

The Decanter  
Power List  
2013

The world's best wine magazine

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# Decanter

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# The 2013 Power List

The fifth edition of our biennial list of movers and shakers in the wine world brings together the 50 most important people who influence what's in your glass today. Adam Lechmere counts down to number one...

IN COMPILING THE fifth edition of the *Decanter* Power List, we respected the one key criterion that has informed every Power List entry since 2005: who influences the wine in your glass? To lose sight of that mantra might result in a simple compilation of the world's biggest wine companies, ignoring the army of gifted winemakers, pioneer oenologists, inspiring teachers, consultants (discreet and otherwise) and merchants who strive to improve the style of wine we drink. Similarly, we have not included such figures as Xi Jinping, the president of China, whose clampdown on extravagant gifting in the People's Republic has had a significant effect on imports from Bordeaux in particular.

Opinions vary of course as to what may 'improve' a wine. For one consultant, or one influential wine buyer, improve may mean 'make more sellable'. For another, it may mean quite the opposite (there are plenty of brilliant winemakers who will show a supermarket representative the door rather than make their wine more friendly to a mass market). But that is not what we are concerned with: we are trying to present a list of the men and women who

have some influence, good or otherwise, over the glass of wine you hold in your hand.

The list is as objective as it is possible to be. In the first place we asked about 35 international journalists, winemakers, Bordeaux négociants, academics, merchants – a distillation of the world's expertise in wine – for their suggestions (see box below). This produced a list of some 200 names, many of which could be dismissed on the grounds that their influence was rather too local.

But what is most telling is how, in a globalised world, it is possible to reach a mass audience while working on what might be a small canvas. There are consultants on our list who seldom get on a plane, and there are others who live as international jetsetters, and (we think) we prove how both make a difference to your wine, wherever you are. You might approve of our choices, or vehemently disapprove, but we hope you'll agree that this is a snapshot of the international wine world as it stands at this point of the 21st century.

What's your opinion? Email us at [editor@decanter.com](mailto:editor@decanter.com)

**In compiling the Power List, *Decanter* consulted the following people:** Pedro Ballesteros MW, Jon Bonné (*San Francisco Chronicle*), Gary Boom (Bordeaux Index), Jim Boyce ([beijingboyce.com](http://beijingboyce.com)), Stephen Browett (Farr Vintners), Andrew Caillard MW, Bob Campbell MW, Mathieu Chadronnier (CVBG Grands Crus), Ch'ng Poh Tiong, Jeannie Cho Lee MW, Phil Crozier (Gaucho), Charles Curtis MW, Victor de la Serna, Ian D'Agata, Pierre-Henri Gagey (Louis Jadot), Peter Gago (Penfolds), Anthony Hanson MW, Michael Hill-Smith MW, James Lawther MW, John Livingstone-Learmonth, Giles MacDonogh, Nico Manassis, Debra Meiburg MW, Jasper Morris MW, Fiona Morrison MW, Joel Payne, John Platter (*Platter's Wine Guide*), Fabricio Portelli (*El Conocedor*), Peter Richards MW, Don St Pierre Jr (ASC Fine Wines), Eleonora Scholes, Larry Stone, Paul Symington, John Terlato (Terlato Wines International), Miguel A Torres

## 50 Michael Hill Smith MW (Position 42 in 2011)

**Co-owner, Shaw + Smith, age 58**

THE BULLISH PROPRIETOR of Adelaide Hills' Shaw+Smith, a self-described 'missionary', Hill Smith is a constant presence on the international wine scene, relentlessly promoting Australian wine. With Tasmania's Tolpuddle Vineyard he joins a growing chorus evangelising the island's cool-climate opportunities. Expect to see a Tasmanian Pinot Noir or Chardonnay on a table near you soon.

## 49 Frédéric Rouzaud (46)

**Managing director, Champagne Louis Roederer, 45**

MAISON ROEDERER IS one of the great family-owned Champagne houses, makers of the iconic Cristal. Its empire also includes Domaines Ott in Provence, Delas Frères in the Rhône, Châteaux de Pez and Haut-Beauséjour in St-Estèphe and, the flagship, Château Pichon-Lalande in Pauillac. Frédéric Rouzaud took over from his father Jean-Claude in 2006. His major research programme was to 'keep the elegance' of the estate, 'but get a real return from the vineyards'.

## 48 Judy Leissner (-)

**CEO, Grace Vineyards, 34**

IN THE VANGUARD of China's wine scene, the only female head of a Chinese wine company, Leissner took over Grace in 2002, aged 24. Founded by her father, Grace today is a 2.5 million-bottle, 275ha wine business. Any quality restaurant in China will have Grace on its wine list and it has a formidable network, with 22 wine shops in China and a global presence. Leissner – in *Fortune* magazine's 'Asia's 25 hottest people in business' – is one of the most dominant presences in Chinese wine.

## 47 Eduardo Chadwick (-)

**President, Viña Errázuriz, 53**

CHADWICK, WHOSE WINES are sold in more than 95 countries, has alliances with Louis Jadot in the Hatch Mansfield agency and with Robert Mondavi in Viña Seña. He was the first to plant in Chile's cool-climate Aconcagua Costa region and is a biodynamic pioneer. At the 2004 Berlin Tasting he pitted his Chadwick 2000 and Seña 2001 against some of the world's greatest, including Lafite and Sassicaia. His wines came first and second respectively, convincing the world that Chile could make great wine.

## 46 Gary Boom (39)

**Managing director, Bordeaux Index, 54**

SOUTH AFRICAN-BORN BOOM left his career in the City of London to set up Bordeaux Index in 1997. Turnover stands at £100m, and Bordeaux Index has offices in Hong Kong, Singapore and Los Angeles. While its main London rivals, Farr Vintners (see right) and Berry Bros & Rudd (see p25), sell more Bordeaux, BI's list spans top Champagnes, America, Lebanon, Italy and more. This year, it sold its entire allocation of Dom Pérignon 2002, £500,000 worth, in an hour.



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## 45 Stephen Browett (-)

**Chairman, Farr Vintners, 53**

FARR VINTNERS IS one of the triumvirate of major London wine merchants whose reach goes well beyond the UK – indeed, with turnover of £166.2m it is neck-and-neck with Berry Bros & Rudd (see p25) – but has always suffered from a bit of an inferiority complex. Browett himself once said of the company he joined in 1984: 'Farr's is the barrow boy while Berry's is the bloke in the top hat'. In fact, Farr's has been a force on the global wine scene for years: it had an early foothold in Hong Kong, and is a forceful presence in the burgeoning Far East market.

## 44 Li Demei (-)

**Consultant winemaker, 43**

ONE OF CHINA'S most respected winemakers, Li was most recently in the headlines for his role at Helan Qing Xue in Ningxia, whose Jia Bei Lan Cabernet 2009 was judged best Bordeaux blend at the 2011 Decanter World Wine Awards. Trained at Château Palmer, Li teaches at Beijing University of Agriculture, is a guest lecturer at L'Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture in Angers and consults on operations throughout China. He is active in China's wine and viticultural circles and contributes to media worldwide – including *DecanterChina.com*.

## 43 Pedro Parra (49)

**Soil expert, 43**

IT'S BEEN SAID that Parra has changed the course of Chilean fine wine by persuading winemakers to go into unknown territory and seek out more refined styles. Parra – who once dreamed of becoming a professional jazz saxophonist – is hugely admired, along with long-time collaborator Alberto Antonini.



He has consultancies in Chile (Montes, Lapostolle, Concha y Toro, Errázuriz), Argentina (Zuccardi, Chakana, Flichmann), Italy, Sonoma, Okanagan, Armenia, Uruguay and Burgundy. Then there are personal projects: last year he unveiled a wine grown at 2,450m altitude in the Atacama Desert.

## 42 Paolo Pong (-)

**Owner, Altaya Wines, 36**

RETAILER AND RESTAURATEUR, Pong is one of the pioneers of fine wine in Hong Kong. He opened Altaya Wines in 2001 as a small wholesale company for private clients. Today it lists 5,000 wines, is agent for more than 75 global wine brands, and offers Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Lafite, Pétrus and Vega Sicilia. In January, Altaya bought Rare & Fine Wines, adding three locations in Sheung Wan, Central and Tsim Sha Tsui to its existing Bordeaux etc, Champagne etc and Burgundy etc shops. Pong also co-owns the Press Room Group of six restaurants.

## 41 Yasuhisa Hirose (48)

**President, Enoteca, 63**

HIROSE OPENED HIS first shop in Tokyo in 1988 and now has a vast empire, with 63 outlets across Japan, Hong Kong, China, Singapore and Korea. Sales total more than 12 million bottles, and the list takes in Roederer, Baron Philippe de Rothschild, the Moueix properties, Antinori, Gaja, Sassicaia, Dominus and others from every major wine region – including England, after a deal with Nyetimber.

## 40 Olivier Bernard (-)

**Owner, Domaine de Chevalier; president, Union des Grands Crus de Bordeaux, 53**

ALSO CO-OWNER OF Château Guiraud in Sauternes, Bernard became president of the UGC when the post fell vacant in December 2012. The UGC wields much influence: it invests €4m annually in publicity and runs 60 tastings a year, including 20 tours in Europe, the US, Asia and Russia. Bernard is keen to make the most of his stewardship, stating that one of his key priorities was to address 'mistrust' between the négociants and châteaux.

## 39 John Kapon (31)

**CEO, Acker Merrall & Condit, 41**

THIS NEW YORK wine retailer and auctioneer, launched in 1998, has made news since it grossed US\$98.5m, a single-year record for an auction house, in 2010. It made sales of US\$46m in the first half of 2012 – 32% ahead of its nearest competitor. Acker, with CEO Kapon a visible presence, moved into Hong Kong in 2008 and took advantage of the spiralling prices for fine wine. It then foresaw the resurgence of the US market, in 2011 buying auction house Edward Roberts International in Chicago. Kapon is no stranger to controversy: Acker (among many auction houses) is linked with collector Bill Koch's litigation, and its name will feature in the trial of Rudy Kurniawan (see 'A Month in Wine', p11) in connection with the 2008 Domaine Ponsot fraud.



## 38 Ch'ng Poh Tiong (32)

**Publisher, The Wine Review, 57**

BASED IN SINGAPORE, Ch'ng Poh Tiong publishes the *Wine Review*, the oldest wine publication in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and China, as well as the world's first *Chinese Bordeaux Guide* – he was a pioneer in introducing Chinese wine lovers to the region. He writes a weekly blog for *Sina.com*, China's biggest internet portal, consults for Hainan Airline and Singaporean supermarket chains, is a *Decanter* columnist, and founder of *Vinovideos.com*. If you're drinking a glass of wine anywhere in Asia it's probably because Poh Tiong recommended it.



## 37 Piero Antinori (35)

**President, Marchesi Antinori, 74**

ANTINORI IS ONE of the oldest wine families in the world, making wine continuously since 1385. Piero Antinori and his father and grandfather before him have constantly experimented with grape varieties and vinification methods, ushering in the Super Tuscan revolution with Tignanello in 1971. He presides over a vibrant international group which includes joint ventures with his brother Lodovico in New Zealand and Washington State's Ste Michelle. As an ambassador for Italian wine, Antinori – who is preparing to hand over control to his three daughters – remains unrivalled.



## 36 Jacques & Eric Boissenot (-)

**Consultants, Laboratoire Boissenot**

THE FATHER AND son team may be the most discreet consultants in Bordeaux but they have probably more influence over the style of blue-chip Bordeaux than any consultant. Jacques began working with Lafite in 1976 and Margaux in 1987,

and has built a 180-plus client list that includes all the first growths (except Haut-Brion) Pichons Baron and Lalande, Ducru-Beaucaillou, Léoville-Barton, Brane-Cantenac – and many more, including consultancies in Spain and Greece, managed by his son Eric who has worked beside him for the last 20 years. How do they manage to keep such a low profile? 'Good wine is team-work,' Jacques has said.

## 35 Allen Meadows (40)

**Writer and publisher, Burghound.com, 59**

MEADOWS IS ONE of the world's most respected Burgundy commentators, and his influence is increasing as the region becomes more important in the secondary market. A former financial executive, he spends half the year in Burgundy, and takes care to list villages as well as grands crus, with a section of the quarterly updated *Burghound.com* catering for Burgundy lovers on a budget. *Burghound.com* also covers US Pinot Noir and Champagne. It's a family enterprise, with wife Erica, son Chris and daughter Mackenzie doing their share.

## 34 Denis Dubourdieu (37)

**International consultant, 62**

DUBOURDIEU HAS DOZENS of consultancies – in Bordeaux (Châteaux Cheval Blanc and d'Yquem to name two) but also Burgundy, Rhône (Château Grillet), South Africa, New Zealand... Generations of students who have taken his courses at Bordeaux University wouldn't call him shy: he is renowned for his soundbites and his Bordeaux vintage reports are gospel. Dubourdieu made his reputation with aromatic whites, but is now equally renowned as a red winemaker. He owns five properties, including Doisy-Daëne in Barsac and Clos Floridene in Graves.

## 33 Magdalena Gerger (-)

**CEO, Systembolaget, 49**

IF YOU BUY wine in Sweden, it's from Systembolaget – and 118 million people visited one of their well-appointed shops in 2012. Scandinavia's largest wine monopoly, with sales of SEK25.1bn (€2.94bn), Systembolaget is a dominant force in European wine retailing. It has 421 stores across Sweden and employs more than 5,000 people. Stores draw on an available range of over 11,000 wines, with a standard 2,400 wines in the fixed range.

## 32 Bob Peter (-)

**President and CEO, Liquor Control Board of Ontario**

AMONG THE WORLD'S largest drinks buyers, the Canada's LCBO has a third of Ontario's alcohol market (but it's not a true monopoly) which it services through 630 retail stores, as well as LCBO Express stores in grocery retailers, catalogues and special order services run by 3,680 staff, offering nearly 19,000 products – of which 6,000 are new wine vintages. In 2011-12, sales topped CN\$4.7bn. Peter has been in charge since 200; a visible and proactive CEO, often quoted on many issues, from underage drinking to trade union negotiations.



## 31 Simon Berry (27)

**Chairman, Berry Bros & Rudd, 55**

SEARCH FOR BERRY Bros & Rudd on *Decanter.com* and you find more than a decade's worth of news stories – many headlined with the word 'first'. Founded in 1698, BBR was the first wine merchant to grasp the possibilities of the internet – back in 1994. Now it is at the forefront of internet trading, with its BBX platform, much imitated, contributing £13.2m to the firm's internet business of £25m last year – against an overall turnover of £165m. The company has been in Hong Kong since 1999 and Japan since 2008, and has now entered Singapore. With Simon Staples as Asian sales director, BBR is ensuring it is on top of that unpredictable market. It also hit the headlines this year by being the first to permanently list Chinese wines – from the huge Changyu wine company (see *Pierre Castel*, p28).



## 30 Marvin Shanken (21)

**President and founder, M Shanken Communications, 69**

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO be an American wine lover and not know *Wine Spectator*. Boasting a readership of 2.8 million (from 300,000 copies sold), *Spectator* is the flagship brand of Marvin Shanken's empire, a publishing and research conglomerate of great reach. But there are cracks on the polished surface of the 37-year-old publication. Its stable of senior commentators has hardly been refreshed for 30 years; and since the departure of Italian correspondent James Suckling, who was based in Tuscany, the centre of operations has shifted to New York, where all tastings take place.



## 29 Tony Laithwaite (20)

**Chairman, Direct Wines, 67**

THE *SUNDAY TIMES* Rich List puts Laithwaite's family at 410th richest in the UK. With a turnover of £350m, 50 million bottles shifted, 2,500 wines in stock, 1,000 employees and 200,000 new customers a year, Laithwaite is the world's biggest mail-order business, operating the *Sunday Times* Wine Club, and owning Aveyrys, Virgin Wines and Warehouse Wines. It has 11 shops, makes wines in France, has an education centre, and runs a mentoring scheme in McLaren Vale, Australia. Almost a quarter of the company's business is in the US, where turnover has reached \$100m (£65m). The wines are by no means always loved by critics but the head of the business is well respected.



## 28 Pierre-Antoine Castéja (34)

**Managing director, Joanne Bordeaux, 62**

AMONG BORDEAUX'S BIGGEST négociants, Joanne's facilities, it boasts, are the most professional in the region, with 15,000m² of temperature-controlled warehouses and cellar room for six million bottles. With provenance of fine wine more important than ever, négociants are counting on sophisticated storage to keep them ahead of unpredictable world markets. Joanne's sales are split evenly between the US, Europe and Asia, while Castéja is busily taking >



a position in the US, where he has also developed a dedicated branch of the business.

## 27 David Pedrol (-)

**Product director, Yesmywine.com, 32**

THE CHINESE ECOMMERCE market is expected to hit 250 million people this year, and *Yesmywine.com* has six million of them, over a third female, which ties in with the national demographic for online shopping but differs vastly from the wine demographic, which remains 90% male. Set up in 2008, the website sells an average of 20,000 bottles a day, dwarfing its rivals. It's not intending to get bigger, Penedès-born Pedrol says, instead focusing on selling better wines (the average bottle spend is €10; not much, factoring in China's 48% tax) and upping repeat orders. Website content is key: wines feature detailed information, sourced through a joint venture with US magazine *Wine Enthusiast*. *Yesmywine* seems healthy, though there's talk that a re-finance deal may be in the offing as venture capital backers become jumpy.

## 26 Stéphane Derenoncourt (33)

**International consultant, 50**

DERENONCOURT, WHO IN 1982 hitchhiked to Bordeaux 'on a whim', has become one of the world's top consultants. He rose to prominence in the early 1990s from his work at Châteaux Pavie Macquin and Canon-la-Gaffelière. Although a critical mass of his clients continue to be in Bordeaux, Derenoncourt now works with more than 60 wineries in Austria, India, Italy, Lebanon, Spain, Syria, Turkey and the US, including Inglenook in Napa and Boxwood in Virginia. He owns Domaine l'A in Castillon, and the Derenoncourt California project, which sources grapes from AVAs in Napa and Sonoma. For all his celebrity, he insists on his dedication to terroir.

## 25 Jeannie Cho Lee MW (26)

**Journalist, 44**

CHO LEE, THE first Asian Master of Wine, exerts huge influence in that continent. Korean-born and based in Hong Kong, she is a professor of wine at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, has an MA in Public Policy & International Relations from Harvard, plus consultancies including Singapore Airlines. She has published award-winning books, runs the *Asian Palate* website, and has numerous newspaper columns in China. Cho Lee is also a contributing editor to *Decanter* and co-Chair of the Decanter Asia Wine Awards. She is probably the most visible face on the Asian wine scene.

## 24 Jean-Charles Boisset (25)

**Proprietor, Boisset Family Estates, 43**

A MAN OF such flamboyance he makes the grandees of Napa look dowdy, JCB (as he's known in California) heads Boisset Family Estates, a business born in Burgundy in 1961. Now, the California base of Boisset Family Estates USA sells more than



Photographs: John Sinai Photography; Clay McLachlan/claypix.com



1.2 million cases in the US and Boisset, La Famille des Grands Vins sells 6.5 million cases worldwide. Boisset is a huge presence in California, not least by his marriage to Gina Gallo in 2009 (see p28). With the purchase of Napa's Raymond Vineyards and the 155-year-old Buena Vista, Boisset made clear his intentions to stamp his family's name on the Valley.

## 23 David Dearie (-)

**CEO/executive director, Treasury Wine Estates, 50**

WHEN IN 2011 Fosters spun off its wine portfolio – containing such jewels as Penfolds, Beringer, Wolf Blass and Lindeman's – staff were delighted. 'We need never go to a meeting about beer again,' said one. TWE, the world's second-largest listed wine company, now has more than 80 brands, 11,000ha of vines, wine sales totalling 32 million cases and more than 3,500 staff across 12 countries. While there have been some PR hiccups – Penfolds for one has been slated for its price hikes on top Bin wines – Dearie is an imaginative and solid CEO, recently announcing a programme to seek out cool-climate land to stay one step ahead of climate change. He also plans to target China's high-end wine drinkers by opening a 6,000m² wine gallery in Shanghai.

## 22 Mathieu Chadronnier (41)

**General manager, CVBG Grands Crus, 35**

CHADRONNIER IS THE youthful and visible head of one of the top three grands crus négociants. CVBG Grands Crus turns over €90m a year, and is part of the group built up by his father Jean-Marie and sold in 2007 to the Thienot group, its sister companies including Vins & Vignobles Dourthe, Kressmann and Maison Delor. Chadronnier approached the scramble for China with caution, and as that market softens, this attitude would seem wise. 'As growth in China has decelerated,' he says, 'and with a succession of less successful *en primeur* campaigns, we've reaped the benefits of our focus on a balanced market portfolio, and a strong business on back vintages.' ➤



## 21 Miguel Torres Maczassek (-)

General manager, Miguel Torres, 38

IN 2012 MIGUEL Torres Jr, as he's known, took the helm from his father, inheriting an empire turning over €231m and producing 4.5 million cases of wine from Spain, California and Chile. It also includes Torres China, 10% owned by Baron Philippe de Rothschild which, through its \$25m Everwines retail chain, carries 300 lines from producers such as Vega Sicilia, Baron Philippe de Rothschild, Egon Müller, Symington, Chapoutier and Henschke. Over its 140-year life, Torres has become an recognisable brand with such staples as Viña Sol and Gran Sangre de Toro, as well as sought-after single-vineyard estates like Grans Muralles and Mas La Plana. There is no danger that Torres Jr will do anything but continue in the same steady way as his father.



Photographs: Clay McLachlan/clayph.com; Yu Kaide; Nigel Bradley; Jean-Bernard Nadeau/Cephas; ABACA/Press Association Images

## 20 Eduardo Guiliasti (9)

CEO, Concha y Toro, 61

CONCHA Y TORO is Chile's biggest wine company, owning Casillero del Diablo, Cono Sur, Argentina's Trivento, Almaviva (the joint venture with Baron Philippe de Rothschild) and California's Fetzer – its first foreign venture. Now a US\$1.5bn company, in its 130-year history Concha y Toro has grown its distribution to cover 130 countries. The company is now focusing on the US and Asia – in Asia, which accounts for 14% of its exports (Europe is 50%), Concha y Toro expects revenue and sales volume to rise 20% this year. From brands like Casillero del Diablo at the entry level, to the iconic, US\$85 Don Melchor Cabernet, Concha y Toro remains one of the world's most respected big brands.



## 19 Robert Shum (17)

Founder, Aussino World Wines, 50

SHUM STARTED AUSSINO (meaning 'Rich Prosperity Wine Business') as a food and wine import business in 1995, shifting his focus entirely to wine in 1997. Today Aussino World Wines is one of China's biggest importers and distributors, supplying 1,000 lines to 100 cities in China. The company runs 80 retail outlets, and events such as the Aussino World Wines Festival in Beijing in 2012 and a programme of up to 50 dinners a year with guests including Châteaux Margaux and Beychevelle, as well as top New World estates. With all this, and a publishing arm, Aussino is one of China's more formidable wine businesses.



## 18 Nobutada Saji (12)

President, Suntory, 67

SAJI SHOT INTO the 2011 Power List thanks to the whisky, soft drinks and restaurant giant's canny wine acquisitions. Suntory had managed Bordeaux's Château Lagrange since 1983, and distributed Georges Duboeuf, Domaines Barons de Rothschild, E&J Gallo, Freixenet, Laurent-Perrier and Henriot. It joined forces with Castel to take over Beychevelle and Beaumont and négociants Barrière Frères in 2011. In 2009 the company took a majority stake in ASC Fine Wines (see opposite page), China's leading



fine wine importer. With its 250 restaurants and 200 café-bars, and its domination of the Japanese whisky market with such venerable brands as Yamazaki (into which it has just invested another US\$50m) and Hibiki, Suntory continues to exert a major influence over the Asian fine wine scene.

## 17 Gina Gallo (15)

Winemaker, E&J Gallo, 46

IT'S THE WORLD'S largest winery, with sales of US\$3.4bn, more than 5,000 employees and over 60 brands available in 90 countries. There are nine wineries in California and Washington and 6,500ha of vineyards – it ships 80 million cases a year. Yet a quick news search will bring up more about Gina Gallo's marriage to Jean-Charles Boisset (see p26) and the birth of twin daughters in 2011 than corporate dealings. The fact that she's the company's facto ambassador, while her cousin Joe, the late Ernest's son, is the more faceless CEO, is telling. E&J Gallo – described in the 2011 Power List as 'prickly, litigious and hush-hush' – presents itself as the world's most friendly family company, and Gina its public face. But make no mistake about her power: her marriage to Boisset forged an alliance between two powerhouses. One in every four bottles of wine drunk in the US is sold by E&J Gallo, and research company Nielsen say it's the UK's third best-selling wine brand, behind Hardys and Blossom Hill.

## 16 Pierre Castel (19)

President and founder, Groupe Castel, 86

CASTEL WAS ALWAYS a *bête noire* for British wine lovers, who criticised the French group's decimation of high street chain Oddbins, subsumed as it was into Castel's uninspiring Nicolas chain. Family-owned Castel, under the chair of the octogenarian Pierre, continues to dominate, with 640 million bottles sold worldwide; thousands of hectares of vineyards in every French region; and ownership, with Japanese powerhouse Suntory (see opposite page), of Châteaux Beychevelle and Beaumont and the

négociant Barrière Frères. Castel also has powerful alliances in China, notably through its tie-up with Changyu, which calls itself the world's 10th-largest wine producer and is the first Chinese wine to get a UK listing with Berry Bros & Rudd (see p25). With Castel has built six huge châteaux in China.

## 15 Dan Jago (14)

Group wine director, Tesco, 53

WHILE THE FALLOUT from the £1.2bn write-off of its US chain Fresh & Easy is yet to permeate down, Tesco is still the world's second- or third- largest retailer, depending on whether you measure revenue or profits. It is by far the UK's largest wine retailer, selling everything from £4 bottom-shelfers to, with the introduction of Bordeaux *en primeur*, £1,000-a-bottle Château Lafite (though in such tiny quantities it could be seen as window-dressing). Tesco has more than 3,000 UK stores and sells in 13 countries, from China to the Czech Republic. In 2012 Jago became group wine director, overseeing the entire global wine division. Many producers resent the supermarket's power but when it comes to Jago, there are few people who can lay greater claim to influencing the style of wine in your glass.

## 14 Bernard Arnault (11)

Chairman and CEO, Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, 64

FORBES MAGAZINE HAS downgraded Arnault, with a personal fortune of US\$29bn, from the lofty heights of world's fourth richest man to 10th. LVMH, Arnault's luxury goods empire, owns an array of designer perfumes, handbags and watches, but also one of the world's great stables of fine wines: Veuve Clicquot, Moët & Chandon, Krug, Ruinart, Cloudy Bay, Cheval Blanc, Cape Mentelle, Château d'Yquem, the tiny Numanthia and others. Arnault is sure-footed, employing such memorable individuals as Dom Perignon's Richard Geoffroy, Krug's Maggie Henriquez or ex-Cos d'Estournel boss Jean-Guillaume Prats at the division which runs Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle. *Forbes'* description of Arnault as 'the world's most influential tastemaker' would seem justified.

## 13 Steven Spurrier (13)

Consultant editor, Decanter, 71

WHENEVER THE POWER List is mentioned, Spurrier asks to be demoted. But he continues to wield huge influence, and refuses to rest on the laurels he earned as the instigator of the 1976 Paris Tasting. A constant traveller, he gave up his chairmanship of the Japan Wine Challenge only to become co-chair of the Decanter Asia Wine Awards (he has chaired the London-based Decanter World Wine Awards since the beginning). He's also chair of the Wine Society of India's wine selection committee, and consults for Singapore Airlines. His knowledge of Bordeaux is unrivalled, but he's an indefatigable champion of emerging wine regions. Spurrier is greatly respected: when he has anything to say, the wine world – from sommeliers to the press to winemakers and proprietors – sits up and listens.

## Ones to watch

**Antonio Galloni** Former Parker heir at *The Wine Advocate*, left under difficult circumstances (see p30) now running his own website. Will he succeed in breaking out of TWA's shadow?

**Daniel Johnnes** Wine director for restaurateur Daniel Boulud's empire, organiser of the Burgundy jamboree La Paulée de New York and a major force on the US East Coast wine scene.

**Edouard Moueix** Sales director at Ets J-P Moueix, a constant presence on the international circuit, and a natural to step into his father Christian's shoes as

head of one of the Right Bank's most prestigious operations.

**Patricio Tapia** Prolific Chilean journalist, author of *Descorchados*, the annual Chilean wine guide among many others, and an energetic ambassador for Argentina, Chile and Spain.

**Alejandro Vigil** Pioneering chief winemaker at Mendoza's Bodega Catena Zapata, restlessly exploring Argentina's most extreme winemaking regions. He is one of the handful of South America's internationally renowned winemakers.



## 12 Yang Wenhua (-)

Managing director, C&D Wines, 43

C&D WINES IS the beverage arm of the huge C&D conglomerate, one of the top 100 Chinese listed companies. Yang started C&D Wines in 1998, transforming it from a grain spirit distributor into China's biggest wine importer. Organised into 44 business divisions covering every Chinese province, it brings in 12 million bottles a year. In 2009 C&D secured agencies from 13 Bordeaux cru classés, cementing these in 2010 with listings of the five first growths. It may dominate Chinese imports, but there rocky times loom as the market softens and China's government clamps down on the lucrative gifting market. C&D Wines saw profits rise 4.6% in the first quarter of 2013, but growth is slowing: the company lost CNY150m (US\$24.2m) in the first quarter of 2013. But as the government cracks down on corruption and fakes, it expects more high-end foreign producers to enter the Chinese market; when they do, C&D will be there to help.

## 11 John D Watkins (-)

CEO, ASC Fine Wines (age withheld)

THE CHINESE FINE wine scene has changed since Suntory-owned ASC, under then-CEO Don St Pierre Jr, made no7 in the 2011 Power List. In 2012, St Pierre gave the reins to John D Watkins, president and CEO of an avionics company, chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China – and ASC's first home delivery customer. Watkins has taken over a company that has seen its once-dominant market share nibbled at by C&D Wine (see above), plus the government's crackdown on gifting spells trouble for importers of fine wine. However, ASC is still the biggest of the foreign-owned importers. It has over 1,200 staff and warehouses across China. It represents DBR Lafite, Beringer, Kendall-Jackson, Wolf Blass and Penfolds, Gaja, Ruffino, Banfi, Louis Jadot, Guigal and many other prestige brands, generating revenues of US\$200m. ASC's next move is to find a domestic partner to improve distribution and expand the business. ➤



## 10 Jancis Robinson MW OBE (10)

**Author, journalist, broadcaster and consultant, 63**

ROBINSON IS EXTRAORDINARILY energetic: wherever there is an unusual or unique tasting – a Hill of Grace vertical here, a flight of Moroccan wines there – Robinson is on hand with a trenchant opinion and a list of recommendations. In the 2011 Power List we described her as, for many, ‘the most respected wine critic and journalist in the world’, and that opinion has to stand. In the past year she has added the encyclopaedic *Wine Grapes* to her list of more than 20 published books, her *Financial Times* column brings gravitas, her website has paid-up subscribers in 100 countries, she has 178,000 Twitter followers, and scarcely a month passes without recognition from one august body or another – not to mention the OBE. Most significantly, the world wine landscape is shifting. The *Wine Advocate*’s reputation has come under scrutiny, and Robert Parker Jr’s star is on the wane. While Robinson is a long way from picking up that mantle (for all her renown, she doesn’t influence sales in the same way that Parker does), she remains one of the few critics with true international clout.



## 9 Robert Parker Jr (3)

**Chairman and CEO, The Wine Advocate, 65**

NO NARRATIVE HAS been more gripping than the loosening of *The Wine Advocate*’s hold during the past year. While Parker remains a towering figure (whoever tastes for TWA, the scores are still ‘Parker points’) he is now a stateless emperor, having sold a majority share in the publication for a reported US\$15m, to a group of Asian businessmen led by Soo Hoo Khoo Peng, former MD of Singaporean retailer Hermitage Wines. It is Soo Hoo’s connections to retail (his wife still has shares in Hermitage) that prompted niggles about TWA’s much-vaunted independence. Then TWA got involved in a dispute with Antonio Galloni, Parker’s ex-dauphin, suing him for fraud, defamation and breach of contract, before settling out of court. Parker-watchers tot up the people he has fallen out with, from tit-for-tat lawsuits with his French translator Hanna Agostini, to the ‘tasting-for-cash’ scandal involving former MW Pancho Campo and Jay Miller in Spain, in which there was found to be ‘an appearance of impropriety’ on TWA’s part. It is unclear how much Parker himself is tainted by all this: he is bigger than the publication, but is inextricably linked. He is set to take on the California beat once again – but as styles evolve there, and more winemakers craft leaner, fresher wines, will he remain relevant?



he’s no hermit: he is active in California where his partnership with Larry Hyde in Carneros, Hyde de Villaine, is expanding from being a Chardonnay project to encompass Pinot Noir. Decanter’s Man of the Year in 2010 insists he has no control over the extraordinary prices his wines achieve – prices which, as Chinese collectors look beyond Bordeaux, may rise, as recent auctions have shown.

## 7 Michel Rolland (18)

**International consultant, 65**


THERE ARE TWO types of consultant: those behind the label and those in front. Michel Rolland is emphatically in the latter camp. And if you thought his influence was beginning to wane, consider the outpouring of dismay when it was announced in March that Château Figeac, bastion of old-fashioned elegance, had engaged him as consultant. Bordeaux-based Rolland, who has 100-plus consultancies in countries as diverse as China (where he works for COFCO, see p34), India and Armenia, was unrepentant. His job is to secure promotion for Figeac from premier grand cru classé B to the coveted A tier, he said. The clichéd view is that he stamps his ‘international’ style on every wine he makes, but Rolland denies this, challenging detractors to find points of similarity in wines as diverse as Mendoza’s Clos de los Siete and Château Smith Haut Lafitte in Bordeaux’s Graves. But if there is an international style of fruit-forward, inoffensively tannic, agreeably oaked, ‘hand-crafted’ wine, Rolland would have to step forward as a prime influence. ➤

## 8 Aubert de Villaine (30)

**Co-owner/co-director, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, 73**


BURGUNDY IS IN the ascendant. As co-owner of the most renowned Burgundy estate in the world, Aubert de Villaine is a major influence over the revival of the region in the global market, not least in China. De Villaine does not court publicity but






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## 6 Robert Sands (5)

**Chairman, Constellation Brands, 55**

THE BYZANTINE COMPLEXITY of Constellation – owner of Robert Mondavi Winery and Ravenswood among others – makes assessment difficult. But as of April 2013, Wall Street was optimistic about what was once the world's largest wine company, now second after Gallo (see p28). Sales have risen by 11% to \$696m, and the share price has risen by almost 40% since January. Constellation has a prized portfolio – plus 20% of Accolade, the legacy of the sell-off of its Australian and South African brands, Hardys, Kumala and the rest. It farms 5,000ha of vines and, it revealed last year, has 50 new brands on the launchpad, and is spending more than US\$10m (20% of its marketing budget) on digital marketing. Perhaps the biggest boost to its fortunes is the purchase of the Mexican Modelo beer portfolio, makers of Corona, for almost US\$5bn. This, Sands said, is 'the most transformational in the history of the company', making Constellation America's third-largest brewer, with concomitant extra cash flow of US\$1bn. Once the dust has settled, Sands has promised he will be 'in the takeover market'. Expect interesting developments in the wine division.

## 5 Mel Dick (4)

**Senior vice-president, Southern Wine & Spirits of America; vice-president of wine division, 77**

ANY WINE THAT Southern Wine & Spirits decides to distribute will end up the length and breadth of the US. With revenue of US\$9bn and 11,600 staff, representing 1,600 wine, spirits, beer and beverage suppliers, and marketing and distributing over 5,000 brands, the company has massive influence over which wines Americans have in their glasses. By virtue of its size and clout, and experience in the market, it can cut through the bureaucracy of inter-state shipping regulations. To date, Southern operates in 35 national markets, and is constantly seeking out distribution deals in states where selling is hampered by import laws. Over this vast market landscape presides Mel Dick, who joined Southern in 1969. A bulldog spirit must be useful: Southern faces hostility from vested interests keen to preserve the three-tier system and keep out national distribution chains. This year the company found itself obliged to distribute hundreds of thousands of dollars in lobbying fees among legislators and politicians running for office.

## 4 Annette Alvarez Peters (6)

**Assistant general merchandise manager for wine, spirits and beer, Costco, 51**

YOU MIGHT BE suspicious of a company whose 68 million-strong membership is bigger than the UK population, but American wine lovers love Costco. It's the fifth-largest US retailer, and the largest beverage retailer. It sells alcohol in 433 stores in the US and Puerto Rico, and a further 165 worldwide; 20 new stores were opened in 2012. Wine sales reached US\$1.4bn in 2012, of which 70% were domestic. Costco's website last year started selling



Photograph: Clay McAcian/claypix.com



in the UK with 131 wines and spirits in its range, including classed-growth Bordeaux and Cristal, Krug and Dom Pérignon Champagne. Wine selections are quirky – it will sell interesting and scarce parcels from just about anywhere, often 10%–15% cheaper than other retailers. Its house brand, the Kirkland range, is well-received. Costco even has its own independent fansite, the Costco Wine Blog, focused on ferreting out the best bargains. Over all this presides Annette Alvarez Peters, usually referred to as the most powerful wine buyer in America. She was pilloried last year for claiming 'wine is simply a product, no different from toilet paper', but simply shrugged a shoulder and got on with the job of selling a \$1.5bn worth of interesting wine.

## 3 Eric de Rothschild (2)

**President, Domaines Barons de Rothschild (Lafite), 72**

ROTHSCHILD HAS RUN Domaines Barons de Rothschild for nearly 40 years, presiding over not only its Bordeaux interests but also d'Aussières in the Languedoc, Viña Los Vascos in Chile, Caro in Argentina with Nicolas Catena, and DBR's property in Shandong, China. He was no2 in the 2011 Power List, but then DBR and Lafite were sitting on top of a boom. Two superb Bordeaux vintages and a jubilant Chinese market had sent Lafite's prices rocketing. At a Sotheby's Hong Kong sale in late 2010, the unbottled 2009 fetched £43,120 a case. In early 2011, away from the auctions, cases of Lafite were changing hands for a still-surreal £14,500. What a



difference two years makes. The price of Lafite 2009 has halved to £7,500, while the Chinese market for fine Bordeaux has softened. Experienced Bordeaux-watchers now suggest DBR was riding a wave the power of which no one could have foreseen. But to say DBR, or Lafite, is in the doldrums would be absurd. Bordeaux's premiers crus still wield huge influence over prices in Asia, and Lafite is the flag-bearer. Not only in price: Lafite and its peers set examples followed throughout Bordeaux, from the basics of vineyard management to the adoption of new cellar technology. As one merchant put it, 'Depending on how it sets its price, Lafite can still make or break a vintage.' Rothschild, along with his managing director Christophe Salin and technical director Charles Chevalier, is still very much in control.

## 2 Wu Rei (8)

**Chairman/general manager COFCO Wines & Spirits, 49**  
STATE-OWNED CHINA NATIONAL Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs Corp (COFCO) is China's largest food trader and manufacturer. Its wine division owns Great Wall, one of the top three domestic wine brands in a country where nearly 90% of wine drunk is still domestically produced. Regarding control of its distribution channels as paramount, COFCO became one of the first in China to buy a Bordeaux property, Château Viaud in Pomerol, also securing distribution rights for its sister properties (such as Château d'Arsac) belonging to Viaud's former owner Philippe Raoux. It owns Chilean winery Bisquit, and in April COFCO's China Foods division revealed it had earmarked \$20m to buy properties in the US and Australia. COFCO has the stamp of an operation that reads the market and acts decisively. Aiming to capitalise on the 20% year-on-year growth in imported wines (China is the third-largest market for French wines, after the UK and US), it is said to be planning to bottle Australian, Chilean and French wine under the Great Wall label. Cannily, it has also employed consultant Michel Rolland (see p30). Rolland understands international wine styles, and millions of Chinese wine drinkers are now discovering, via COFCO, what that style is.



## 1 Pierre Pringuet (1)

**CEO, Pernod Ricard, 63**

OF THE MILLIONS of people who buy such wines as Campo Viejo and Jacob's Creek, few will know that they are owned by Pernod Ricard. But it is these brands that have helped create a wine-drinking market: Jacob's Creek introduced millions of newcomers to wine. The French-based conglomerate employs more than 18,000, and reported sales of €6.65m to the end of March this year. But it is in the breadth and prestige of its brands that it commands most attention. From the wines (Perrier-Jouët and Mumm Champagnes, Jacob's Creek, Brancott Estate, Campo Viejo and Graffigna) to the spirits (Absolut Vodka, Beefeater gin, Ballantine's, Chivas Regal), its reach is both wide and deep, in terms of still and sparkling wines, Old and New World, high-end and mass market. Campo Viejo, for example, sells 1.5 million cases from the basic Crianza to the icon Dominio. Jacob's Creek pulls off the same trick, flooding the world with its entry-level bottles, and winning awards at the top end for its Steingarten and St Hugo wines, while Brancott has just released the first of its limited-edition Sauvignon Blancs under its Icon Project. In financial terms there are wobbles; like every other drinks company, it has ridden the wave of Chinese demand, and the latest figures showed a 2% fall in China. But new markets beckon: they are exploiting demand for lower-alcohol wines with the 9% Brancott Estate Flight, and new custom in Japan with Jacob's Creek Kotobuki Wines, designed for sushi. **D**

