a lot of information into these dense books. The *Bordeaux* book starts with a history of winemaking in the region and an overview of the geography. There follows a concise travel guide to the city of Bordeaux, including sites, restaurants, hotels, and all the information a traveler needs for a visit. Then Higgins lays out each appellation and sub-appellation of Bordeaux in a methodically organized manner, moving outward from the city of Bordeaux.

Each chapter includes information and photos about the wineries, as well as tips for where to eat and stay. Often dining and lodging are part of the winery experience. One of the criteria Higgins used to decide whether to include a winery in his book was if it offered some experience more than only wine tasting. To be in the book, a winery had to be open to the public (makes sense), have excellent wine, and offer something to elevate the visit above the ordinary. He found wineries

offering rooms in castles for overnight guests, restaurants, winemaking workshops, cooking classes, and other unique experiences.

Exploring Wine Regions: Bordeaux is chock-o-block with gorgeous photographs, making it a perfect armchair travel book for any [Francophile](#). It is also indispensable for planning a wine tour of the region. I can't imagine visiting Bordeaux without Higgins's book!

ARGENTINA

Having indulged in the *Bordeaux* book, I wanted to poke around in the *Argentina* book to learn something about a wine region I know absolutely nothing about. Wow! Now I want to visit Argentina.

Like with the *Bordeaux* book, Higgins starts with a geographic overview of the wine regions of Argentina. He follows with a travel guide to Mendoza, the large city that is the capital of the Mendoza wine region and a good place from which to stage an exploration of Argentinian wineries. He then moves through each of the four main wine regions.

Only a few of the wineries featured offer much in the way of dining, lodging, or add-on experiences. Higgins provides information on where to eat and stay, as well as sites and recreational activities. Argentina is spectacularly beautiful, so the geography is as much of a draw as the amenities.

THE SERIES

The next book in the series will be a book about California. If it is as good as the first two, it is sure to be another winner.

My only quibble with both books is that there is no information about prices – of wine, restaurants, or lodging. I know prices change, so putting actual numbers in makes no sense. And Higgins includes websites for every place mentioned, so it is not arduous learn more. But it would be nice to have a little guidance about whether a restaurant or winery is a once-in-a-lifetime spree or a reasonable stop for an afternoon. Higgins wrote in the *Bordeaux* introduction that he was "on a quest to find the good at good prices, and the extraordinary wines at better prices." So even knowing whether a winery falls in the good wine/good price or extraordinary wine/better price category would be nice.

Read more about Higgins and learn more about the Exploring Wine Regions series at ExploringWineRegions.com.

Link to review: rosecityreader.com/2020/11/exploring-wine-regions-bordeaux-and.html