

BODEGA CHACRA

PATAGONIA ~ RIO NEGRO

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Although Río Negro contains the oldest vines in Patagonia, many of its vineyards have languished over the years due to lack of interest and investment. Enter Piero Incisa della Rocchetta of Tuscan royalty and the renowned Sassicaia. On a trip to Argentina, Incisa della Rocchetta discovered a plot of unappreciated, own-rooted Pinot Noir vines up for grabs in the tiny village of Mainque. His cousin, Noemi Cinzano, owner of Tuscany's Argiano winery, had already made a splash with her penetrating, old-vine Malbecs from adjacent vineyards. After spending a summer at Bodega Noemía, Incisa della Rocchetta felt the tug of Patagonia—and Pinot Noir—and Bodega Chacra was launched in 2004. After enlisting Noemía's winemaker, Hans Vinding-Diers (also the winemaker at Argiano), Incisa della Rocchetta began crafting Patagonia's—and perhaps South America's—most intriguing Pinots.

Those gnarled, head-trained old vines produce profound wines with a unique texture that is immensely appealing, as well as a subtle strength that Incisa della Rocchetta describes as *la force tranquile*. The vines range from 55 to 78 years old and have been biodynamically farmed since Bodega Chacra took over. Asked about the difficulty of working with this notoriously unpredictable grape, Incisa della Rocchetta confesses, “You have to be a masochist to make Pinot Noir.”

Excerpt from “Pushing for Pinot in Patagonia”
by Natalie Guinovart, CWE, DWS