

A photograph of Eduardo Chadwick, a man with grey hair, wearing a brown suit jacket, a white shirt, and a red patterned tie. He is sitting in a large, dark brown leather armchair, smiling slightly. Behind him is a large wooden bookshelf filled with books. To his left, a small round wooden table holds a glass of red wine, an open book, and a small vase with pink flowers. A gold desk lamp is visible on the left side of the frame.

Decanter Man of the Year 2018

Eduardo Chadwick

His pioneering vision and sheer determination have helped to propel Chilean fine wine onto a global stage. Peter Richards MW meets the widely respected winemaker, family man and adventurer who describes himself as 'a survivor' >

IT WAS THE final ascent. The peak of Ojos del Salado, the highest active volcano in the world, was within touching distance. But then disaster struck: Eduardo Chadwick, precarious on the ladder, suddenly got cramp. ‘My biggest worry,’ he recounts, smiling broadly, ‘was that the bottle of Seña I had with me to unveil at the summit was in my breast pocket – so if I fell, there was a very real chance it would be driven through my heart.’

The story reveals much about Chadwick. There’s the driven, ambitious, relentless, single-minded, talented mountaineer in him. Also the savvy marketer and businessman: teller of stories, creator of positive opportunities, irrepressible. Finally, there’s the man: courteous, with a ready smile, a healthy sense of humour and humanity, aware of his frailties yet resolute not to let them limit or define him. ‘It’s a question of persistence,’ he says, softly. ‘I’m a survivor.’

Eduardo Chadwick is a man on a mission. His self-appointed task? To prove that Chile produces fine wines to rival the best in the world – and has the potential for more to come. Nowhere was this captured better than at what has become known as the Berlin Tasting of 2004, when Chadwick (‘scared to death’) pitted his top Cabernets against the global elite (Lafite, Latour, Margaux, Solaia) in

a blind tasting with trade professionals chaired by Steven Spurrier, who had himself upset the established wine world order at his famous Judgement of Paris tasting in 1976, when Californian wines usurped French classics.

World class

Famously, in Berlin Chadwick’s wines prevailed, rated in the two top spots. He went on to repeat the exercise 21 times, reaching 1,400 wine professionals in 17 countries, and achieving an admirable consistency of results for his wines. This was followed by a series of 10 further blind tastings, dubbed the ‘Seña verticals’, focusing on ageing potential by assessing past rather than current vintages. The results delivered a similarly consistent vindication of Chadwick’s message, with a Seña wine ranked top on every occasion.

‘We never expected these results, nor their consistency,’ admits Chadwick. ‘The Berlin Tasting was born of frustration that Chile wasn’t getting the critical attention or ratings it deserved. It was about justice. But we gained confidence from this and saw it finally converting into critical recognition, for us and for Chile.’

This is a crucial point. The Berlin and Seña tastings did not just raise the profile of Chadwick’s own wines (his main brand is >

Eduardo Chadwick at a glance

Born March 1959

Education 1976–1981, Universidad Católica (industrial engineering)

Family Married to María Eugenia Braun. Four daughters: María Eugenia, Magdalena, María José, Alejandra

Main brands

Errázuriz, Seña, Viñedo Chadwick, Don Maximiano, Kai, La Cumbre, Las Pizarras, Caliterra, Arboleda

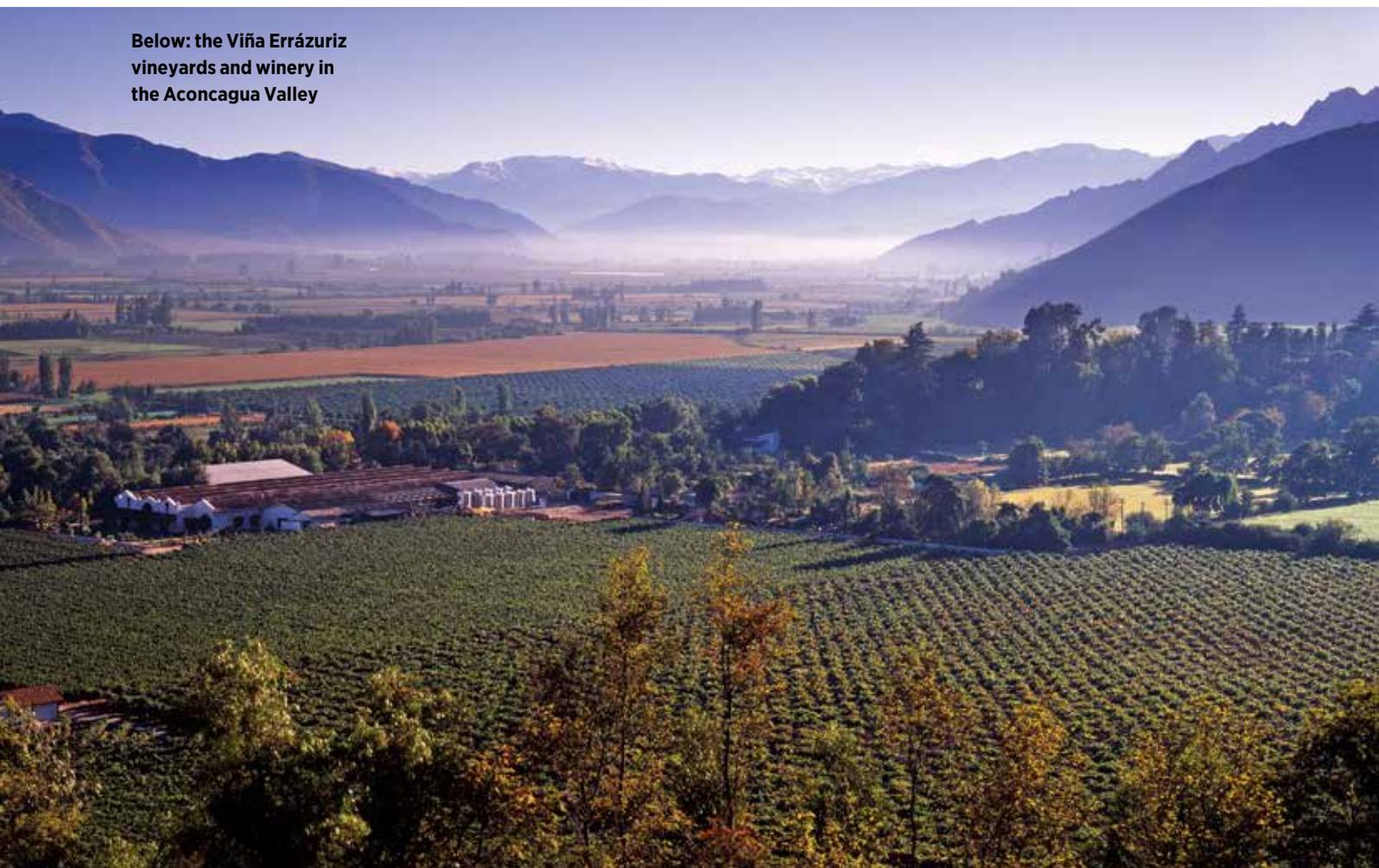
Hobbies

Tennis, swimming, mountain climbing

Likes to say ‘Finesse and elegance’

Photographs: Thomas Skovsø (previous page); R & K Muschenetz/Cephas

Below: the Viña Errázuriz vineyards and winery in the Aconcagua Valley



Decanter Hall of Fame: past recipients

- 2017 Steven Spurrier, England
- 2016 Denis Dubourdieu, France
- 2015 Alvaro Palacios, Spain
- 2014 Jean-Pierre & François Perrin, Rhône
- 2013 Gerard Basset OBE MW MS, England
- 2012 Paul Symington, Portugal
- 2011 Giacomo Tachis, Italy
- 2010 Aubert de Villaine, Burgundy
- 2009 Nicolás Catena, Argentina
- 2008 Christian Moueix, Bordeaux
- 2007 Anthony Barton, Bordeaux
- 2006 Marcel Guigal, Rhône
- 2005 Ernst Loosen, Mosel
- 2004 Brian Croser, Adelaide Hills
- 2003 Jean-Michel Cazes, Bordeaux
- 2002 Miguel Torres, Penedès
- 2001 Jean-Claude Rouzaud, Champagne
- 2000 Paul Draper, California
- 1999 Jancis Robinson OBE MW, London
- 1998 Angelo Gaja, Piedmont
- 1997 Len Evans OBE AO, Australia
- 1996 Georg Riedel, Austria
- 1995 Hugh Johnson OBE, London
- 1994 May-Eliane de Lencquesaing, Bordeaux
- 1993 Michael Broadbent MW, London
- 1992 André Tchelistcheff, California
- 1991 José Ignacio Domecq, Jerez
- 1990 Professor Emile Peynaud, Bordeaux
- 1989 Robert Mondavi, California
- 1988 Max Schubert, Australia
- 1987 Alexis Lichine, Bordeaux
- 1986 Marchese Piero Antinori, Tuscany
- 1985 Laura & Corinne Mentzelopoulos, Bordeaux
- 1984 Serge Hochar, Lebanon



‘The Berlin Tasting was born of frustration that Chile wasn’t getting the critical attention or ratings it deserved’

Errazuriz but Seña, Viñedo Chadwick and Don Maximiano are his top Cabernets). They have also, by extension, provided validation for Chile as a whole. When I asked Chadwick what this *Decanter* award meant to him, he said: ‘More than for us, this award is for Chile. It’s recognition that Chile has entered the realms of fine wine. Previous recipients – Mondavi, Antinori, Torres – have helped prove their countries are part of this world-class family of wine terroirs. That’s what I have been trying to do.’ >

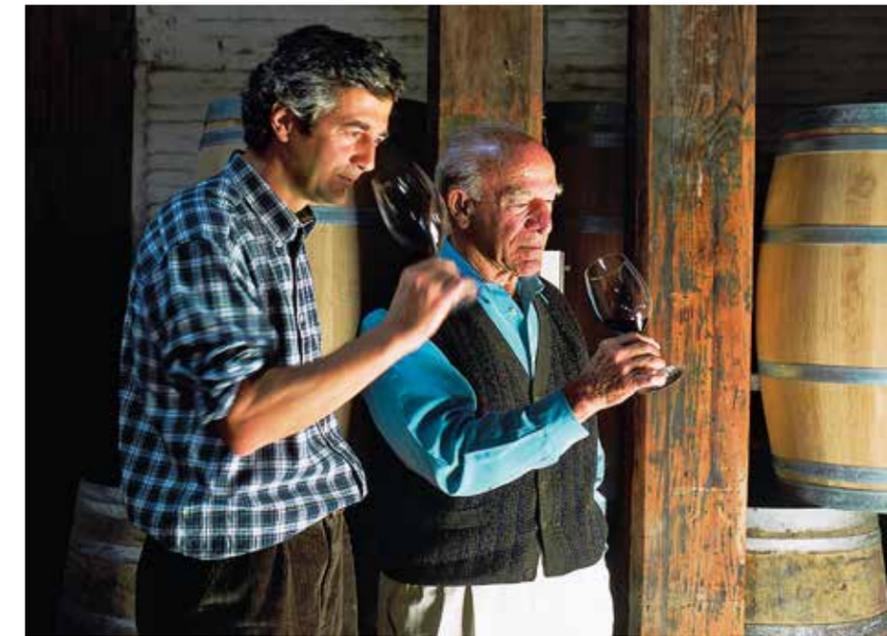
Above: the Berlin Tasting of 2004 with Eduardo Chadwick (centre) and Steven Spurrier (right)

Change of direction

It could have played out very differently. Chadwick initially trained as an engineer and, after university, was working in Saudi Arabia – the world of wine a distant reality. But the critical juncture in Chadwick’s life came in 1983 when his father Alfonso, a talented polo player whose business interests included wine-growing, seized an opportunity to buy back what had once been the family winery, Viña Errázuriz. (The family had lost control of the estate in the mid-20th century and the country’s attempts at land reform had left it effectively ruined.)

On accepting his father’s invitation to revive Viña Errázuriz, Chadwick set about re-establishing what had once been a proud brand begun by his ancestor Maximiano Errázuriz in 1870. ‘I’d done odd jobs in my father’s vineyards,’ he remembers, ‘so I had a little knowledge, but not much. At that time, there was no culture of fine wine in Chile; it was all very basic.’ What was needed was investment and ambition – both personal and financial. Aided by the family’s wider business interests in malting, brewing, soft drinks and distribution – responsibilities he continues juggling to this day – Chadwick took to the task with gusto.

As well as renewing winemaking equipment and expanding the vineyards, Chadwick took time to visit Bordeaux and Burgundy, meeting the likes of Emile Peynaud, Denis Dubourdieu and Paul Pontallier along the way. On return, he began laying the foundations necessary for fine wine at Errázuriz: re-launching Don Maximiano as ‘an icon red for the modern era’, planting his father’s polo field in Puente Alto to become Viñedo Chadwick, and establishing



Above: Eduardo Chadwick and Robert Mondavi, who collaborated on the Seña joint venture

Hatch Mansfield agencies in the UK (see *timeline, below*).

Positive influence

A fateful moment in Chadwick’s career came in 1991 when he volunteered to chauffeur Robert and Margrit Mondavi, fresh from a fishing holiday in the south, around Chilean wine country. ‘At the time, the Mondavi operation was twice the size of the entire Chilean wine industry and our average export price was US\$10-\$12 per case,’ recalls Chadwick. ‘At the end of the trip, Bob said, “There’s great >

‘We needed to raise the reputation of Chile and put our wine on the map as a luxury item’

Timeline of major achievement

- 1870**
Maximiano Errázuriz founds his eponymous winery in Aconcagua
- 1883**
Family takes back control of Viña Errázuriz; Eduardo Chadwick joins
- 1985**
Travels to Bordeaux and Burgundy
- 1987**
Marries María Eugenia
- 1991**
Meets Robert Mondavi in Chile
- 1992**
Plants his father’s polo field in Puente Alto to form Viñedo Chadwick
- 1994**
UK agency Hatch Mansfield acquired by Viña Errázuriz, Louis Jadot and Villa Maria
- 1995**
Joint venture with Robert Mondavi to create Seña
- 1998**
New dedicated vineyard for Seña planted in Ocoa
- 1999**
Viña Errázuriz becomes Principal Supporter of Institute of Masters of Wine
- 2002**
Summits Mount Aconcagua, the highest peak outside Asia, brandishing a bottle of Don Maximiano Founder’s Reserve >

‘More than for us, this award is for Chile. It’s recognition that Chile has entered the realms of fine wine’

terroir and potential in Chile.” He was in his 80s, already an iconic figure, I was early-30s. We did talk about doing something together, but it seemed a distant dream.’

Nonetheless, the dream became reality in 1995 when Errázuriz and Mondavi created a ground-breaking joint venture encompassing the Caliterra brand and creating a new icon wine: Seña. Chadwick was profoundly aware of how Mondavi’s own joint venture with Baron Philippe de Rothschild, Opus One, had raised the profile of California’s Napa Valley – and hoped his own association would do the same for Chile, whose fine-wine credentials were proving harder to assert than he’d envisaged. In 1998, a dedicated vineyard for Seña was developed in Ocoa, Aconcagua, which was subsequently converted to biodynamic cultivation under the late Alan York’s guidance from 2005.

Ambitious plans

Although Mondavi’s involvement came to an end in 2004 following Bob Mondavi’s death and the firm’s takeover by Constellation, Chadwick sees the positives. ‘I see Bob as a mentor: he opened my eyes to how to do things. We were too humble and closed in Chile: we needed to get out into the world, to raise the reputation of our country and put our wine on the map as a luxury item.’ ➤

Photograph: Thomas Skovsen



Above: Eduardo Chadwick has helped to establish Chile’s reputation as a producer of fine wines

Timeline of major achievement (continued)



Getting out into the world has been Chadwick's mission since. And yet this is not to gloss over significant investment and achievements at home. Viña Errázuriz has been at the forefront of many positive trends in Chile, such as the development of Syrah and Sangiovese, hillside plantings, drip irrigation, biodynamics and wild ferments. Talented chief winemaker Francisco Baettig, a renowned Francophile, has long upheld the value of travel and wide tasting to improve winemaking. Most recently, the development of the Aconcagua Costa vineyard on the basis of detailed terroir analysis has given rise to two of Chile's most exciting, elegant and nuanced wines of the modern era: Las Pizarras Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

And there have been challenges. Chadwick has felt many personal losses, including that of his father, brother and two infant children. Professional too: Chadwick relates how finding a foothold among the Bordeaux négociants proved challenging at a time when non-Bordeaux wines were not particularly



welcome. Just one (CVBG, run by Mathieu Chadronnier) took a risk. These days, sales are brisk across 15 négociants.

As for regrets, Chadwick is frank. On a personal note, he says: 'I regret taking life too seriously at times, not enjoying the journey and time with my family as much as I might have.' To this, he adds not becoming a Master of Wine (Chadwick came close to becoming Chile's first MW while living in the UK but had to abandon the course to return home). On a professional note: 'I regret that as a nation we didn't focus on fine wines earlier, and that

Above: Las Pizarras Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are 'two of Chile's most exciting wines of the modern era'

we're not more united. Bob [Mondavi] never kept secrets, always shared his knowledge. This is still work in progress.'

For Chadwick, despite the increasingly prominent accolades, the mission is far from accomplished. 'There's lots of work to do: more miles, more education. We're not there yet – I was in China recently and no one in the room had visited Chile. It's still early days: this is just the beginning.' It's telling he mentions China, as Asia is central to Chadwick's plan of developing Chile's fine wine future.

The final words go to Patrick McGrath MW, the MD of Hatch Mansfield and fellow mountaineer. 'At the top of the mountain, Eduardo just keeps going, never losing his sense of humour. He has helped change the perception and future of Chile. Those who will really see the results of his hard work are his daughters – and his country.' **D**

Peter Richards MW is an award-winning writer, author, consultant and broadcaster on wine, and the DWWA Regional Chair for Chile

Tributes to Eduardo Chadwick



'In 2003 and 2004 Eduardo was living in Oxford, studying to become a

Master of Wine, and his four daughters were with him, attending local schools. In January 2010 Sebastián Piñera, newly elected President of Chile, invited him to be the Chilean Ambassador to the United Kingdom. Eduardo declined this honour, stating that he did not wish to have his daughters move once more. He was already and continues to be the best ambassador his country's wines have ever had.'

Steven Spurrier, 2107 Decanter Man of the Year

'Too young, too charming and too good-looking are presumably the only three reasons for Eduardo

Chadwick's belated anointment as Decanter Man of the Year. On a serious note, this award is testament to Eduardo's innovative spirit and his tireless quest for quality, whether at the quintessence of Chile level of Seña, Don Maximiano and Viñedo Chadwick or in his unrivalled portfolio of more affordable, deliciously drinkable wines.'

Anthony Rose, wine writer and DWWA Regional Co-chair for Australia



'Over the years, my son Miguel and I have always been impressed by the will and capacity of Eduardo Chadwick to raise the quality and prestige of Chilean wine. In so doing, Eduardo has not only proved that Chilean wines can compete with the

wines of the Old World, but he has also inspired a whole generation of Chilean oenologists by making them conscious of the potential of Chile's great wine terroirs.'

Miguel A Torres, 2002 Decanter Man of the Year

'I first met Eduardo three decades ago, in the days when Chilean wine was hard to find outside South America and almost no one took Chile seriously as a source of real quality. Eduardo's blind Berlin Tastings (two of which I have been lucky to have participated in) had a radical impact on changing those impressions. But so too have his enthusiasm for Carmenère (almost unknown 30 years ago), biodynamic viticulture, regionality and effective super-premium brand-building.

Robert Joseph, publisher of www.thewinethinker.com



'I have known Eduardo Chadwick for more than 25 years and had the pleasure of

working with him to create Seña, one of the first wines of Chile to be recognised among the great wines of the world. Eduardo always impressed me with his passion, dedication and sophistication. His commitment to learning, producing and advocating the great wines of Chile has elevated the reality and awareness of Chilean wine, and led me to think of Eduardo as the Robert Mondavi of Chile. I applaud *Decanter* for their thoughtful selection, and congratulate my good friend Eduardo for being recognised as Decanter Man of the Year.'

Tim Mondavi, partner in Continuum Estate and co-creator of Seña



'Eduardo Chadwick's tireless and resolute crusade to champion his wines

and those of Chile on the international stage has been extremely successful. Through his brilliant work Eduardo has demonstrated that he is both a great visionary, a superb innovator and a fabulous ambassador for the Chilean wine industry; someone who has inspired many. More importantly he is a great man and a true gentleman. Bravo Mr Eduardo Chadwick!'

Gerard Basset OBE MW MS, 2013 Decanter Man of the Year

'Eduardo is a tireless ambassador of Chilean wine, championing its quality and leading by example: as the

pioneer of iconic wines that often beat the best of Bordeaux in blind tastings; in realising the potential of Aconcagua, which he single-handedly placed on the world wine map; by launching the most mineral Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs that may challenge Burgundy... The full list would fill this page. Eduardo is also a talented taster (he passed the practical component of the Master of Wine exam), an avid sportsman, a wonderful friend and true family man.

What makes him so deserving of being 2018 Decanter Man of the Year is that the admiration he has won for his achievements in wine are overshadowed by the love and high regard that his family and friends have for him.'

Jeannie Cho Lee MW is a DWWA judge and Decanter contributing editor for Asia

