



**Katie Kelly Bell**  
Contributor

[FOLLOW](#)

TRAVEL | 4/18/2014 @ 12:39PM | 1,189 views

## Why Drink Organic, Biodynamic And Sustainable Wines For Earth Day?

[+ Comment Now](#) [+ Follow Comments](#)

Six Organic Wines To Try Now

## Six Organic Wines To Try Now

4 of 6



### 2012 Bonterra Sauvignon Blanc

**2012 Bonterra Sauvignon Blanc**, Grassy, herbal with pink grapefruit and a nice sweet kiwi note at the finish. Expressive of the cool climate it comes from; grapes sourced from Mendocino and Lake counties. Bonterra is one of the largest producers of organic wines in California.

Talking about organic wine is surprisingly complicated. When I set out to write this column I planned on rounding up some organic producers, tasting some wines and calling out the tastiest selections. Easy peasy, unless you start asking questions. First, organic wine and wine made with organic grapes are two entirely different things. Then there are some who purport that organic farming requires too much tilling and sustainable farming is the better direction. And then we have the biodynamic producers who preach the benefits of manure teas and can be found burying cow horns in the soil during a descending moon phase.

The conversation about which practice is better (organic, sustainable or biodynamic) is hot right now. At a recent wine tasting a winemaker, and disciple of sustainable farming, vented to me that organic farming was crap because, among other things, it requires heavy soil tillage. Or, consider Burgundian (and biodynamic) winemaker Emmanuel Giboulot who was recently fined several hundred euros for not spraying his vines to kill a flying pest. The French authorities believed his decision might possibly endanger nearby vineyards from the traveling pest. What's most interesting is that we are having the conversation at all. Given the volume of opinion on the matter, I've broken this story into a three-part series to give proper space to each approach. In honor of Earth Day, and because it's the term we are all most familiar with, it seems fitting to start with organic wine.

First, as I mentioned before, organic wine is different than wine made with organically grown grapes.

Wines made from certified organically grown grapes are farmed without synthetic additives and pesticides. But, these winemakers add sulphur at the bottling stage to control for spoilage. Without the addition of sulphur, the wines really have no shelf life. In contrast, "organic wines" are made from organically grown grapes and have no added sulfites, but, take note, some may be present naturally. Organic farming does require more soil tillage to manage weeds, (this is a problem if vines are growing on a hillside, as it leads to topsoil erosion), and generally prohibits synthetic pesticides but, it does allow for the use of natural pesticides.

It's worth noting that organic does not mean the vines are free from sprays and applications. Organic labeling and farming may soon fall out of favor as consumers start to compare it to biodynamic and sustainable practices. All that said, organic farming is a better alternative to industrial practices that rely solely on chemicals and do little to sustain the environment.

All of the wines below are made from organic grapes.

#### **Organic Wines to try in 2014**

**2012 Cono Sur Organic Cabernet/Carmenere Blend, \$14.** some bell pepper, darker low toned fruits, coffee, smooth tannins, light bodied on the palate.

**2011 Emiliana Coyam, \$34.** Mushroom and old forest with a heap of black fruits, plums some white pepper and a soft, lingering finish. The wine is named for the ancient oaks that surround the vineyards.

**2009 Domaine Carneros by Tattinger, Estate Brut Cuvee, CA, \$32.** This inaugural 100% organically farmed California bubbly has been aged for three years on the lees. A vivacious citrus nose and heaps of racy fine bubbles work nicely with the creamy texture on the palate. Sold only at the winery.

**2012 Bonterra Sauvignon Blanc**, Grassy, herbal with pink grapefruit and a nice sweet kiwi note at the finish. Expressive of the cool climate it comes from; grapes sourced from Mendocino and Lake counties. Bonterra is one of the largest producers of organic wines in California.

**2010 Inman Family Wine, OGV Pinot Noir (SRP \$68)**. The OGV Pinot Noir comes from Kathleen Inman's 10.5-acre organically-farmed estate Olivet Grange Vineyard in the Russian River Valley. It's a refreshing departure from the typical Russian River Pinot Noir—lighter in alcohol and more finely tuned with high toned strawberry and raspberry fruits and a lingering finish rounded out with nice acidity.

Follow me on Forbes, [Facebook](#) and Twitter by clicking the buttons near my name.