

Bordeaux beware: New Jersey is set on stealing your bouquet

United States

Will Pavia Atco, New Jersey

In 2010, the state of New Jersey gave the world the full-bodied governor Chris Christie, a cheeky little Italian named Snooki and a new denim and leather-soaked album from Bruce Springsteen.

Less well known is that 2010 was also an excellent year for New Jersey cabernet sauvignon, merlot and petit verdot.

"The wine guys are getting very excited about this vintage," said Jack Tomasello, 52, a New Jersey farmer and vintner, holding a glass of his newly bottled 2010 Palmaris and explaining that the grace notes of olive came from the cabernet franc in the blend. "They know what's coming." Ten min-

A sign Jack Tomasello keeps in his office



utes up the road, in a winery modelled on a Tuscan villa, the food scientist and vintner Louis Caracciolo was even more bullish about his 2010 Europa I. "In a couple of years I will put this up against a Château Margaux and beat it," he said.

Until recently, these statements would have seemed the stuff of fantasy in a state better known for motorways, heavy industry and Tony Soprano. Yet soil tests, climate studies

and a series of blind tastings by French and American judges are establishing New Jersey as a wine region to rival Bordeaux.

When his fellow vintners first asked the US Government to designate south Jersey a wine-producing region akin to Napa Valley, Mr Tomasello was sceptical. But studies showed that the

area had a sandy soil similar to that of Bordeaux, an almost identical growing season and a very similar topography.

Italian immigrants to New Jersey, including Mr Caracciolo's grandfather, had made their own wine but the industry was brought to its knees in the 1920s by Prohibition. Mr Caracciolo did his best to keep up the tradition: at college he was arrested for making wine in his dormitory room.

Planting his vines in 1976, he was cheered by the so-called "Judgment of Paris", a blind-taste test in which a Californian wine beat a Château Mouton-Rothschild. French wine critics now visit Mr Caracciolo. "Michel Rolland, one of the most famous wine writers in the world, was here," he said. "He tasted my cabernet sauvignon. He said, 'Either this is a miracle or a fraud'."

Though Mr Caracciolo frets over the image of New Jersey, he was reassured by another French oenophile. "He said, 'Louis, no problem. They have been making shit wine in New Jersey for 350 years; in Provence, it was a thousand. You change it one taste at a time.'"



Bursting the bubble (carefully)

Katey Walter, an ecologist at the University of Alaska, aided by a student with a match, releases methane gas trapped beneath the frozen Goldstream

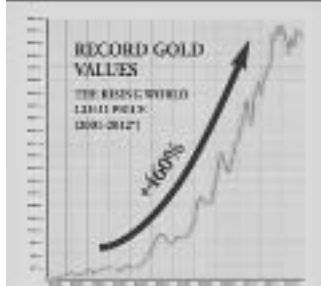
Lake in Canada. She is researching how much methane the ice holds and its impact on the atmosphere. "My job's the worst, because usually you catch on fire," she said.

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Would-be hero's fake attack fails to impress

Will Pavia New York

In the cause of impressing a woman, few men have gone as far as Jeffery Siegel, 26, who apparently arranged for a man to leap out at him and his female friend armed with a large knife as if intending to rape her.

The "victim", Brianne Coats, said Mr Siegel, from Arkansas, had invited her for a stroll in a park in Jonesboro, saying he wanted to talk.

As they walked through woodland, Ms Coats complained that "it was cold and dark, and I wanted to go back to the truck". She told a local television station: "I heard the leaves rustle, and a guy jumps up, and he has a really big knife with him." She heard him shout: "You can go, but your girlfriend stays."

Mr Siegel told her to stay back while he confronted the black-clad assailant. Ms Coats fled through the woods and down a sheer hillside, losing a shoe as she ran. She then called the police.

After officers searched the area and noted the shallow wounds inflicted on Mr Siegel by the attacker, the would-be hero allegedly confessed that he had staged the entire incident. Police did not press charges.

"He felt like he had to impress me somehow," Ms Coats said. "And I just told him that I didn't feel like we needed to be talking any more after that."

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65	£39.5K	£52.5K	£65.5K	£78.5K	£91.5K
70	£50K	£67K	£83.5K	£100.5K	£117K
75	£57K	£76K	£95K	£114K	£133K
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