

FOOD & WINE

ITALIAN SPRING

THE
SPRING
WINE
ISSUE

Luscious pastas, vibrant wines, and fresh menus to
celebrate the season

GARGANELLI
WITH SPECK,
PEAS, AND
SCALLION CREAM
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IN VALPARAÍSO, CHILE,
WINEMAKERS AND STREET
ARTISTS GET TOGETHER TO
LAUNCH THE WORLD'S
FIRST WINE-GRAFFITI
FESTIVAL—AND TO HELP
CHANGE A NEIGHBORHOOD
ALONG THE WAY.

BY RAY ISLE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
LIANNE MILTON

WINE



AT THE BASE OF CERRO MARIPOSA in Valparaíso, Chile, a neighborhood on one of this port city's 42 steep hills, a 20-foot-tall, brown-skinned Bacchus holds out a mysterious cup of wine to you. What he's offering is an idea for change.

He's the subject of a mural that's a joint venture between Rodrigo Estoy, a Chilean artist, and Miguel Torres Chile, one of Chile's principal wineries. It's an ode to wine, to Chile, and to the Greek god of wine, but "a Latin American version," as Estoy says. And it's one of 17 wine-themed murals that went up over two days last November along Avenida Baquedano, the main street of Cerro Mariposa, to create the city's first wine-and-art walking tour.

This graffiti-wine event, Graffestival, was the idea of winemaker Grant Phelps, an outspoken New Zealander who's also the owner of WineBox, a wine-themed hotel built from recycled shipping containers perched halfway up Cerro Mariposa. All told, 16 wineries signed on (with an additional mural sponsored by the Wines of Chile organization), each partnering with a street artist but not dictating what they could paint. "Our communication staff may want to kill me, but I just thought, look, go for it," says Cristian Carrasco of Miguel Torres Chile. "Graffiti is a form of art; it shouldn't be advertising. And the character, this Bacchus, really has some mystery—it's like the wine as a potion."

Mariposa is by no means on the usual tourist track for Valparaíso, and Phelps' real hope is to bring economic development to the neighborhood by means of wine and art. Neither is unknown to

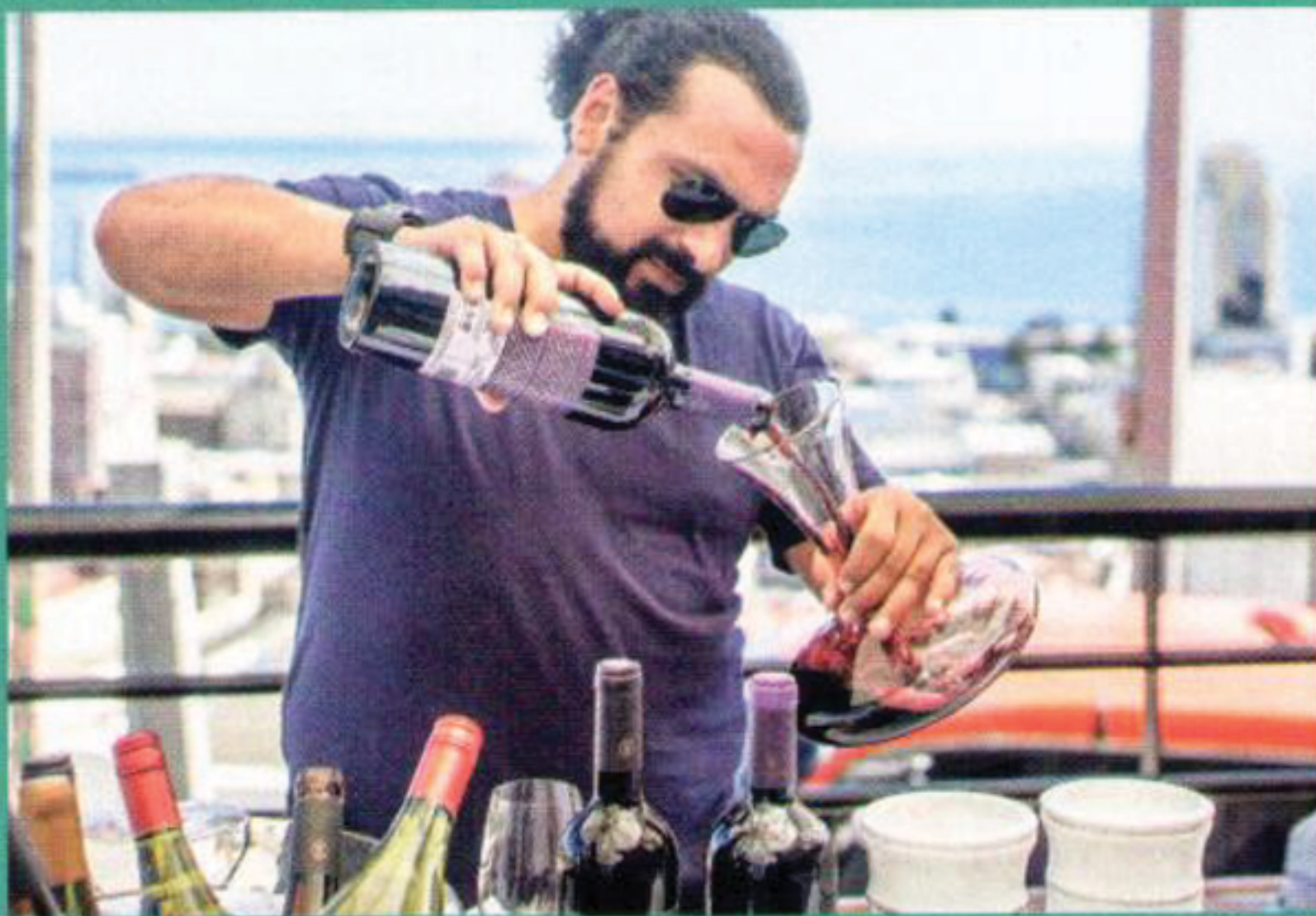
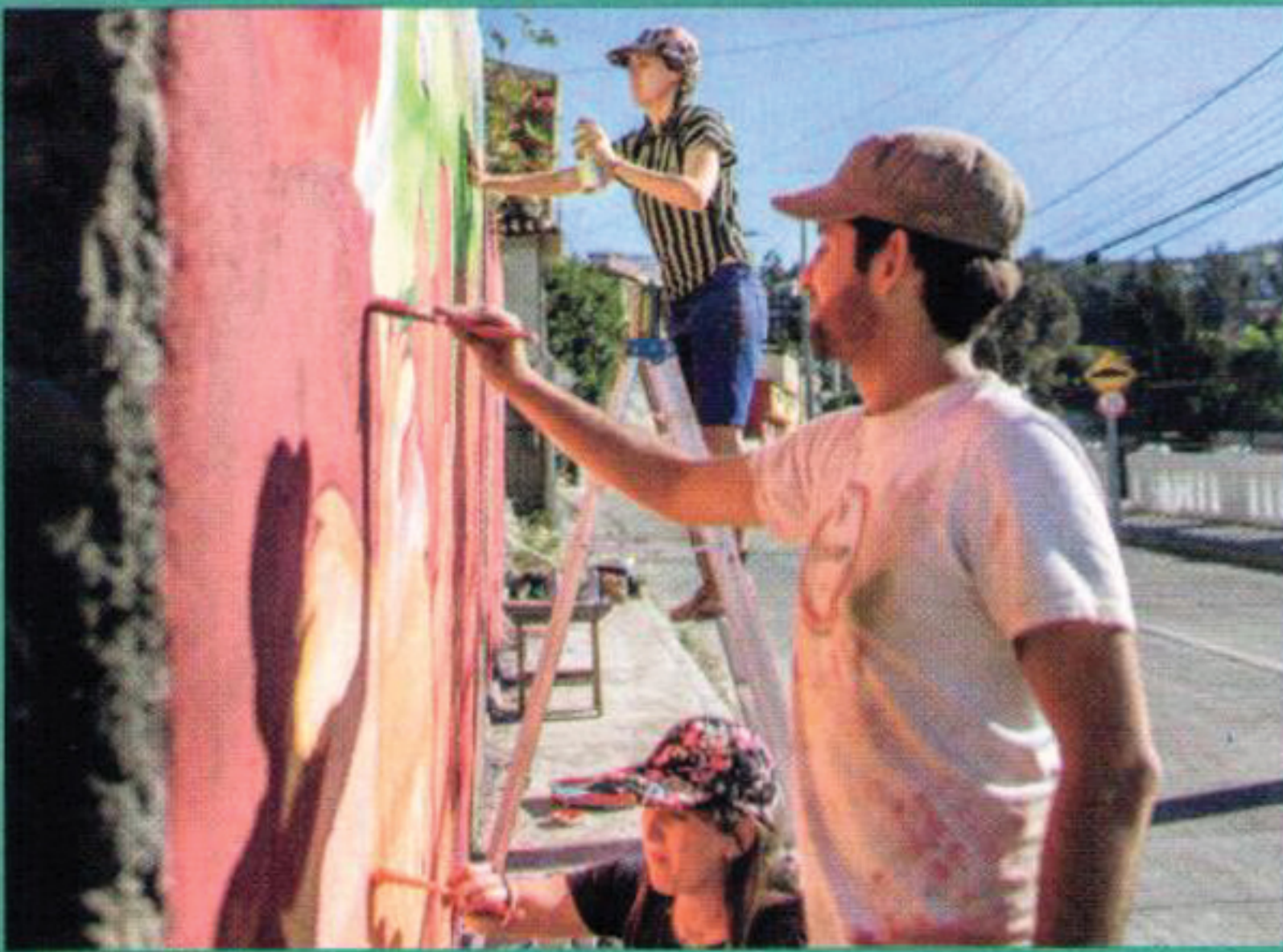
the city. Valpo, as locals call it, is surrounded by some of Chile's best wine regions: Leyda is 15 minutes away; Casablanca, maybe 30. And the streets here are a riot of murals and graffiti art: piano key stairsteps, fever-dream birds, you name it. Street art in Valpo originated as a form of political protest in the '60s and during Pinochet's dictatorship. "The consequences were a lot more risky then, like death-penalty risky," one artist told me. But today, street art in Valpo is largely celebrated. As Tikay, one of the Graffestival artists, says, "Sure, some people will roll by and yell, 'Hey, paint your ass!' but the majority really love it."

Partly that's just Valpo, in all its bohemian, scruffy vibrancy. It's a city of hills tumbling down to the Pacific Ocean; it's also a city of brilliant color. Walk down a staircase and there's a bathtub full of flowers. Turn a corner, there's a burst of gold and blue and red on a wall. Inti Castro, arguably South America's most famous street artist, was born in Valpo. "My grandfather told me that people used to steal paint from the ships in the port—really strong colors—and paint their houses with them," he recalls.

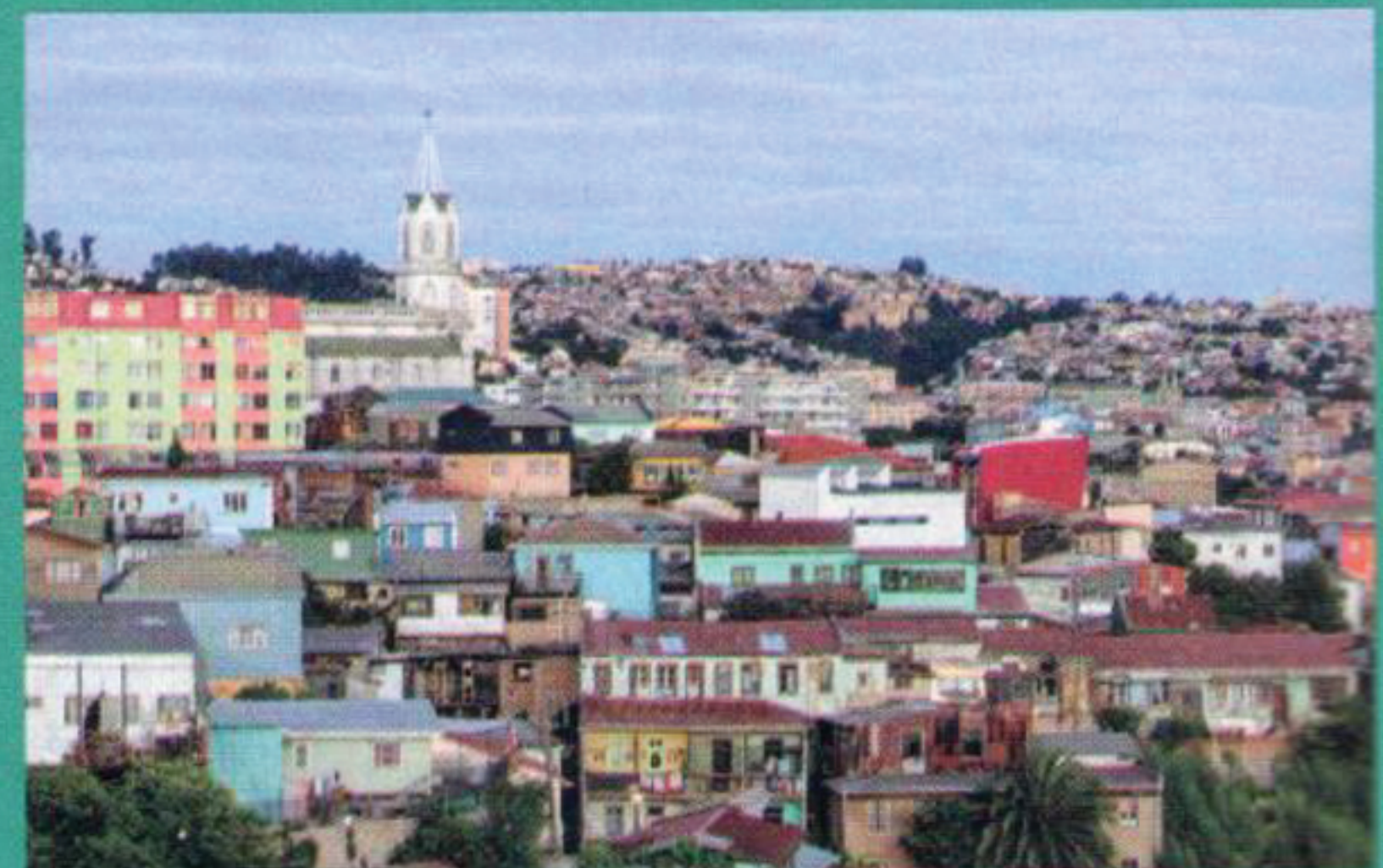
Come to Cerro Mariposa, walk up the hill, check out the murals, and watch a neighborhood blossom. As Horacio Silva Duarte, who runs the street-art organization Valparaíso en Colores, says, "After we paint, people start to organize. They submit community proposals. They get grants: more lights, green spaces, railings. All of a sudden they have hope that things can change. Particularly with wine, on this street, it really shows the face of Chile to the world."



OPPOSITE PAGE: Artists Aner and Tikay take a break from working on their vine-themed mural. "We had a lot of emails with our winery, Morandé, back and forth," Aner recalls, "and couldn't agree on a subject. Finally the winemaker showed up and just said, 'We trust in your work—just do what you want!'" **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Winemaker, hotelier, and organizer Grant Phelps in his micro-winery under his hotel, WineBox; artist Aliona Rud relaxing at the end of the two days with a glass of Cabernet and paint-stained hands; globally acclaimed street artist Inti Castro. He grew up one hill away on Cerro Monjas. About Valparaíso he says, "There's a kind of freedom of the street here that makes the city messy but really organic. It's a freestyle place. And it's a port city, so you can make all the rules you want, but people are never going to follow them."



Over two days in November last year, 17 wine-themed murals went up in Valparaíso's Cerro Mariposa neighborhood. **TOP ROW, LEFT:** Artists Vale and Eileen Hinckle working on the mural for Casa Silva winery. **SECOND ROW, FROM LEFT:** Winemaker and hotelier Grant Phelps relaxes against one of WineBox's walls—the hotel is also covered in street art; winemaker Cristian Carrasco and artist Rodrigo Estoy take a break midway through Estoy's work on the Bacchus figure that starts the route; winemaker Viviana Navarrete of Viña Leyda. **THIRD ROW, FROM LEFT:** Carrasco decanting a bottle of red from Miguel Torres Chile; the artists and winemakers partying at the end of the second night of painting at WineBox's rooftop bar—which offers a spectacular view out over Valparaíso to the Pacific Ocean. **BOTTOM.**



VALPARAÍSO TRAVEL

GETTING THERE

LATAM Airlines offers direct flights from the U.S. to Santiago from New York, Los Angeles, and Miami; from Santiago it's a 90-minute drive (partly through wine country) to Valparaíso.

WHERE TO STAY

Hotel WineBox
Valparaíso, constructed from 25 decommissioned shipping containers, is a must-stay for wine travelers. Rooms are quirkily luxurious, full of art from local artists, and have stunning views of Valparaíso's harbor. There are daily wine tastings, a hot tub made from a 160-year-old wine vat, and Chile's first urban winery in the basement. (Rooms from \$115 per night, [facebook.com/wineboxvalparaiso](https://www.facebook.com/wineboxvalparaiso))

WHERE TO EAT

Espiritu Santo

A mother-son team, manager/wine director Laura Moreno and chef Manuel Subercaseaux, owns this boutique restaurant atop Cerro Bellavista. Look for dishes like local rockfish ceviche with passion fruit sauce and bottles from boutique producers who rarely export to the U.S. (Hector Calvo 392, Cerro Bellavista, Valparaíso)

Tres Peces

Ultra-fresh, sustainable seafood straight from fishermen's boats is the star in this restored 19th-century house in the waterfront Cerro Concepción neighborhood. ([facebook.com/trespecesvalparaiso](https://www.facebook.com/trespecesvalparaiso))



THE ART OF WINE

Fifteen different wineries participated in the Graffestival event. Here are some highlights from their portfolios, all of which can be found in U.S. wine shops.

2016 Ritual Chardonnay (\$21)

This cool-climate Chardonnay from the Casablanca Valley has plenty of peachy flavor that gets a lift from a light herbal note. It's made partly in large concrete eggs, the latest thing in winemaking.

2016 Viña Tarapacá Gran Reserva Organic Red (\$18)

Organic viticulture is still rare in Chile, but more wineries are looking into it every year. Tarapacá's robust, smoky red blend is at the forefront of this nascent movement.

NV Miguel Torres Estelado Sparkling Rosé (\$20)

A crisp, unusual sparkling rosé from Chile's Central Valley, it's made from the País, or Mission, grape, and offers plenty of bright berry fruit. Swap your usual Prosecco for it next time.

2016 Casa Silva Los Lingües Carmenère (\$20)

Chile's signature grape, Carmenère, can head toward green-pepperness. But when done well, as with this wine, its herbal notes dovetail perfectly with its vivid red-currant fruit.



2016 Montes Alpha Cabernet Sauvignon (\$22)

Lots of sweet, dark currant fruit; good tannic structure; and a hint of spice make this perennial value from Montes an excellent introduction to Chilean Cabernet.