

## O Fournier, Urban Malbec 2007 Mendoza

21 Oct 2008 by Jancis Robinson

From £5.99 and \$10.

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This was by a mile the best value wine at a [recent tasting](#) of the revitalised Odd bins' new range – I actually wrote that it was too good for the price of £5.99!-and it's relatively easy to find in the US where it is on sale at Cost Plus for under \$10, I am assured.

The O Fournier wine empire is relatively recent and <sup>includes</sup> Spain and Chile but it is in Argentina that the family of its founder J M Ortega is based, notably at their new Urban en O Fournier restaurant in Mendoza, presided over by his wife Nadia, which was recently voted Best Restaurant Related to Wine Tourism by the Great Wine Capitals Group. See [here](#) for a series of recent tasting notes on O Fournier wines.

**O Fournier, Urban Malbec 2007 Mendoza**, known as **Urban Uco Malbec 2007 Mendoza** in the US, over-delivers massively. There is masses of totally natural ripe fruit here with more than whiff of high altitude Malbec's rather haunting appeal (see my recent [Argentina gets more polish](#)). The alcohol level is 14.5% but it does not feel excessive on the palate. I reckon this wine should still drink well in 18 months' or even two years' time, which is unusual for a wine at this price.

José Manuel Ortega who founded the O Fournier Group says, "We are very happy how the wine is drinking. The vintage was exceptional because it was cooler than usual. As you know, we only source our grapes from the Uco Valley so we can get that extra acidity and freshness in the aromas. We also get great Malbec personality in Uco. The wine is made to be very fruity with soft tannins and an interesting price as well. It has been aged for three months in oak barrels (we do not use chips or any other oak products). The purpose is to complex the wine a bit and give it some more ageing potential."

The grapes were grown at well over 1,000m altitude (3,600 ft) in El Cepillo vineyard in La Consulta in the Uco Valley. Grapes were sorted by hand. It was fermented in stainless steel with a total maceration of 15 days, and given three months in barrel. Those thirsty for numbers may like to know that the total acidity is 4.82 g/l and the pH is 3.8.

There is also a **Malbec/Tempranillo** blend whose 2007 version I have not tasted but have no reason to doubt. The 2006 was pretty good and 2007 sounds a better vintage. The Tempranillo to which Fournier have access includes some nice, old-vine material. In fact Fournier were the first to my knowledge to put varietal Tempranillo on the modern Argentine map.

Fournier wines are imported into the UK by Seckford and sold by independent retailers such as Flagship Wines. In the US Urban wines are easiest to find in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Texas and California. Winesearcher also notes Mövenpick in Switzerland as a stockist

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