



IN DEFENSE OF SCREW TOPS

GAVIN NEWSOM, PLUMPJACK WINERY FOUNDER AND MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO

> “Everyone in the industry was saying, ‘You first, you first,’ so we went first. I own a winery; corks are a really serious issue for me. The idea that 5 percent of our wines—thousands of bottles—would be corked was unacceptable. We started seeing a real problem with the quality of corks in the late ‘90s and needed to find an alternative. Screw tops worked. We were nervous about them and what our customers would think, especially at the high end, where we were selling a reserve bottle for over \$125 and closing it with a screw top. But we wanted to make the case that our best wines could be protected not with a cork but with a screw top. In terms of aging, some of these bottles are ten years old now, and every time we have a tasting, nobody gets it right—nobody knows that they have screw tops. We all come in with preconceived notions about what screw tops do and what corks do over time, and we’re always dead wrong.”—H.K.

ITALY’S SECRET: THE WINE ITALIANS LOVE TO DRINK

DEVIN FRIEDMAN GETS THE LOWDOWN FROM IAN D’AGATA, HEAD OF THE INTERNATIONAL WINE ACADEMY OF ROMA



> Sicily is hot. It’s closer to Africa than it is to the rest of Europe. “It gets lots of sun and lots of light, and it has wonderful volcanic soils with lots of minerals, which results in wines with very distinct fruit-filled personalities,” D’Agata says. Sicilian reds are the reason Sicily is widely considered the next great wine region of Italy. The most well-known and easy-to-find Sicilian red is Nero d’Avola. “It’s a distant relative of Syrah,” D’Agata says. “It’s a little peppery with a big structure.” If you can find it, try Feudo Montoni’s Nero d’Avola or Donnafugata’s Mille e una Notte. As for Sicilian whites, try Gulfi’s Carjeanti, which D’Agata says tastes like “a dry Riesling that ages remarkably well.”



SHELVE IT! HOW TO PRESERVE THE LIFE SPAN OF THOSE BOTTLES IN YOUR HOME

ACCORDING TO
ALAN RICHMAN

> Nowadays everybody feels entitled to fine wine, but nobody knows where to put it. You can install a temperature-controlled refrigeration unit in your living room if you want friends to think your decorator was Robert Mondavi, or you can be smart and never buy

wines that are supposed to improve with age. (And don’t keep the wines you *do* buy in the kitchen, the hottest room in the house.)

Here’s what not to buy: Red Bordeaux. Red Burgundy. White Burgundy. Barolo. Vintage port. Vintage champagne. That covers about 99 percent of

the wines that need years to show their stuff. Serve whatever you buy within six months—two months if it’s summer and your apartment isn’t 100 percent air-conditioned. If a guest brings you Château Latour as a gift, try trading it for something you can drink right away.