



# International Wine Cellar

the consumer's passport to fine wine

**Bodega Dolium.** This functional, multileveled winery in the Agrelo section of Luján de Cuyo, built almost entirely underground, turns out some of Argentina's most impressive red wines. Owner Mario Giadorou, an engineer who established the winery in 1997, died earlier this year, and Dolium is now in the hands of his son Ricardo. The Dolium wines, from purchased grapes from vineyards in Lunlunta, Perdriel, Agrelo and other top Mendoza sites, are fermented in stainless steel following a brief pre-fermentation cold maceration, then aged in a combination of French and American oak (the reserve bottling relies mostly on American barrels for the malbec component). Bottling normally takes place on the late side, 22 to 24 months after the harvest. Flying winemaker Paul Hobbs consults here, and also makes his Cobos wines at the Dolium facility.

2004 Dolium Syrah Mendoza (\$15; just bottled): Medium ruby. Spicy dark berries, black cherry and licorice on the nose; a bit youthfully stunted. Dense, spicy and penetrating, with primary, rather unyielding flavors of black fruits and spices. Conveys an impression of very firm

acidity and finishes with chunky tannins. Seems a bit tough and soulless—or is it simply stunned by the recent bottling? 87(+?). 2004 Dolium Malbec Reserva Mendoza (\$25; aged in about 60% new oak): Bright, deep ruby. Pure aromas of blackberry, raspberry, violet and licorice. Suave and elegant, with strong dark berry flavors offering lovely cut and persistence. The wine's cedary oak is nicely balanced by fruit. Substantial ripe tannins build with aeration but remain sweet and fine. Finishes with lingering blackberry, spice and bitter chocolate. Offers impressive concentration for the price. 90. 2003 Dolium Malbec Gran Reserva Mendoza (\$50; about 60% new oak, mostly French): Saturated full ruby. Compellingly sweet, sappy aromas of black cherry, black raspberry, licorice, violet, cocoa powder and baking spices. Dense, chewy and superripe, if a bit youthfully folded in on itself. Comes across as less sweet and more tight than the Reserve bottling, but this possesses fruit of uncanny strength and superb harmonious acidity. With aeration, superconcentrated flavors of black cherry, blackberry, spices and minerals emerged. This spreads out impressively on the back end, finishing with substantial chewy tannins and great persistence. A great showing for this wine. 92(+?). Also tasted: 2004 Sauvignon Blanc Roble Mendoza, 2004 Rosé de Malbec Mendoza