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## In Buenos Aires, Sips From All Over



Nicolas Goldberg for The New York Times

Aldo's Vinoteca, a new wine-centric restaurant in a hotel, has nine sommeliers and a 42-page wine list.

By MICHAEL T. LUONGO  
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FOR visitors to [Argentina](#), missing out on [Mendoza](#), the country's main wine region, doesn't mean missing out on its [wines](#) — or, for that matter, those of other Argentine regions. In the last few years, a number of wine-tasting opportunities have opened in [Buenos Aires](#), offering samples of the best the country's vineyards have to offer.

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At the high end is the wine tasting room at [La Bourgogne](#) (Ayacucho 2027; 54-11-4805-3857 [alvearpalace.com](#)), a restaurant in the [Alvear Palace Hotel](#) in Recoleta, where for 310 pesos a person, about \$75 at 4.12 pesos to the dollar, visitors can sample three or four wines with food pairings. Explanations are detailed, and despite the hotel's gilded setting, Alejandro Barrientos, the head sommelier, said, “My wine tastings are very informal.”

For a more budget-friendly option, Thursday evening tastings at **Lo de Joaquín Alberdi** (Jorge Luis Borges 1772; 54-11-4832-5329 [lodejoaquin.alberdi.com.ar](#)), a wine store in Palermo Soho, are 60 pesos. Visitors get four glasses of wine, accompanied by plates of ham and cheese. The store also offers private, personalized tastings at 150 pesos a person. “We can show you, for instance, how malbec is expressed across the country,” said Gastón Silva, the shop's sommelier, “in Mendoza, in San Juan — or Torrontés, something new.”

Indeed, part of the appeal of these tastings (and the challenge for their organizers) is the continual widening of the country's wine spectrum. “Argentina is such a big country, with a range of climates,” said Martín Bruno, the sommelier at the Hotel Fierro's **Hernán Gippóni Restaurant** (Soler 5862; 54-11-3220-6820 [hgrestaurant.com.ar](#)) in Palermo Hollywood. “It's sad people only know us for malbec.” Tastings at the restaurant are 100 pesos a person, for four wines with food pairings.

Locals, tourists and expats alike gather for fun and festive events at **o800-VINO** (Anchorena 695; 54-11-4966-2500 [o800-vino.com](#)), a wine delivery and tasting company in Abasto, started by Nigel Tollerman, a British native. For 50 pesos, participants get up to eight glasses of different wines. “It's nice to find people from all over the world here,” Yasmin Khan, a Londoner who recently moved to Buenos Aires, said during a recent tasting. “It's striking because we also tasted white wines here, not something we usually think about for Argentina.” The place also offers private tastings of high-end wines for \$500, which covers groups of 2 to 12 people.

Another spot to sample lesser-known local varietals is **Experiencia Fin del Mundo** (Honduras 5673; 54-11-4852-6661 [bodegadelfindelmundo.com/Experiencia](#)), which opened in May 2010 in Palermo Hollywood. The wine bar and restaurant is affiliated with [Bodega Fin del Mundo](#), a winery in Neuquén Province in [Patagonia](#). Sandra Castillo, the sommelier, explained that Patagonian varietals include cabernet franc, [merlot](#) and [pinot noir](#), which she called “a special grape when planted in Patagonia.” Tastings, which usually include four glasses with small plates of food, are 90 to 450 pesos a person, available Monday to Friday, from 5 to 8 p.m.

The newest, and perhaps most ambitious, wine-centric restaurant in Buenos Aires, is **Aldo's Vinoteca** (Moreno 372; 54-11-5291-2380 [aldosvinoteca.com](#)), which opened in June at the Moreno Hotel in San Telmo, featuring a 42-page wine list. Aldo Graziani, the owner, is a former vice president of the [Argentine Sommeliers Association](#) and he has assembled a staff of nine sommeliers for his new spot, the most, he says, of any Argentine restaurant.

Tastings with three to four wines paired with tapas are 80 to 100 pesos, and can be ordered at any time. More instructional tastings on Thursday evenings, led by guest experts, are 100 pesos a person. “I learn more each time,” Mr. Graziani said. “With wine, you never finish learning.”

(For an even more immersive experience, see the review of Mio, at left, a new wine-themed hotel in the Recoleta neighborhood.)

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