

Bloomberg

The Problematic Future of Bordeaux's Wine Futures

Plus: Napa vineyards trade the tasting room for the tasting dinner, and an incredible new \$250 cabernet.

By Elin McCoy

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Hi again, Top Shelf readers, especially you wine lovers. It's Elin McCoy, and I'm here with the latest wine news.

What's that about Bordeaux's annual en primeur circus? The mega collector who sued auction houses over counterfeit wines now unloading gems at one of them? Convivial chimps in Guineau-Bissau sharing booze? (Yes, that's really a thing.)

Napa dinner parties

Napa vintners are going beyond the tasting room to offer more intimate and personal experiences. Those at two newish estates in Rutherford, California want to host you at private dinners, starting this month. A word of caution: invitations don't come cheap.



An Annulus tasting at Wheeler Farms in St. Helena, California. Photographer: Bryan Meltz/Annulus Cellars

For an urban take, Luke Evnin of MPM Capital and his wife Deann Wright, the owners of new cabernet estate Annulus, offer "Napa in New York" dinners, wining and dining you in their private Manhattan residence. The food, cooked by a private chef, will be inspired by famous regional classics like Mustard Grill's Mongolian Pork Chop. Cost: \$550 per person for eight guests; contact info@annuluscellars.com or 707-531-9462 to book.

ANNULUS

Napa dinner parties

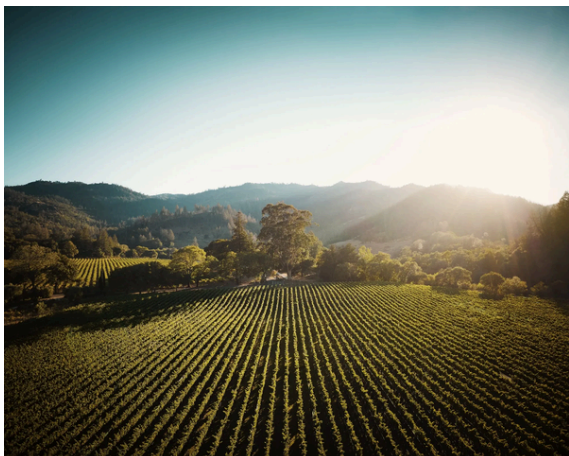


The Annulus range of cabernets. Photographer: Suzanne Becker Bronk/Annulus Cellars

With the 2021 vintage last fall, Annulus, which means “ring,” launched three cabernets and a high-end sauvignon blanc. Coincidentally, the wines are made by the same duo, Nigel Kinsman and Bordeaux consultant Michel Rolland, that makes Bella Oaks.

Leaving aside the question of whether Napa needs another \$250 cabernet, my favorite of Annulus’ new wines is from a special part of the celebrated Vine Hill Ranch vineyard. Situated between Dominus and Harlan Estate, it comes with great terroir bonafides.

The 2022 Annulus Vine Hill Ranch Cabernet is a wine for drinkers who love richly fruity reds with gorgeous aromas, exceptional balance, and bright notes of cherry, tobacco and cedar. It will be released in the fall; you might find a bottle or two of the equally delicious 2021 around now.



Vine Hill Ranch vineyard in Oakville, California. Source: Annulus Cellars