

WINE SECRETS

12 MONTHS TO ENJOY WINE

Red-letter dates to pencil into your international wine calendar.

JANUARY Burgundy: The annual St Vincent Tournante Fair is named after the patron saint of grape growers and held during the quietest month of the wine year. "Tournante" means turning, a reference to the fact that it moves to a different village each year. A ticket buys you a souvenir glass which can be refilled as often as you like. *Details:* +33 3 80 28 02 80.



FEBRUARY Miami: For a taste of Miami vice – the legit and palatable kind – head to the South Beach Wine & Food Festival (pictured above), 25-27 February. Combine serious eating and drinking, courtesy of celebrity chefs, tastings, cooking classes and demonstrations. *Details:* www.sobewineandfoodfest.com.

MARCH Pfalz: The town of Bad Bergzabern, in Germany's Pfalz wine region, celebrates its Spring Wine Festival. *Details:* (02) 8296 0488, www.germany-tourism.de.

Rheingau: Gourmet Week is held in Burg Hattenheim, a medieval castle in the town of Eltville, on the Rhine near Frankfurt, Germany. Starts the last Friday of the month. *Details:* (02) 8296 0488, www.germany-tourism.de.

APRIL Verona: Vinitaly, Italy's international exhibition of wines and spirits, is held 7-11 April. *Details:* www.vinitaly.com.

Trier: The annual Wine & Gourmet Festival in Trier, Germany, the country's "oldest city", is on, 1 April-1 May. *Details:* (02) 8296 0488, www.germany-tourism.de or www.trier.de.

MAY Italy: Cantine Aperte ("Open Cellars"), held on the last weekend of the month, is when the finest vineyards in Italy open their gates to the public. *Details:* (02) 9262 1666, www.enit.it. For a guide to the wineries involved, go to www.movimentoturismovino.it.

JUNE Bordeaux: Europe's premier trade show for wines and spirits, Vinexpo (pictured, top left), is expecting 50,000 visitors and 2300 exhibitors, 19-23 June. All the wining and dining delights you'd expect of the gastronomic capital of France. *Details:* www.vinexpo.com.

Aspen: The Food & Wine Classic, 10-12 June, showcases cooking demonstrations and food and wine tastings, highlighting the talents of the US's top toques and vintners. *Details:* www.foodandwine.com/ext/classic.

Rioja: At the Batalla del Vino ("Battle of Wine"), held 29 June in Harro, capital of Rioja, expect the "blood of the earth" to be spilled. That means a good dousing in wine squirted from leather bottles. *Details:* www.haro.org.

JULY Hawaii: The Kapalua Wine & Food Festival, 7-10 July, showcases varietal and vertical wine samplings, vigneron dinners and culinary demos by celebrated chefs in a spectacular ocean-front setting. Surfboards are optional. *Details:* www.kapaluamaui.com.

AUGUST Singapore: Chefs and winemakers will gather at The Ninth Annual New World of Food & Wine Festival at The Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore, 23-28 August. *Details:* +65 6434 5288, www.nwfw.com.



SEPTEMBER France: The Fête de Vendages (Harvest Festival) is celebrated nationwide. The festivities at St Emilion are some of the biggest in Bordeaux, with processions through the streets and fireworks over the city. *Details:* +33 57 55 50 50.

Bardolino: Festa dell'Uva, the annual grape harvest festival, is held on the last Sunday of September in an Italian town famous for producing fine reds. Expect concerts, fireworks, tastings and local meat and rice specialties. *Details:* (02) 9262 1666, www.enit.it.

OCTOBER France: Being in France during Semaine du Goût (Taste Week) ensures that no matter where you are, there'll be a festival celebrating those Gallic cornerstones: food and wine. *Details:* +33 1 56 20 92 08.

NOVEMBER Tyrol: Some 100 Italian and 80 international wine producers will take part in the International Wine Festival in Merano, in Italy's South Tyrol region. Quality will be high: South Tyrol produces just seven per cent of Italy's wine but won 18 wine awards in 2004. *Details:* (02) 9262 1666, www.enit.it.

DECEMBER Alsace: The famous Christmas market, held in the old French town of Colmar, features top vinous and gourmet produce and provides an unparalleled atmosphere in which to end the year. Get into the seasonal spirit with a glass of mulled wine and cruise the arts and crafts stalls. *Details:* +33 3 89 20 68 92.

Text by Anthony Manifold, Judy Sarris, Emma Ventura.