

magazine

American family's face of the future is multiracial



Jeanne Phillips
dear abby

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are both Caucasian. Recently, we adopted a beautiful mixed-race baby girl. She's Vietnamese, African American and Hispanic. She is not even 18 months old, and already we have experienced some negative comments from strangers.

Where we live is progressive and open-minded, and I'm not so much concerned about our neighborhood or schools. But I'm no dummy. I know we're going to encounter people who have "questions" or "unwarranted" opinions" (to put it nicely).

I'm not trying to educate those who choose to remain ignorant, nor reason with the unreasonable, or even explain our family and our choices. I just want a quick, witty response that tells people their not-so-nice comments are unwelcome and, to put it frankly, back off. Any suggestion? — OPEN-MINDED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR OPEN-MINDED: According to the 2010 census, nine million Americans (2.9 per cent of the population) are multiracial. It also showed that the number of people who reported multiple races grew by a larger percentage than those reporting a single race.

Frankly, I don't think you should say anything "witty" to a bigot. Just smile and say, "It's the wave of the future. Get used to it."

DEAR ABBY: When my in-laws come for dinner, they ask what they can bring. I always say "absolutely nothing," but they bring dessert or a bottle of wine, and then take the uneaten dessert or uncorked bottles of wine home with them. What's the rule of etiquette when someone brings items to a party? — WONDERING IN FLORIDA

DEAR WONDERING: When guests bring something to their hostess—a bottle of wine or dessert—it is considered a gift. For guests to commandeer the leftovers without them having been offered is poor manners.

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High, dry terroir makes for great wines in Mendoza

Craig Pinhey good drink

Argentina is one of the largest wine-producing countries in the world, with plenty of suitable terroir for grape growing, at over 500,000 acres. It also has excellent conditions, including pure water from the Andes snow melt, very dry conditions that avoid disease and encourage organic/sustainable farming, and high altitudes that provide diversity of terroir, including the desired cool nights for making elegant, balanced wines.

Although there are diverse wine regions from north in Salta to south in Patagonia, most of the grape growing takes place in Mendoza—over 80 per cent of its wines, and they are very good. I'd like to see some at ANBL, particularly their Susana Balbo 2012 Malbec, which has a silky texture similar to good Spanish Rioja.

While there are also tasted wines from other producers, including Zuccardi, the fourth-biggest winery in Argentina, well-represented in Canada. I loved their 2013 Bonarda "Emma Zuccardi" which was clean, fresh, and very Pinot Noir-like.

We also tried wines from Catena Zapata, including their super premium White Bones, a Chablis-style Chardonnay, and Catena Alta Historic Kows Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon, very elegant reds. The ANBL sells their basic Malbec (\$22.99) as well as limited amounts of super-premium wines, including Catena Zapata Nicolas 2009 Cab Malbec, \$85.24.

It was also my first tasting Malbec from the famous Achaval-Ferrer, a smaller winery in Luján de Cuyo. Their Malbecs are very elegant in style, old-worldly, made from old, high elevation vines. I particularly enjoyed comparing the 2011 Finca Mirador to the 2006 version.

The next morning we visited Montevideo, one of the wineries that make up Clos de los 7, a group of well-respected producers on one large estate in the Uco Valley, all associated with French winemaking consultant Michel Rolland. There are 850 hectares with an elevation between 1,000 and 1,200 metres above sea level, in Vista Flores, Tunuyán. This is a very flat, dry area, with stunning views of the Andes.

Montevideo is a gorgeous winery, with lots of art, an annual music festival, and a rooftop restaurant under construction. The owners also own several



Columnist Craig Pinhey recounts his journey through Argentina's wine country. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

We finished the first day with a tasting and dinner at Dominio Del Plata, most commonly known as Susana Balbo's winery, in Agrelo, Luján de Cuyo. Balbo is an iconic winemaker in Argentina, having been in their industry over three decades. The winery exports 98 per cent of its wines, and they are very good. I'd like to see some at ANBL, particularly their Susana Balbo 2012 Malbec, which has a silky texture similar to good Spanish Rioja.

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Chateaux in Pomerol, Bordeaux, France. We tried their full range of wines, from the Festivo entry line up to the balanced Petite Fleur, the tannic Lindal for reds, and their icon wine, La Violeta, a big, purple Malbec that is hand-destemmed.

The ANBL has their Valle de Uco Malbec for \$29.99 which appears to be what they now call Petite Fleur.

I also tasted three vintages of the well-respected Clos de los Siete, a "blend of blends" from all seven estates, always over 50 per cent Malbec, put together by Rolland. This wine sells in Canada for around \$30, and we have seen it in New Brunswick in the past. Although generally hot and dry there, the vintages were quite different. 2010 has smooth tannins and is less fruity, the 2011 is lighter due to loss of crop from hailstorms that year, and the 2012 is a bigger wine with lots of dark fruit, but still balanced with tannins.

I really enjoyed the O, Fournier wines, which I had tasted in Canada before, but we no longer have here in New Brunswick. They are smooth reds, particularly their Alpha Crux, very Spanish in style, and deserve to be at the ANBL.

We met the famous (in Argentina) musician/winemaker Marcelo Pelleriti, and tried his wines, too. A nice fellow, old-worldly, made from old, high elevation vines. I particularly enjoyed comparing the 2011 Finca Mirador to the 2006 version.

My last winery in Uco Valley was Masi Tupungato, located in, of course, Tupungato. This is a very hot, dry area where they produce their unique wines from dried grapes, using the technique Masi uses in Veneto for their Amarone and other Valpolicella wines. The big difference here is that they are drying Malbec and Pinot Grigio. They only make three wines here, Paso Blanco from dried Pinot Grigio and non-dried Torrontes, Paso Doble from Malbec and dried Corvina, and Corbec, made from 100 per cent dried grapes, including Corvina

and Malbec. These are very cool wines, different, bridging the wines of Argentina and Veneto.

Our last visit was to Maipú to see Finca Agostino, a medium-sized winery owned by Canadians. The Agostino brothers lived their childhood in Mendoza before settling with their family in Canada in the '60s. They have a lovely estate, with an excellent on-site restaurant where we enjoyed local interpretations that made this my best meal of the trip. I also really enjoyed their Extra Brut Espumante sparkling wine made partly from old vines Chenin Blanc that we could see out the window of the restaurant. I'd love to see that here in New Brunswick, if it could make it for under \$20.

This was an excellent trip, and it was terrific to experience the Uco Valley, as well as Mendoza itself. It is hot and dry, yes, but there are plenty of great wines with which to quench your thirst.

Wine of the week

Catena Malbec, \$22.99. This is their entry level Malbec, but is still more serious than the average Malbec, more like Bordeaux than the \$10 to 15 Malbecs, which tend to be quite juicy.

Upcoming Events

- Saturday, March 7, Fredericton Craft Beer Festival—frederictoncraftbeerfestival.com
- Wednesday, March 11, Beer and Whisky Dinner at the Barrel's Head, Bethesda, see event info at my Facebook site: facebook.com/CraigPinhey.FrogsPad
- Tuesday, March 24, *Somm—The Movie* and tasting at happier wine bar, happierwiner.com
- Saturday, April 11, Saint John Beer Fest—facebook.com/SaintJohnBeerFest

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Heart murmur not always a concern



Dr. Anthony L.
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health

DEAR DOCTOR K: What is a heart murmur? How is it treated?

DEAR READER: A heart murmur is a sound made by turbulent blood flow within the heart.

Most often, a murmur occurs in a healthy heart. Sometimes, people have murmurs just with a normal flow of blood through their hearts. In other cases, a heart murmur may indicate a problem. Murmurs may be caused by a structural abnormality of a heart valve. Heart valves normally cause blood to be pumped in only one direction. When, for example, blood is being pulled in the wrong direction by gravity, the valve keeps that from happening.

Heart murmurs also may be due to an abnormal connection between two parts of the heart. Some causes of heart murmurs include:

- A tight or leaky heart valve. Heart valves control blood flow from the heart's upper chambers to its lower chambers, and from the lower chambers out to the rest of the body. A murmur can be heard if a valve becomes narrow, interfering with the outflow of blood. A murmur also can be heard if a leak causes blood to flow backward, in the wrong direction, through a valve.
- Mitral valve prolapse. In this condition, the mitral valve fails to close properly. As a result, blood leaks back from the heart's lower left chamber to the upper left chamber.
- Congenital heart problems. Some children are born with abnormalities in the way the heart and the blood vessels attached to the heart are built. These abnormalities often cause murmurs.
- Endocarditis. Endocarditis occurs when an infection of the heart valves causes them to become damaged. This can cause a tight or a leaky heart valve, which then causes a murmur.

Heart murmurs often do not cause symptoms. However, when the heart damage that causes the murmur also causes the heart to malfunction, symptoms occur. They can include

shortness of breath, light-headedness, rapid heartbeat and chest pain.

Murmurs that do not cause symptoms do not require treatment, though your doctor should monitor them regularly.

- When treatment is required, it varies based on the cause of the murmur.
- A tight or leaky heart valve. Medications can treat symptoms. In severe cases, a diseased valve may be surgically corrected or replaced with an artificial valve.
- Mitral valve prolapse. Palpitations may be treated with medications. In rare, severe cases, the abnormal valve is repaired or replaced surgically.
- Congenital heart problems. Severe cases need to be corrected surgically.
- Endocarditis. Bacterial endocarditis is treated with several weeks of intravenous antibiotics. Sometimes, the infected heart valve must be replaced.

One of the most important things that a doctor does during a physical exam is listen for a heart murmur—and to distinguish those that are not a problem (most of them) from those that are.

Dr. Anthony Komaroff
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