

# The 10 best Malbec wines taste tested

By Henry Jeffreys



Drinks expert Henry Jeffreys shares his top Malbecs from Argentina and beyond. He picks wines for any budget, with blowout bottles and plenty under £10.



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A wine merchant once let me into a secret about ordering from an unfamiliar wine list: go for the [Rioja](#) or the [Malbec](#), and you can't go wrong. Malbec is one of the very few grape varieties, like Sauvignon Blanc or Chardonnay, that has become a brand name familiar to non-wine buffs.

What's all the more remarkable is that 25 years ago the word 'Malbec' was almost unknown. In its home in South-west France, where the grape made an often rather tough wine called Cahors, it was called Cot. In Bordeaux, however, it was known as Malbec, but there was very little of it.

Once an important variety, it had largely been superseded by Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc, and Merlot. But there were acres and acres of the stuff in Argentina, where it was brought by French immigrants in the 19th century.

In the 1990s, Argentine producers managed to harness all that sunshine to transform this often awkward grape into something people loved – full-bodied but with smooth tannins, lushly fruity and perfumed with violets. A new wine style was born, Argentinian Malbec.

It's become such a success that in South-west France, they now call the grape Malbec instead of Cot, and it's generally made in a fruitier more friendly style than in the past.

The one criticism you could have of Argentinian Malbec is that it can all taste the same. Many producers have found a crowd-pleasing formula, and stuck to it, and who can blame them?

It wasn't easy choosing between many very similar tasting bottles. It's not going to be a problem for most customers, however, who aren't likely to taste 35 in one day. That wine merchant really was on to something.

Read on to discover our pick of the best Malbec. For more unbiased expert buyer's guides and taste tests, visit our [review section](#) to find 200+ round-ups of everything from [prosecco](#) to [rosé](#).

## Best Malbec under £30



### Viu Manent Single Vineyard Malbec 2017

This one was my mother-in-law's favourite. It's made on the other side of the Andes in Chile. There's a great balance to it, with lush fruit, fresh acidity and a stalky, aromatic note.