



TRINITÉ ESTATE

Acaibo: A Bordeaux family in Sonoma



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JANE ANSON, FEBRUARY 2022

TOP 5 WINES

VINTAGE	WINE NAME	SCORE
2015	Trinité Estate Acaibo Chalk Hill AVA 2015	94
2016	Trinité Estate Acaibo Chalk Hill AVA 2016	94
2014	Trinité Estate Acaibo Chalk Hill AVA 2014	92

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If you pick one wine to open now: 2014

- Owned by Claire and Gonzague Lurton, with the inaugural 2012 vintage coming on the market in 2014. Both from longstanding Bordeaux families, and owners of classified growths in the appellations of Margaux and Pauillac, this was their first property outside of France.
- On the Place de Bordeaux for the first time in 2022, with the 2016 vintage to be released in March.
- Trinité Estate, from which Acaibo is the main estate wine, is a 24 acre (10ha) property in Chalk Hill AVA, Sonoma, close to Russian River, Knight's Valley and Alexander Valley. It is set at 228m (750 feet) on clay/loam soils over a volcanic subsoil, and is now planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc.
- As with their Bordeaux estates, Acaibo is farmed entirely organically and biodynamically, with irrigation happening only once or twice a year, using water from ponds on the estate.
- Claire, who studied ancient documents in Paris as a student, came across a text that outlined the etymology of a group of Native Americans who originally lived in the Sonoma Valley, loosely grouped together under the name Pomo. Acaibo comes from a combination of Aca meaning fish, Aka meaning water, and Sibó meaning three – which is why you see three fishes on the label.
- The wine is made in stainless steel vats, with malolactic taking place in French oak barrels, with natural yeasts and minimal intervention at every point.
- Eric Boissenot is consultant, as he is on the Lurton's Bordeaux estates.
- The wines in this vertical are estate grown for all grapes except for those used for the press wine. For the press, they source small amounts of biodynamically-grown Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes from viticulturalist Phil Coturri, pioneer of organic viticulture in California.
- As of the 2018 vintage, Acaibo will be 100% estate grown fruit.

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- Château Haut-Brion
- Château La Conseillante
- Château La Tour de Mons
- Château Lafite Rothschild
- Château Laffleur Saint Jean
- Château Lagrange
- Château Langoa Barton
- Château Latour
- Château Les Carmes Haut-Brion
- Château Lynch Bages
- Château Léoville Las Cases



When Claire and Gonzague Lurton decided to buy an estate in California, they took a rather different approach from many Bordeaux owners who have found outposts over there. Despite running a Margaux 1855 2nd Growth (him), a Margaux 3rd Growth and a Pauillac 5th Growth (both her), they packed up their entire family and moved over to California for three years. They began looking in Napa, but became increasingly convinced that the style of Cabernet that they wanted to produce would be

...became increasingly convinced that the style of Cabernet that they wanted to produce would be easier to find in Sonoma.

I first visited them there in 2018, after tasting their wine from the first vintages back in Bordeaux, and my memories of the property are of walking through miles of beautiful wild scrub and lush vine-covered slopes – and of seeing how relaxed they both looked compared to the more formal setting of Bordeaux chateaux.

'Finding an estate was extremely difficult', Gonzague told me at the time, 'because when we were searching, all the agents talked about was finding a location close to main roads, where footfall would make sales easier. I kept saying, 'no, it's all about the soil'.

They asked **Pierre Seillan** – also from Bordeaux, and winemaker of Sonoma's Verité – for advice, and it was his suggestion that they began looking around Chalk Hill AVA.

'We began in 2012, and are extremely happy with the results. But those agents were right in some ways – they clearly understood that without sales it is hard for any winery to exist, and in Sonoma much of that pipeline remains to be the cellar door'.

This may be the reason that they are now bringing the wines on to the Place de Bordeaux (not all Bordeaux wine owners in California have selected this distribution method, with many choosing to retain exclusive importers per market). This vertical covers just three vintages, but prior to 2014 part of the Acalbo wine came from purchased grapes, so we are trying here the first true 'estate only' bottles.

They clearly show the potential for Sonoma Cabernet to combine lush concentrated fruit with elegance and freshness, but they are up against an increasing number of icon wines that are going through the Place de Bordeaux. It will be interesting to see if they catch the imagination of the international market.

Tasting Notes

VIEW: Wines Tasting Notes

VINTAGE	WINE NAME	COLOUR	SCORE
2015	Acalbo	Red	94
2016	Acalbo	Red	94
2014	Acalbo	Red	92

- Château Léoville Poyferré
- Château Montrose
- Château Nenin
- Château Palmer
- Château Pape Clément
- Château Pichon Baron
- Château Pichon Comtesse de Lalande
- Château Plain-Point
- Château Pontet Canet
- Château Prieuré Lichine
- Château Rauzan Ségla
- Château Rocheyron
- Château Saint Georges Côte Pavie
- Château Saint-Pierre
- Château Smith Haut Lafitte
- Château Troplong Mondot
- Château d'Armailhac
- Château d'Issan
- Château de Fargues
- Château la Corne
- Château la Dominique
- Clos Dubreuil
- Clos Fourtet
- Clos Manou
- Clos du Beau Père
- Jim Barry The Armagh
- L'Aventure
- Liber Pater
- Marchesi di Gresy
- Marqués de Riscal
- Masseto
- Opus One
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