

FIVE TO INSPIRE: ROSA KRUGER'S LANDMARK WINES & VINEYARDS



DECANTER HALL OF FAME AWARD

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SOUTH AFRICA The Skurberg 2009 was Eben Sadleir's first interpretation of a Chenin Blanc vineyard that I discovered in 2007. I think it's an enormous challenge for a winemaker to stand back and let the vineyard speak for itself, but that's what he does. Skurberg reflects its landscape: a sandy, arid, windswept place with cold nights, surrounded by wild fynbos (native shrublands). It's a unique site interpreted by a genius.

LOIRE Didier Dagueneau's 2003 Assefrole (from a small plot of ungrafted vines) was made during the 2003 harvest in Pouilly-Fumé and was my introduction to extreme weather conditions in Europe (exceptionally hot in 2003). We sat in the vineyard at sunrise and I was sure the heat would be devastating for the vines. But the wine turned out to be amazing when I tasted it



Laura Lorenzini, Decanter 1999/2000

the following year. I don't know if it was the site or Didier's talent as a winemaker.

SOUTHERN FRANCE Mas de Daumas Gassac in Languedoc was inspirational. I went to see [the late] Aimé Guibert in 2006 and he taught me several things about viticulture: think

outside the box, follow the flow of the land and put your ear to the ground. When I got back from France, he wrote me the most beautiful handwritten letter thanking me for my visit. I still have it!

NORTHWEST SPAIN The vineyards of Ribeira Sacra, Galicia. There's no place like it. In 2005, I spent two weeks with Laura Lorenzini at Dominio do Bibei [Dateria Viticultores since 2014]. I loved those incredible steep [vineyard] parcels and the beauty of the rivers and mountains. I really appreciated the honesty, simplicity and freshness of the red and white wines, and I still do."

TUSCANY Sassicaia is a remarkable place in a region that I love. Going there in 2012, I realised how vineyards can and should blend into their natural surroundings and the benefits of a biodiverse system. With that wine, you don't taste the grape varieties, even the Cabernet Sauvignon, which has such a strong thumbprint; you taste the local landscape. ☐

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