



DI-VINE DWELLINGS

LIVING OFF THE VINE AT MENDOZA'S TOP WINEMAKING COMMUNITIES

Oh, the old romantic notion of a vineyard dwelling: plucking grapes come late summer before crushing them by foot into a fabulous vintage. Although winemaking à pied rarely takes place in this day and age, owning a home and a plot of Malbec or Bonarda in Mendoza, Argentina's principal winemaking region, is a more feasible dream.

Located at the foot of the majestic Andes, Mendoza – officially anointed as one of the world's eight great wine regions in part thanks to its 800 to 1,200-metre altitude – also offers skiing at Las Leñas, horseback riding across untouched countryside, polo and golf as well as extreme sports such as white-water rafting and mountain climbing. Here, we select some of Mendoza's most interesting vineyard communities in Valle de Uco, a former desert-turned-prime-growing-area where some of Argentina's finest grapes are being produced.



O.FOURNIER WINE PARTNERS



Spanish winemaker José Manuel Ortega has been producing wine in Chile, Spain and Portugal as well as in Uco Valley at O.Fournier bodega since 2000, and his latest project aims to turn wine lovers into wine producers. Buying into O.Fournier Wine Partners not only means you have the opportunity to own a slice of terroir, but also build a villa for the ultimate vineyard lifestyle. Plots available at Finca Santa Sofía Estate range between one and three hectares, and are planted with six tried-and-tested varieties including Malbec, Cabernet Franc and Torrontés. O.Fournier's oenology team takes charge of maintenance, simply leaving you with the decision of whether to commercialise your own brand, or keep it for the cava.

LA MORADA DE LOS ANDES



Since opening its Clubhouse in February 2013, La Morada de los Andes is simply flourishing. Set across 409 hectares in Los Arbolitos vineyards that look west over the mountains and east over the valley, the emphasis is on the 83 homeowners making a life for themselves – permanent or on a holiday basis – at La Morada, taking advantage of everything Pachamama ('Mother Nature' in Quechua) offers. Homes are set among vines and, as owners have a fee simple title for a residential plot, they can have a hand in winemaking without the responsibility of owning a vineyard or a winery. Members of this international community can trust in top-notch infrastructure and a world-class agronomy team, given that the management group also runs Buenos Aires' successful Fierro Hotel.

THE VINES OF MENDOZA

Since its 2005 inception, The Vines of Mendoza has branched out like a carefully pruned vine. Originally offering private estates between one and three hectares in size, the project has diversified so investors can snap up a villa as well as a vineyard, then rent that property out as part of the Resort and Spa, which completes in August 2013. One of The Vines' aims is to take the mystery out of winemaking, so estate owners can get involved with the nitty-gritty such as taking soil samples, fermenting and even designing labels at the on-site winery. To complete the circle, the finished product can then be sold at The Vines' Mendoza City tasting room; one estate owner's vintage has been awarded 90 Robert Parker points: the SoloContigo Malbec 2010.

