

## Wine Capitals awards 2010

12 Nov 2009 by Julia Harding MW

Personal recommendations are invaluable when it comes to places to stay, eat or buy wine - as is clear from the requests and generous and detailed responses in the [Travel stuff](#) section of our forum as well as from the places recommended in [Your views](#).

But there's a place for industry awards, too, especially when it comes to comparing across countries and hemispheres, which most of us are not able to do.

The [Great Wine Capitals Global Network](#), set up in 1999, is 'a network of eight [now nine actually - they haven't updated their website!] major global cities in both the northern and southern hemispheres, which share a key economic and cultural asset: their internationally renowned wine regions'. Its stated aim is 'to encourage travel, education and business exchange between the internationally renowned centres of Bordeaux, Cape Town, Florence, Mainz, Mendoza (pictured), Oporto, Bilbao-Rioja and San Francisco-Napa Valley', not forgetting, just added, Christchurch on New Zealand's South Island, much to the disappointment of Hastings in the Hawke's Bay region on the North Island, NZ's other contender for the wine capital title.

The Network met in Bordeaux earlier this month to celebrate its 10th anniversary and announced the following awards for 2010. 'Award winners were chosen by an international jury from the 56 regional winners from each member city of the Network' in the categories listed below. The descriptions are theirs not ours.

### Accommodation

#### **Algodon Wine Estates - Mendoza**

Algodon Wine Estates is a stunning 2.050 acre estate at the base of the Andes that has a range of peaceful lodges and villas for guests. Developed by renowned vineyard architect Bormida & Yanzon, together with designer Gerhard Heusch, the estate also offers golf, wine-making and several excellent restaurants. Eco-friendly concepts such as natural fertilizers and organic crops, solar energy and clean power are in place, and the estate plans to develop its own cattle and dairy farm.

[www.algodonwineestates.com](http://www.algodonwineestates.com)

### Architecture, parks & gardens

#### **Quinta do Seixo - Porto**

Located in the Cima-Corga region near Pinhão in the heart of the historic Douro winelands, this is a wonderful place to see the traditional planting of vines in this region. Vineyards are on terraces with small stone walls between each one, as well as more modern planting styles. Because of its diversity, Quinta do Seixo has an excellent visitors' centre explaining these dramatic, and often breathtaking, methods of production, and offers excellent wine tasting opportunities.

<http://eng.sograpevinhos.eu/douro>

### Art & culture

#### **Clos Pegase - San Francisco | Napa Valley**

Owners Jan and Mitsuko Shrem created Clos Pegase to be a temple to art and wine, sharing not only their wine, but their personal art collection with their customers. A visit here is an enlightening and enjoyable experience, with figures from Greek and Roman mythology - from Pegasus to Bacchus and Gaia - making continual appearances in the art and architecture of the winery, and the cave theatre.

[/www.clospegase.com](http://www.clospegase.com)

## **Innovative experiences and sustainable wine tourism practices**

### **Bodegas Muga - Bilbao | Rioja**

Bodegas Muga was one of the first wineries in Rioja to open its doors to tourists. The attractive stone and wood building dates back two centuries, and provides visitors with a quality learning experience about wine, and the wider context in which it is made. The cellars also contain their own cooperage, allowing visitors to learn about the process of barrel making, so central to the Muga style.

[http://bodegasmuga.com/eng/home\\_eng.html](http://bodegasmuga.com/eng/home_eng.html)

## **Sustainable wine tourism practices**

### **Weingut Hemmes - Mainz | Rheinhessen**

The Hemmes family, innovative owners of a wine estate in Bingen-Kempton, has extended the idea of sustainability from vineyards to the local environment. They have restored a former schoolhouse, a listed historic building in the heart of the village, and converted it into a wine school with tasting rooms, a professional kitchen, and areas for presentations, readings or celebrations. Not only has this preserved a key piece of history, but energy is supplied to the building by geothermal heat.

[www.weingut-hemmes.de](http://www.weingut-hemmes.de)

## **Restaurants**

### **Castello del Trebbio - La Sosta del Gusto - Firenze**

The large outside terrace makes for a perfect setting for this lovely restaurant, located in the Trebbio Castle. The castle was built as a small fortress in 1184 by the Pazzi Family, and passed into the hands of the present owners in 1968. Extensive renovations were carried out, and a restaurant, La Sosta del Gusto was opened in 2006. Run by a Maitre-Sommelier, it is renowned for its excellent seasonal menus, and its extensive, imaginative wine list.

[www.vinoturismo.it](http://www.vinoturismo.it)

### **Rust en Vrede Restaurant - Cape Town**

The first South African estate to specialise in the exclusive production of red wine, Rust en Vrede is now also famous for its welcoming, top quality restaurant. Located in the foodie-destination of Stellenbosch, the restaurant is located in what was once the wine cellar and is now a National Monument. The kitchen is in full view of diners, creating a relaxed but exciting atmosphere. Diners can also choose an intimate side area for private dinners.

[www.rustenvrede.com](http://www.rustenvrede.com)

## **Wine tourism services**

### **Château Pape Clément - Bordeaux**

One of the best known châteaux of the Pessac-Leognan appellation, owner Bernard Magrez has invested heavily not only in the winemaking, but also in restoring the château and winery. The Orangerie, the Barrel Cellar, and the Pavillon du Prelat offer spaces for the staging of both personal and professional events, with a team fully on hand to organise everything from catering to logistics. Luxury wine tastings are also on offer, as are tours around Magrez's other Bordeaux vineyards.

[www.pape-clement.com](http://www.pape-clement.com)