

546 en primeur
wines tasted

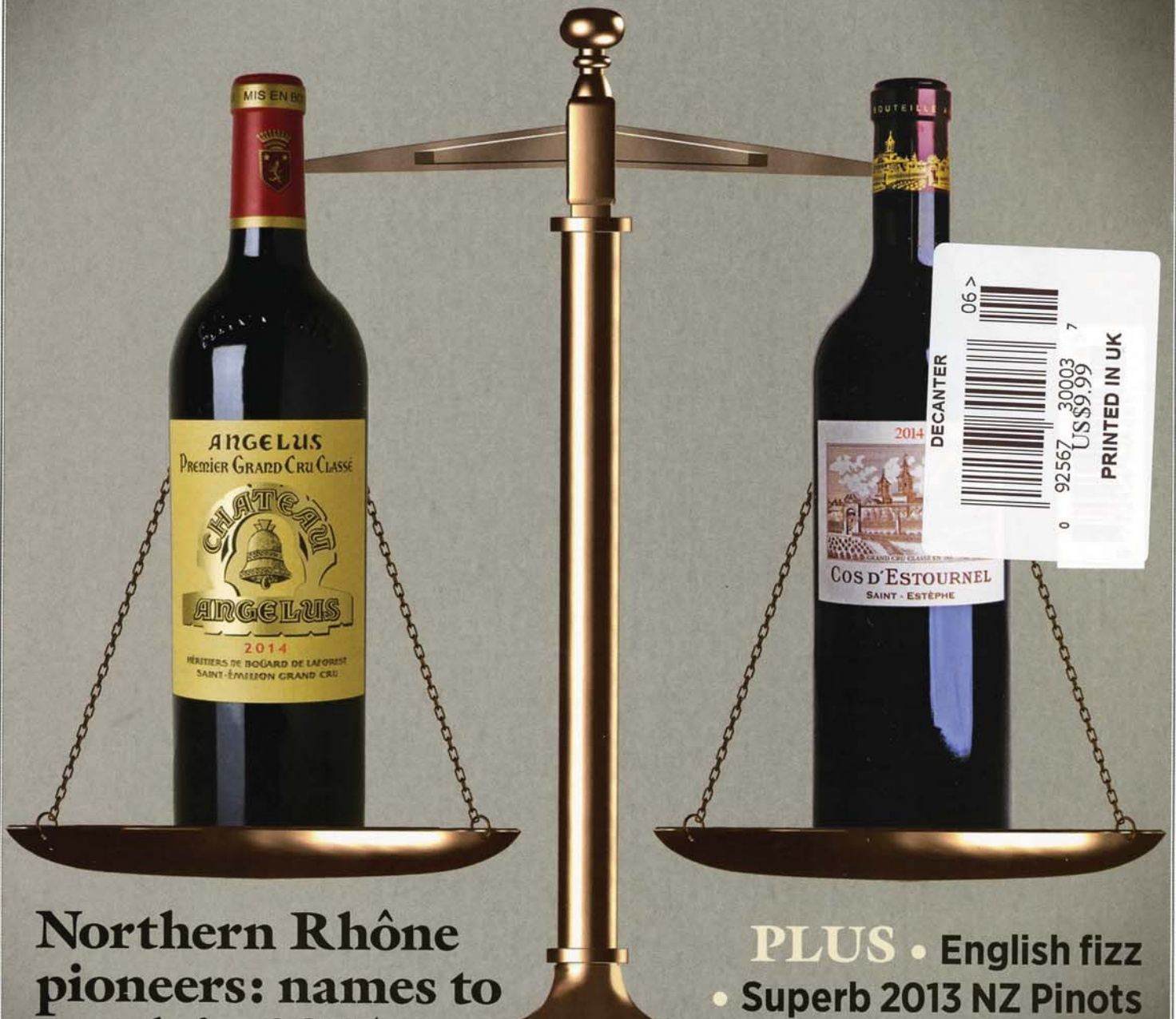
The world's best wine magazine

June 2015 £4.40

Decanter

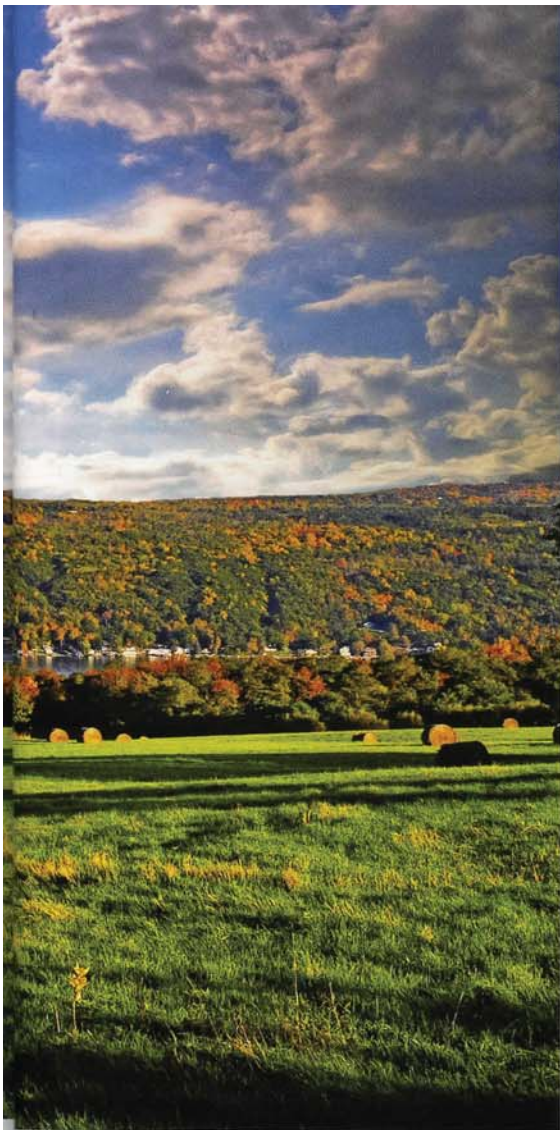
En primeur in the balance

2014 Bordeaux: best since 2010 but should you buy now or later?

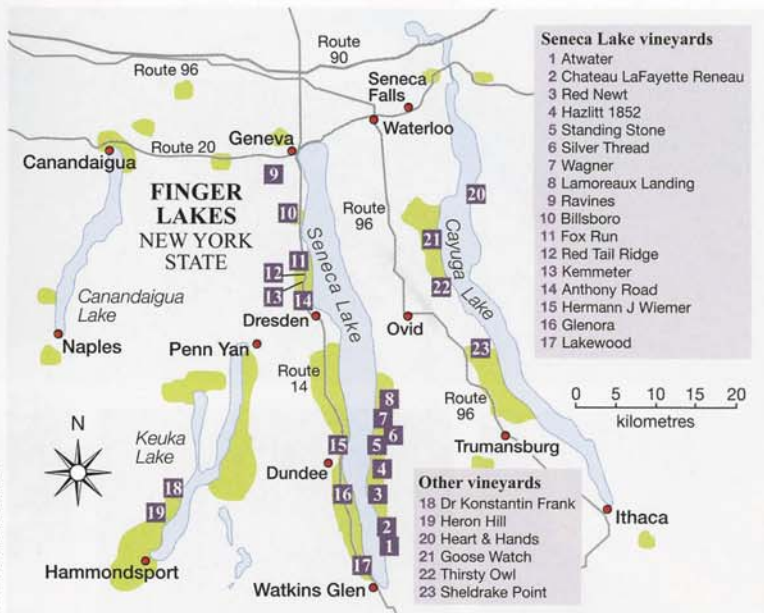


**Northern Rhône
pioneers: names to**

**PLUS • English fizz
• Superb 2013 NZ Pinots**



Photograph: Finger Lakes Wine Country; Bill Hecht; Maps: Maggie Neilson



Above: Keuka Lake, one of the main trio of New York State's Finger Lakes, typifies the bucolic charms that entices visitors to this rewarding wine region

(25km) has 10. The region's 11 other lakes have six between them.

A proper visit here needs at least three days, but a week can be fully rewarding. Wine travel is orderly and systematic, since the wineries – mostly small-scale and family-owned – are on or near the lakes (see boxes, right and p107). Each lake offers organised wine trails but be warned: their informational materials are not exhaustive because not all top producers are members.

Gamut of grapes

The region's foremost wine-grape-breeding institute (responsible for the varieties Cayuga White, Chardonel, Melody, Noiret and Valvin Muscat) is Cornell University's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, at Seneca's northern end.

The state's so-called vinifera revolution, which enabled Riesling's ascent to international attention, began in 1976 when the legislature passed the Farm Winery Act. By European standards, 39 years is mere childhood, but the prevalence of young and middle-aged winemakers and grapegrowers bent on building their reputations is accelerating the industry's maturation. ➤

My perfect day in Finger Lakes

Morning

Rise early to make the most of your day. Careful planning helps exploit this large-scale district because of longish distances to go for boat cruises and rentals, canoeing, fishing, swimming, hiking, camping, birding, picnicking in state parks, museum-going and stops at pick-your-own farms and farmers' markets. While Seneca is the hub, Keuka and Cayuga are also crucial for Rieslings (which are assumed but not specified in recommendations below) and also showcase other varieties.

On Keuka's west side, taste a range of wines from **Dr Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars** (www.drfrankwines.com), including the best-selling Rkatsiteli – a Georgian grape. The tasting room also pours sparkling wines from nearby Chateau Frank. At **Heron Hill** (www.heronhill.com) don't miss the Chardonnay, Muscat, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris and late-harvest Vidal Blanc.

Afternoon

Travellers who love discovering local foods will appreciate *Edible Finger Lakes*, a food magazine found at wineries, markets and stores. After a spot of lunch (see *Address Book*, p109) try this winery tour on the east side of Cayuga, starting from Ithaca, Cornell University's home. I've recommended the must-try wines from each: **Heart & Hands**

Cornell University, Ithaca



(www.heartandhandswine.com) Pinot Noir; **Goose Watch** (www.goosewatch.com) Diamond, Lemberger, Rosé of Isabella; **Thirsty Owl** (www.thirstyowl.com) Chancellor, Gewürztraminer; **Sheldrake Point** (www.sheldrakepoint.com) Gewürztraminer.



Evening & overnight

You have tasted and spat out wine all day, alternating water with wine to ensure safe driving. Now, like winemakers everywhere, you have earned a cold beer. Try local brands Abandon, Ithaca Beer, Naked Dove and Wagner Valley, or enjoy drinking a bottle of Finger Lakes wine over dinner at one of the restaurants (see *Address Book*, p109). But be warned, reservations may cease at 9pm.