

GOURMET TRAVELLER

THE INDEPENDENT DRINKS JOURNAL

WINE

50 Top Wine Experiences

Champagne's
Grandes Marques
& Growers

TASTINGS

100 NEW RELEASE WINES
AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING
GRÜNER VELTLINER

TOURING TASMANIA – CATALAN FEAST – NZ'S BEST WINEMAKERS

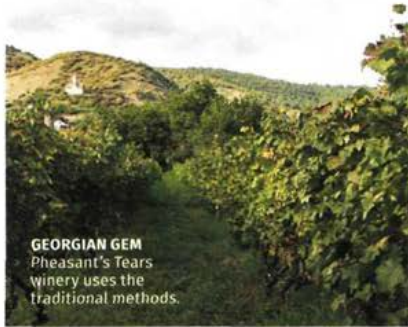
TRAVEL



50 TOP WINE EXPERIENCES

Our band of wine experts share their favourite regions, cellar doors, watering holes and the most rewarding vinous exploits the world has to offer. Here they are in no particular order.

TRAVEL



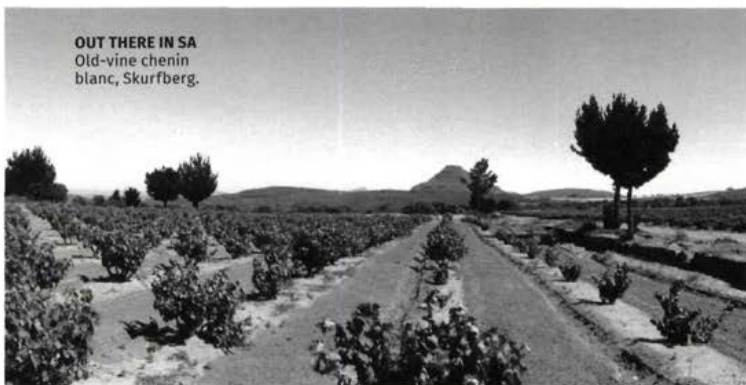
GEORGIAN GEM
Pheasant's Tears winery uses the traditional methods.



4 Georgian Tours

"Our speciality is custom-made tours with a focus on authentic, artisanal food and wine," says John Wurdeman, artist and co-owner of **Pheasant's Tears** winery plus restaurants in Georgia's capital, Tbilisi. His **Living Roots** bespoke tour company has gastronomy at its heart while delving into Georgia's culture and history. Some say the soul of Georgia is its 8,000-year-old wine culture; tours visit winemakers of local varieties such as chinuri and mtsvane made in qvevri, large buried earthenware vessels – unique winemaking listed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Aside from khachapuri at street stalls and excellent restaurants, Living Roots offers the unique experience of dining with families visiting cheesemakers, foragers and more. JANE FAULKNER

► **TIP: Ensure Pheasant's Tears restaurant in Sighnaghi is on the tour itinerary.**
travellingroots.com

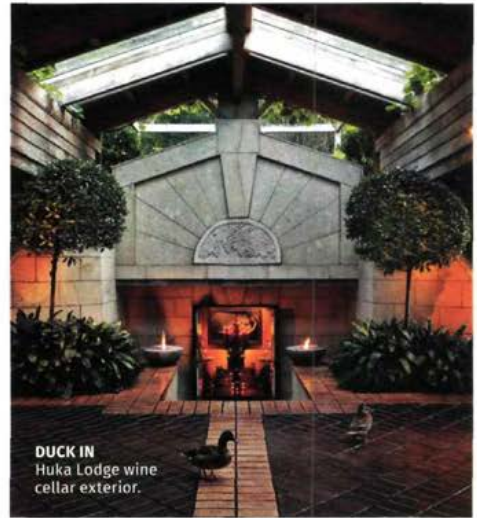


OUT THERE IN SA
Old-vine chenin blanc, Skurfberg.

6 Skurfberg, South Africa

Skurfberg is a windswept west-coast mountain between Clanwilliam and the Atlantic, where unirrigated old vines, farmed mostly by **Henk Laing**, **Joshua Visser** and **Basie van Lill**, are producing some of South Africa's most exciting wines, especially from chenin blanc. **Eben Sadie** was first to draw attention to Skurfberg's magic red sand and clay soils with his Skurfberg and (semillon) Kokerboom bottlings. TIM ATKIN MW

► **TIP: Other local stars include Ginny Povall (Botanica The Mary Delaney Collection), Chris Alheit (Magnetic North) and Anthonij Rupert (Cape of Good Hope Van Lill & Visser).**
clanwilliam.info



DUCK IN
Huka Lodge wine cellar exterior.

5 Huka Lodge

On the Waikato River in Taupo (North Island, New Zealand), **Huka Lodge** has been enjoyed by the most discerning guests, including HM Queen Elizabeth. The location's beauty is reason enough to visit. Founded as a fishing lodge in the 1920s, Huka was transformed in 1984 into 25 luxury suites plus the Owner's Cottage and Alan Pye Cottage, amid seven exquisite hectares of gardens overlooking the turquoise-blue river.

Recreation close by includes fishing, golf, hunting, trekking and helicopter tours. Wine lovers visit for the cellar of exceptional NZ wines (and Burgundy); wine dinners feature top chefs and winemakers.

When *GT WINE* visited, **Analiese Gregory** of Hobart's acclaimed Franklin restaurant teamed up with **Jorge Nunes** from Symington Family Wines to present a dinner featuring Douro Valley wines. JUDY SARRIS

► **TIP: Choose from twenty-plus secluded dining venues, from the wine cellar to an outdoor spot overlooking the river, for a private dining experience. Look out for the next Big Red dinner, in 2019.**

hukalodge.co.nz

7 Little Wine Shop in Lyon

The tip came from winemaker Max Graillet in Crozes-Hermitage: "If you are in Lyon you must visit **Antic Wine** – Jojo is the craziest wine buyer ever!"

I was, so I did, and he's right: located on a narrow street in the old city, this place holds one of the most fantastic wine treasure troves in the world.

Surrounded by shelves full of sought-after, cutting-edge (but well-priced) bottles, Jojo – owner **Georges Dos Santos** – will welcome you with a grin, likely pour you a taste of something uncommonly delicious and invite you to negotiate the steep steps down to the cellar, where his own smallgoods hang above really special, old, rare and expensive bottles. The next time you're in Lyon, take my advice and head straight to Antic Wine. MAX ALLEN

► **TIP: Ask about Jojo's saucisson.**

facebook.com/AnticWine