DIETER BRAATZ, ULRICH SAUTTER, and INGO SWOBODA: *Wine Atlas of Germany*. Trans. Kevin Goldberg. University of California Press, Berkeley, 2014, 277 pp., ISBN 978-0-520-26067-2, $60.

The *Wine Atlas of Germany* is a wonderful coffee-table–style book that takes a thorough look at the wine geography of Germany. It contains excellent wine maps and a wealth of useful information about German wine. However, the atlas has its limitations because (1) the way in which German winemakers classify their wines is in transition; and (2) the *Wine Atlas of Germany* is a translation of the *Weinatlas Deutschland,* published in Germany in 2007; the cut-off date for the German version was almost ten years ago, so the *Wine Atlas of Germany* was already outdated in a number of important aspects when it was published. This is the only weakness of the book, but it is a major one.

The authors are Dieter Braatz (deputy editor-in-chief of the German gourmet magazine *Der Feinschmecker*), Ulrich Sautter (wine writer) and Ingo Swoboda (co-author of *Riesling*). Jancis Robinson provided a foreword, and the translator, Kevin Goldberg, added a note at the beginning of the book.

The *Wine Atlas of Germany* is essentially divided into two main parts. First, introductory chapters provide background to the ongoing reform of wine classification in Germany, a discussion of the factors that make a vineyard unique, an overview of the history of winegrowing in Germany, and an introduction to the grape varieties in Germany. Second (and comprising the majority of the book), 16 chapters cover all German wine regions, one by one. Each of these chapters includes detailed maps and information on the area's soils, history, and main grape varieties.

Turning to the issue of wine classification in Germany, the basic German wine classification system is that of the German wine law of 1971, which replaced the German wine law of 1930. The German wine law of 1971 created the Prädikatswein system, which links must weights to a hierarchy of predicates. In ascending order of ripeness of the grapes at harvest, these are Kabinett, Spätlese, Auslese, Beerenauslese, Eiswein, and Trockenbeerenauslese. Importantly, although the hierarchy of predicates is not a quality hierarchy, in reality it is seen that way. The terroir as a determining factor for quality clearly moved to the backburner in Germany as a result of the introduction of the Prädikatswein system in 1971.

In terms of vineyard classification, the 1971 law distinguishes between *Einzellage* and *Grosslage*. *Einzellage* is a single vineyard; *Grosslage* is a collection of single vineyards. A village typically has, say, ten single vineyards and one collective vineyard. The wine law of 1971 redrew the vineyard map of Germany considerably, as the law required that single vineyards be at least 5 hectares in size. As a consequence, the 1971 law resulted in fewer but larger and more heterogeneous single vineyards than before. The *Wine Atlas of Germany* covers all collective vineyards and all single vineyards delineated by the German wine law of 1971.

The 1971 law does not contain a ranking of the single vineyards. However, the authors divided them into four levels: (1) excellent vineyard; (2) superior vineyard; (3) good vineyard, and (4) other vineyards. The vineyard ranking in the *Wine Atlas of Germany* is a subjective ranking of the authors, based on various information and historical documents that are available, such as Prussian tax documents for the 1800s.

The ranking of the authors, all three accomplished experts on German wine, is sound, although some criticisms have been raised. For instance, just seven sites along the entire Mosel are listed as exceptional, 13 if you include the Saar and Ruwer. This compares with 11 exceptional vineyards in the Pfalz, 16 exceptional vineyards in the Rheingau, and 21 exceptional vineyards in the Nahe. The large community in the world of fruity-sweet Mosel-Saar-Ruwer wines fans is obviously disappointed by these ratings. But this is because the *Wine Atlas of Germany* is a translation of a German wine atlas, and in Germany, the wines of the Mosel-Saar-Ruwer do not enjoy the same cult status as they do outside Germany.

A few years ago, the VDP (the association of German elite wine makers) revolutionized the German classification system by moving to a terroir-based classification, following the Bourgogne model. With the latest modifications in 2012, at the bottom of the VDP classification are the basic entry-level wines (*Gutswein*). Above these are the village wines (*Ortswein*), followed by the single vineyard wines worthy of premier cru (*Erste Lage*) or even a grand cru (*Grosse Lage*) status. Note that in 2012, *Grosse Lage* replaced *Erste Lage* at the top of the VDP classification. Note that *Grosse Lage* should not be confused with *Grosslage,* the term for a large collective site in the 1971 law (which, in my view, should be abolished).

Obviously, the *Wine Atlas of Germany* reflects only the early phase of these fundamental reforms. Unfortunately, much has happened in the past few years, and this is not reflected in the atlas. Thus, if you have a recent vintage of a VDP producer, the *Wine Atlas of Germany* is of only limited utility if you want to know more about where the wine comes from.

Should one care about the VDP classification? It is the classification of just 200 winemakers, but 20,000 or so winemakers are not members of the VDP. Yes, one should care. It is the elite of Germany (although quite a number of top winemakers are not members of the VDP). When it comes to drinking German wine outside Germany, the wine market is dominated by VDP producers. And, rightly in my view, the *Wine Atlas of Germany* pays a lot of attention to the VDP classification, even though it does not capture the changes of the past few years.

Finally, looking ahead, Germany is in the process of changing the wine geography further by allowing Gewann names—a subplot of a single vineyard—on the label, in response to the fact that many single vineyards established in the wine law of 1971 are of quite varying quality (i.e., heterogeneous). Many such Gewanne have

already been registered, and you will see more and more of them on German wine labels. This reform, of course, is not reflected in the *Wine Atlas of Germany*.

In sum, the *Wine Atlas of Germany* does not capture the most recent movement to a Bourgogne-type ranking of vineyards in Germany, but there is much more to the book. Overall, the *Wine Atlas of Germany* is a beautiful book with great maps and a lot of background information. The excellent photographs capture essential details of each region covered. Finally, German wine lovers outside Germany will be excited by the coverage of the internationally lesser-known regions, such as Baden, Württemberg, and Saxony.

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EVAN GOLDSTEIN: *Wines of South America: The Essential Guide*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 2014, 312 pp., ISBN 978-0520273931 (cloth), $39.95.

This volume, with the immodest but entirely appropriate subtitle, indeed lives up to its billing. There is so much to like about and learn from it. To help one get oriented, ten maps are provided at the continent, country, and regional levels. The first chapter begins with a two-page history of the earliest viticulture and winemaking in South America, starting with the first planting of vineyards south of Lima, Peru, in 1548. We then jump to the late twentieth century for an overview of the wine industry in the four major producers, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.

Before delving into each of these, as well as lesser players, Bolivia, Columbia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela, Goldstein dedicates a substantial chapter to grape varieties grown in the continent. "Official sources indicate commercial plantings of 165 different grapes in Argentina, 117 in Brazil, 65 in Uruguay, and over 60 in Chile" (p. 13), we learn. Not surprising, vinifera cultivars originating in Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, and Germany were brought by immigrants who needed something familiar to drink in their new lands. A class of vinifera varieties called *criollas* came over with the Spanish conquerors and settlers in the 1500s and remain significant sources of everyday wines. But some, like the three different Torrontés in Argentina, have been gaining favor especially in the American market. When attempts to grow vinifera failed in the less congenial climates, hybrids and even labrusca varietals like Niagara were imported from North America.

Individual chapters are dedicated to each of the four largest wine-producing countries, with the two chapters on Argentina and Chile comprising half the