

## Argentina offers good deal you won't find from European wine producers



**Gil Lempert-Schwarz**  
WINE OF THE WEEK

**W**hile European wine imports are nearly prohibitive because of the high euro, the wines of South America beckon U.S. consumers.

Spanish sparkling wine producer Codorniu's foray into Argentina introduces us to this tasty little wine called Septima Malbec.

Coming from vineyards planted 3,300 feet up on the Andean plateau in Mendoza, this is the greatest place in the world for growing the malbec grape varietal.

Originally from Bordeaux, France, this varietal lost favor there, but has proved a success in Argentina, yielding wines with depth and power, as well as concentration. This is an excellent example of that, and for a very low price.

In the glass, Septima Malbec is a deep, dense violet-red color with an opaque blackish core going out into a fine ruby red rim definition with medium viscosity.

On the nose, there are earthy licorice-laden black fruit notes with crushed black cherries, plums, sandalwood, roast beef and hints of oak, over subtle touches of spices and tobacco.

In the mouth, the wine just coats the palate with rich, rounded black fruit characteristics, such as black plum compote, crushed brambleberries, pomegranate seeds, cran-

grape juice and soft hints of wood. The midpalate is incredibly well-balanced and shows suppleness in the tannin structure, making it through to the silky finish that has yet more cherry liqueur character and hints of star anise powder and chewing tobacco.

While Septima Malbec is a more earthy style of wine, it is delicious with food, and pretty much anything thrown on the grill would work well with it. The wine should drink well for another two to three years, but serve it in a nice big glass that'll bring out all the flavors.

**Wine:** Septima Malbec  
**Grape:** Malbec  
**Region:** Mendoza, Argentina  
**Vintage:** 2005  
**Price:** \$8.99

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