



MALBEC HAS ITS OWN WORLD DAY

MALBEC, ARGENTINA'S FLAGSHIP VARIETAL, NOW HAS ITS OWN WORLD DAY, AS WINES OF ARGENTINA HAS DECIDED TO ESTABLISH APRIL 17TH AS MALBEC WORLD DAY, A CELEBRATION THAT WILL BE A MUST WITHIN THE WINE AGENDA WORLDWIDE.

MALBEC HAS BEEN ACCLAIMED BY EUROPEAN PALATES ESPECIALLY THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH WHO HAVE INDULGED IN THIS VARIETY SINCE THE TIMES OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE UNTIL MODERN TIMES. CENTURIES LATER, THIS VARIETY FOUND IN ARGENTINA THE IDEAL ENVIRONMENT TO REACH UNPRECEDENTED LEVELS OF QUALITY AND PRODUCE UNIQUE WINES OF INTERNATIONAL RENOWN. TODAY ARGENTINA IS THE LARGEST PRODUCER OF MALBEC IN THE WORLD. MALBEC HAS BECOME THE NATIONAL STAR AND IS GROWN ALL OVER THE COUNTRY'S WINE REGIONS. THAT IS WHY WINES OF ARGENTINA DECIDED TO PAY THIS TRIBUTE TO THIS EMBLEMATIC VARIETY.

THE MALBEC WORLD DAY CELEBRATIONS WILL BE HELD FOR THE FIRST TIME NEXT YEAR ON APRIL 17TH. CITIES LIKE NEW YORK, LONDON AND MENDOZA WILL BE HOSTING EVENTS ORGANIZED TO HONOR THE WINE THAT HAS LATELY EXPERIENCED THE GREATEST INTERNATIONAL GROWTH. THE BIG APPLE REPRESENTS THE NORTH AMERICAN MARKET (THE MAIN EXPORT MARKET FOR ARGENTINE WINES); THE UNITED KINGDOM STANDS AS A SYMBOL OF THE HISTORICAL EXPANSION OF THIS VARIETY IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT; AND MENDOZA IS ARGENTINA'S WINE CAPITAL AND THE BIRTHPLACE OF MALBEC. THESE MAJOR CITIES WILL BE HOSTING SEMINARS, WINE TASTINGS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AT RESTAURANTS AND WINESHOPS THAT WILL BE FEATURING MALBEC AS THE MAIN STAR. THERE WILL ALSO BE EXCLUSIVE PARTIES WITH SPECIAL GUESTS AND CELEBRITIES OF THE WINE TRADE.

WHY WAS APRIL 17TH THE DATE CHOSEN?

MALBEC ORIGINATED IN BORDEAUX IN THE SOUTHWEST OF FRANCE WHERE THIS VARIETY WAS CULTIVATED AND WHOSE RESULTING WINES BORE THE NAME OF THE PLACE: CAHORS WINES. THESE WINES GAINED RECOGNITION DURING THE TIMES OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THEIR PRESTIGE WAS CONSOLIDATED IN THE MIDDLE AGES TO GAIN FULL RECOGNITION IN MODERN TIMES. THE CONQUEST OF THE ENGLISH MARKET WAS A CRUCIAL STEP FOR THE SUCCESS OF CAHORS WINES. THIS PROCESS STARTED WITH THE WEDDING BETWEEN THE KING OF ENGLAND AND THE DUCHESS OF AQUITAINE, WHICH BROUGHT THE SOUTHWEST OF FRANCE UNDER THE RULE OF THE ENGLISH KING. SINCE THEN, THE BRITISH MARKET TURNED ITS ATTENTION TO THE FRENCH WINE FROM THAT REGION, AND A CULTURE OF APPRECIATION OF MALBEC BEGAN TO DEVELOP IN ENGLAND AND AROUND THE WORLD. WHEN THE PHYLLOXERA PLAGUE DESTROYED FRENCH VITICULTURE TOWARDS THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY, THE COT FELL INTO OBLIVION. HOWEVER, A CULTURE OF APPRECIATION OF MALBEC HAD ALREADY CONSOLIDATED.

IT WAS ON THIS BASIS THAT ARGENTINE MALBEC DEVELOPED SOME TIME LATER. IT WAS BROUGHT TO OUR COUNTRY BY MICHEL AIMÉ POUGET (1821-1875) FROM FRANCE, AN AGRONOMIST WHO WAS HIRED BY DOMINGO FAUSTINO SARMIENTO TO RUN THE QUINTA AGRONÓMICA DE MENDOZA.

AFTER THE MODEL OF FRANCE, THIS QUINTA NORMAL SOUGHT TO INCORPORATE NEW VARIETALS AS A WAY TO BOOST THE NATIONAL WINE INDUSTRY. THIS INITIATIVE WAS WELL RECEIVED BY THE GOVERNOR OF MENDOZA, PEDRO PASCUAL SEGURA. ON APRIL 17 1853, THEY SUBMITTED TO THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE A BILL FOR THE FOUNDATION OF A QUINTA NORMAL AND A SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DEALT WITH THE BILL ENACTING IT AS LAW ON SEPTEMBER 6 1853.

POUGET ARRIVED IN MENDOZA IN 1853, AT THE AGE OF 32, AND TOOK CHARGE OF THE QUINTA. HE BROUGHT PLANTS, SEEDS AND SEVERAL TYPES OF GRAPE VARIETIES FROM FRANCE, SUCH AS CABERNET SAUVIGNON, PINOT NOIR AND MALBEC.

AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY, VITICULTURE EXPERIENCED EXPONENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE HANDS OF ITALIAN AND FRENCH IMMIGRANTS, AND SO DID MALBEC, WHICH ADAPTED QUICKLY TO THE VARIED TERROIRS OFFERED BY OUR GEOGRAPHY AND PRODUCED BETTER WINES THAN IT DID IN ITS ORIGINAL LAND. IN THIS WAY, OVER THE COURSE OF TIME AND AFTER A LOT OF HARD WORK, MALBEC BEGAN TO SHAPE UP AS ARGENTINA'S FLAGSHIP VARIETY.

THE EFFORTS MADE BY POUGET, SARMIENTO AND THE QUINTA NORMAL OF MENDOZA PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THAT PROCESS. TO WINES OF ARGENTINA, APRIL 17TH IS A DAY THAT REPRESENTS BOTH THE TRANSFORMATION OF ARGENTINA'S WINE INDUSTRY AND THE STARTING POINT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MALBEC AS ITS FLAGSHIP VARIETY AND INTERNATIONAL EMBLEM OF THE COUNTRY'S VITICULTURE AND WINEMAKING.