



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES
WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON

CORNEY & BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS

Established 1780



ACHAVAL FERRER, EN PRIMEUR

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK, HONG KONG & SINGAPORE



*“These are a force with
which to be reckoned
in any arena –
truly outstanding.”*

ALISON BUCHANAN, SEPTEMBER 2012



ACHAVAL FERRER EN PRIMEUR

The Mendoza-based company Achaval Ferrer soared to worldwide recognition at a ferocious rate for such a young company. They enjoyed widespread third party plaudits from the outset. We are delighted to represent the wines exclusively in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Singapore.

ORIGINS

Achaval Ferrer is the result of a meeting of minds. A group of Argentinian and Italian friends came together in 1998 with one aim in mind. They had set their sights on producing world class wine in Argentina, wines which would offer exceptional quality whilst remaining faithful to their origins.

It is difficult today to appreciate the sheer scale of this ambition. At that time few people would have considered Argentina as anything but a volume workhorse however Achaval Ferrer was clear about what their point of difference would be – wines from old, low yielding vines with restricted production – both key to Achaval Ferrer's iconic style.

The timing could have been better. 1998 marked the threshold of economic depression in Argentina yet the Achaval Ferrer team, un-phased by the task ahead, pursued their goal passionately, undaunted. Their philosophy echoes that of so many of our principals; here, the vineyard is considered fundamental. Viticulture too often plays second fiddle amongst commentators who tend to focus on winemaking skills – not at Achaval Ferrer. That said including Italian agronomist come winemaker Roberto Cipresso in the partnership was a significant and inspired coup. In a recent, very rare visit to London, Roberto talked of the DNA running through Achaval Ferrer's wines – **intensity, complexity and elegance** – that is what has drawn everyone's attention.

VINEYARDS

The choice of vineyards was fundamental to the ultimate success of the Achaval Ferrer dream. Located very high in Argentina's Mendoza province, between 730 metres and 1,100 metres above sea level, the temperature gradient is perfect. Warm, sunny days and cool nights prolong the ripening season. This, allied to poor alluvial soils and low rainfall, sets the scene for the production of concentrated, mature grapes. These, in turn, make for impressive structure and complexity in the finished wines.

Over the past few years, Achaval Ferrer has developed something of a cult status internationally, winning a plethora of awards – richly deserved.

We now offer five wines in total, each with very individual personalities. They transcend what we would ordinarily expect of Argentinean wines, offering a rare balance of opulence, accessibility and classicism. These are a force with which to be reckoned in any arena – truly outstanding.

Alison Buchanan
Associate Director, Buying
September 2012

2011 VINTAGE REPORT

Santiago Achaval was almost apologetic in proclaiming yet another excellent year – but Mendoza is fortunate in having such a regularly good climate.

Three major factors determined the character of the 2011 vintage:

- Late spring frost: Mendoza saw the worst late frost since 1992. Achaval Ferrer got off lightly. Though they did suffer, only small areas were affected across various vineyards. Not one vineyard was totally wiped out, which can happen. In addition, fruit set was patchy across the board, the frosted parcels the worst hit. Yields were destined to be down from the outset.
- In addition to the frost, this was the third year of drought with rainfall even lower than the normal (“normal” being desert-like). The vines did suffer a degree of hydric stress although melted snow from the Andes helped.
- Moderate temperatures in January and February delayed harvest. For only the third time since 2002 (other years 2008 and 2010) harvest did not start until the second week in March. Generally it is the first week and in 2003 it was the 28th February. Conditions were in no way adverse, with clear skies. It was simply unseasonably cool. Phenolic ripeness preceded optimal sugar levels though by harvest these had also accelerated.

The resulting wines show lively intensity. The single vineyard wines (Fincas) are impressive as always but Malbec and Quimera have excelled in these unusual conditions. We are very happy to be able to include the Malbec in this release and look forward to offering the rest of the 2011s next year.

2011 TASTING NOTES

“2011 was another excellent vintage. I especially like how the Mendoza Malbec in 2011, brings together both the intense and bright fruit of the 2009 and the minerality of the 2010.”

SANTIAGO ACHAVAL, PRESIDENT
AND CO-FOUNDER, AUGUST 2012

MALBEC 2011

Corney & Barrow Score 18

In the rest of the Achaval Ferrer portfolio, Malbec is either a conduit for the expression of *terroir* or proves its worth as a complementary element in a blend. Here the aspiration is specific and ambitious – the goal set at producing a standard-bearing 100% varietal, which celebrates the grape itself in a pure, unadulterated form. Malbec does particularly well in Argentina. Sun-loving, the quasi-desert conditions are ideal, allowing for a long ripening period. The grapes, from ungrafted pre-phylloxera vines, are sourced from three distinct sites, under the direction of the Achaval viticultural team. A variety of altitudes, vine age, vine density and aspect adds considerable complexity. Promiscuous, younger vines have their exuberance restrained, by rigorous pruning, whilst naturally low-yielding, sedate old vines of 66 and 86 years add intensity and depth. Roberto Cipresso has given Malbec its head, allowing it to show that it is much more than a reliable slogger. This is a perennial favourite amongst the Corney & Barrow team and an outstanding ambassador, placing both Malbec and Argentina firmly on the world wine map. The 2011 vintage is lustrous plum-bramble in colour. The nose is sweet, inviting and warmly fruited, plum compote and spiced red and black berries. This is a big wine and yet it dances – bright, oozing vitality and very long, with a good mineral focus. Roberto’s aim is for an easy-drinking Malbec which will give early pleasure – a fine achievement, beautifully balanced.

Recommended drinking from 2012–2020+
£120/case of 12 bottles, in bond UK
£45/case of 2 magnums, in bond UK

2010 VINTAGE NOTES

“Another great vintage in sunny, weather blessed Mendoza. As the years go by and we gain experience, I never cease to be amazed by two different, almost opposed facts about Mendoza:

- *How small vintage variations are, relative to the rest of the winemaking world.*
- *How different each vintage is! Each with its own character and personality. Each with its own defining moments. All of them with the nerves and tension of the growing cycle: Frost or not? Hailstorms or not? Heatwaves or not? Rain at harvest or not”.*

SANTIAGO ACHAVAL, PRESIDENT
AND CO-FOUNDER, JULY 2012

Two main features dominated the character of the growing season in 2010.

First of all, a cool spring, emerged from a cold winter, extending through to flowering. This made for late bud-break and ultimately a relatively poor fruit set, particularly for Malbec. Potential yields, as a result, were a good 30% to 35% lower than average but good weather ultimately came to the rescue, warm and sunny, allowing for vigorous growth. The vines did extremely well and with nature having curtailed the potential crop earlier, the green harvest was not as severe as normal. Final production, in the end, was about average.

Then, the second and third week in February, as harvest approached, it was a little overcast and cool but *véraison* (changing colour) worked to schedule. The sun continued to be elusive and nail-biting days of waiting ensued.

Fears were put firmly into perspective with neighbouring Chile’s earthquake on the 27th February. The Achaval Ferrer winery may have suffered no damage but its rocking like a stricken boat on a rolling wave must have taken its toll psychologically. Despite everyone’s fears about the recalcitrant sun, the rather grizzly weather pre-harvest ultimately served the wines well, helping the overall balance by avoiding too high sugar levels.



2010 TASTING NOTES

QUIMERA 2010

Corney & Barrow Score 17+ – 18+

Quimera, meaning “the search for perfection”, is a blend, the name of which evokes the idea behind the wine – the pursuit of a perfect wine, perhaps the unattainable, where the finished wine is so much greater than the sum of its parts. The 2010 vintage is a blend of 27% old Malbec vines from Medrano and from Luján de Cuyo, 20%, Merlot from Tupungato, 24% old Cabernet Sauvignon vines from Medrano and from Tupungato, 25% Cabernet Franc from Tupungato and 4% Petit Verdot. The three sites vary in altitude lying between 750 and 1,100 metres above sea level. Yields were a mere 18 hl/ha – a scant kilo per vine. Restricting yields is, to a great degree, responsible for the quality and certainly the intensity of the finished wine. To put this in context, first growth clarets regularly produce over 40 hl/ha. 6877 cases of twelve bottles were made of the Quimera 2010. The wine was fermented in small tanks before blending and undergoing malolactic fermentation and maturation in wood, 40% new, 60% one-year-old, for fourteen months. Early blending can be risky but it really facilitates the integration of the constituent parcels. Deeply coloured and intense, this presents dark, concentrated fruit, with an earthy, assertive backdrop. The palate is sweet and silky, luscious and warming, combining red and black spiced berry compote, laced with vanilla cream. There is good mineral definition which adds direction and focus – possibly the best Quimera we have tasted at this stage.

Recommended drinking from 2014–2025+
£110/case of 6, in bond UK
£85/case of 2 Magnums, in bond UK

THE FINCAS

Achaval Ferrer’s third concept revolves around single vineyards – Fincas – with a very different set of ambitions from the other two wines. We have already ascertained that the aim for Achaval Malbec is to produce the very best possible ambassador for the varietal, calling on a number of different origins to add nuances and complexity. Quimera has a different brief; it is all about striving for perfection through the creation of a utopian blend. These Fincas, however, are in a class of their own, centred upon the wines being faithful to a specific place, translating their individual *terroir* and altitudes.

There is one element here which is unusual within the concept of *terroir*, altitudes, aspects and specific plots notwithstanding. The soils of all three Fincas are essentially the same – rather impoverished alluvial silt, stones and clay. A very clear point of difference however in this arid, desert-scape is ‘imported *terroir*’ – the varied geologies in the Andes – which provide irrigation. This water, and the varied rocks through which it passes, plays a crucial role – articulated in the differences in style between all the three Fincas.

When we taste the range, individual tasters tend to favour rather stridently, one or other wine – with no clear front-runners emerging – small wonder. They are all world class wines and although each shows individuality and personality the buying team’s scores here are very similar. Please note that the Fincas are better decanted at least one hour before serving.

FINCA MIRADOR 2010

Corney & Barrow Score 18+

Mirador is a 6 ha parcel of over 70-year-old, un-grafted Malbec, situated at 700 metres above sea level in Medrano, Mendoza, the lowest in altitude of the three Fincas. The vines were planted in 1921, at 6500 vines per hectare. In common with the other single vineyard wines, yields are very low, with three vines required to produce just one bottle of wine – around 14 hl/ha. 1122 cases of 12 were produced in total, aged for 15 months in 100% new French oak. Very intense jet-plum in colour, this offers a very dark-fruited nose, sweet, warm and inviting, luscious fruit refreshed by violet notes, complemented by mocha notes – rather decadent. The palate responds to the challenge, echoing the aromatics yet set within a lighter frame than suggested by the nose. There is an upbeat, sprightly focus which drives the palate through to a long, uplifting, precise, mineral finish.

Recommended drinking from 2013–2023+
£240/case of 6, in bond UK
£180/case of 2 Magnums, in bond UK

FINCA BELLA VISTA 2010

Corney & Barrow Score 18+

This is 5 ha in size, in the heart of the Malbec region, in Perdriel, on the south bank of the Mendoza river. The vineyard here is set at 980 metres above sea level, providing cooler nights. Yields are just 14 hl/ha from old vines planted in 1910 – about 1/3 of a bottle per vine. 1077 cases of 12 were produced, aged in 100% new French oak for 15 months. This is intense, almost black, with purple lights, offering a lovely, uplifting array of ripe, fresh, berried fruit and darker, warm cherry compote refreshed by fresh herb notes, mint and hints of balsamic. The palate is beautifully balanced, innate power held in check, warranting a little patience.

Recommended drinking from 2015–2025+
£240/case of 6, in bond UK
£180/case of 2 Magnums, in bond UK

FINCA ALTAMIRA 2010

Corney & Barrow Score 18+ – 19

This was the first vineyard to capture Roberto Cipresso’s imagination. Neglected, semi-abandoned and hideously overgrown, the imagination required was indeed considerable, but how well it paid off. The 5.5 ha Altamira vineyard sits at 1,050 metres above sea level, in the La Consulta region of the Uco Valley, 50 miles south of Mendoza. Ungrafted vines of over 80 years are naturally low yielding, producing just 12 hl/ha in 2010, three vines required for one bottle of wine. 890 cases of 12 were produced in 2010, aged for 15 months in 100% new French oak. Deeply coloured and richly-textured, this is enticing from the outset. The nose is intriguing, savoury elements and wild herbs melding with super-concentrated, supple, ripe fruit. The palate is surprisingly sprightly, bearing considerable weight with consummate ease, fresh berried fruit and floral elements providing an uplifting boost, a complement to more languid, toasted mocha opulence. A seam of minerality gives focus throughout – totally captivating.

Recommended drinking from 2015–2025+
£270/case of 6, in bond UK
£210/case of 2 Magnums, in bond UK



TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

14–16 A very good to excellent wine
16–18 An excellent to outstanding wine
18–20 An outstanding to legendary wine

A definitive score of a young wine is almost impossible. We usually offer a spread (e.g. 14–16) which relates to a potential to achieve a higher mark.

A ‘+’ adds further to that potential.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes.

CONTACT US:

LONDON

1 Thomas More Street, London, E1W 1YZ
Tel: 020 7265 2430 Fax: 020 7265 2444
sales@corneyandbarrow.com

EAST ANGLIA

Belvoir House, High Street,
Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8DH
Tel: 01638 600 000 Fax: 01638 600 860
newmarket@corneyandbarrow.com

EDINBURGH

Oxenfoord Castle by Pathhead,
Midlothian, Scotland, EH37 5UB
Tel: 01875 321 921 Fax: 01875 321 922
edinburgh@corneyandbarrow.com

AYR

8 Academy Street, Ayr, Ayrshire, KA7 1HT, Scotland
Tel: 01292 267 000 Fax: 01292 265 903
ayr@corneyandbarrow.com

NORTH OF ENGLAND

Sedbury Stables, Sedbury Hall, Richmond,
North Yorkshire, DL10 5LQ
Tel: 01748 828 640 Fax: 01748 821 928
sedburyorders@corneyandbarrow.com

HONG KONG

6th Floor, 9 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong
Tel: +852 2537 3325
export@corneyandbarrow.com



ORDER EN PRIMEUR ONLINE
WWW.CORNEYANDBARROW.COM