

Celebrate Mendoza, Argentina Vendimia Wine Harvest With a Bottle of Malbec at Posada de Rosas Inn

By Ellen Hoffman

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Posada de Rosas boutique inn invites wine-lovers to celebrate the Vendimia grape harvest festival. In March. Guests booking nights between March 2 and 13 will receive a bottle of Alta Vista Premium Malbec wine to get into a festive mood.

Posada de Rosas boutique inn invites wine-lovers to celebrate the Vendimia grape harvest festival--Mendoza, Argentina's biggest, most colorful annual event--in March.

The Posada, a 5-room inn located in the center of the city, will welcome guests who reserve rooms for nights between March 2 and March 13 with a bottle of Alta Vista Premium Malbec wine in their room. Malbec, a rich, fruity red, is the signature wine of Mendoza, one of the nine "Great Wine Capitals of the World."

The Posada is walking distance from two prime Vendimia events—colorful public parades, one each on March 6 and 7, featuring local grape harvest queens, gauchos, local music and folklore displays. It's also walking distance to top restaurants, shops, cafes and the city's vibrant, European-style street life.

"Vendimia is the perfect time to experience the rich traditions and folklore associated with a long history of wine-making in Mendoza," says Posada co-owner Riccardo Accurso. "And the fall—when the leaves on the grape vines and the poplar trees turn the landscape into a blaze of yellow—is a spectacularly beautiful time to visit this region at the base of the snow-capped Andes."

The Posada (www.posadaderosas.com) still has availability for some dates between March 2 and 13, the prime Vendimia period. To honor the occasion, guests will be welcomed with a bottle of Alta Vista Premium Malbec wine in each room. Malbec, a rich, fruity red, is the signature wine of the Mendoza region.

The Posada offers two types of rooms. There are two rooms in the main house, and three studios across the terrace, alongside the pool and garden. The rate for all rooms during the Vendimia period is \$200.00 U.S. per night. It includes an ample Continental breakfast, served to guests under the grape arbor, weather permitting. (From March 14- 31, while the grape harvest continues, rates change to \$100 U.S. for a room in the house and \$125.00 for a studio.)

With advance notice, the Posada can also arrange and offer special meals and other events and excursions (for additional costs). Options include:

- Private wine tasting with an expert, just for your group
- Private typical Argentine "asado" or barbeque, at the Posada, with live music
- A cooking lesson
- Winery tours--full-day, with tasting lunches
- An excursion into the Andes--full day
- A two-hour city orientation tour

Wine harvest festivities start in Mendoza early in the year, when, one after another, each of 18 districts within the province elects a harvest queen and sponsors a harvest festival. The events continue through the

first full week in March. The actual grape harvest goes as late as early April in some areas.

For visitors, Vendimia offers three main public events:

- The Vía Blanca de las Reinas (or White Way of the Queens), on Friday, March 6, 2009: An illuminated, evening parade through the center of the city, featuring the national harvest queen, other invited queens, and 18 parade floats; honoring the beauty of the departmental queens.
- Carrusel, morning of Saturday, March 7, 2009: This parade features the same 18 departmental floats. But this time they'll be peopled with and surrounded by folklore figures such as gauchos or farmers, as well as horseback riders, ox-carts, and dancers representing the various immigrant and ethnic groups of Argentina.
- Acto Central (Main Event), the night of Saturday, March 7, 2009: As sound and light show, performed on a mountainside outside of town, featuring hundreds of dancers and singers; the show is repeated Sunday and Monday nights.

Owners of Posada de Rosas and the parent company, Amazing Mendoza Tours, are North Americans Ellen Hoffman, a free-lance writer, and Riccardo Accurso, an artist. Ellen has been a cultural tour guide for trips sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is the author of two travel books and has contributed to several travel guidebooks.

Riccardo and Ellen have lived in Spain. They are both fluent in Spanish and as part-time residents of Mendoza, they are constantly researching and updating their knowledge of Mendoza's wines, wineries, restaurants, and off-the-beaten-track experiences to incorporate in the company's small, exclusive and custom tours.

For more information, visit www.posadaderosas.com and www.amazingmendoza.com .

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Posada de Rosas is an American-owned boutique inn in the center of Mendoza, capital of Argentina's wine country. The parent company, Amazing Mendoza Tours, specializes in high-end and custom tours in the Mendoza region. The Posada and the tours offer custom events and activities, including wine tasting, winery visits, food, art and culture, and visits to the Andes mountains..

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