



屹立于丽山的Ridge Vineyards酿酒厂原址及品酒室。

丽山 Monte Bello 传奇

在美国加州库比提诺市 (Cupertino), 距离苹果公司总部大约10公里, 有一座名为丽山的山峰。山中有一酒庄, 名叫Ridge Vineyards, 在葡萄酒业界内名气响亮, 就连法国顶级酒庄也得让它三分。

TEXT 林之樱 / C.L NEOH PHOTO RIDGE VINEYARDS

1976年5月24日, 一位在巴黎操业的英国酒商Steven Spurrier, 为了庆祝美国独立200周年而在巴黎举办了一场法国和美国葡萄酒的盲饮竞赛, 红酒部分有6瓶当时名不见经传的加州酒以及4瓶法国顶级波尔多。这个对全球酿酒业影响深远的盛会后来被简称为《巴黎审判》。参与评审的专家, 除了一位是来自美国外, 其余的都是法国人, 其中包括了INAO (法国葡萄酒官方单位) 的主管, 勃艮第著名酒庄罗曼尼康帝 (Domaine de la Romanée-Conti) 的老板以及3家米其林三星餐厅的老板及侍酒师。这绝对是重量级的评审团, 没有人比他们更懂法国葡萄酒了。结果加州酒打败了赫赫有名的波尔多顶级酒庄而Ridge Vineyards的1971 Monte Bello赤霞珠也进入首5名。比赛结果让法国专家大跌眼镜, 也打碎了法国人的自尊。2006年, Spurrier再次搬演30年前的比赛, 以同样年份与酒庄的葡萄酒进行盲饮, 举办地点分别在美国纳帕谷及英国伦敦。评审团里只有一位是原来的法国审判, 其它的都是当今业界人士及评酒大师, 其中包括了著名评酒家Jancis Robinson及Hugh Johnson。结果是Ridge Vineyards 1971 Monte Bello赤霞珠荣获冠军, 毫无疑问地粉碎了“新世界葡萄酒经不起岁月沉淀”的看法。

Ridge Vineyards 的酒好, 缘于天时, 地利与人合。1885年, 一位在三藩市工作的意大利籍医生 Osea Perrone买下了位于丽山一块面积180英亩的葡萄园, 同一年他在峰上建设了Monte Bello酒庄并在1892年发布了第一个年



在《巴黎审判》中独鹤鸡群的1971年Monte Bello 赤霞珠。

份葡萄酒。1940年，酒庄经过数次转手后终于被William Short 买下。这位新主人看准丽山的独特地理条件而决定扩展葡萄园版图并且重新培植赤霞珠果树，大幅度提高葡萄素质。1960年，3位在斯丹福研究院任职的科学家发现这块山中宝地后决定买下并命名为Ridge Vineyards酒庄。1962年至1965年期间，这群科学家不辞劳苦的栽培了多个从波尔多进口的葡萄品种，包括梅洛，品丽珠与小维铎。1968年，酒庄增产至36,000瓶，远超出科学家们所能付出的“课外”时间。因此，他们决定聘请专人来担任酿酒师一职。Paul Draper在1969年加入Ridge Vineyards成为酒庄的第一位全职酿酒师。1988年，他被委任为酒庄总裁。

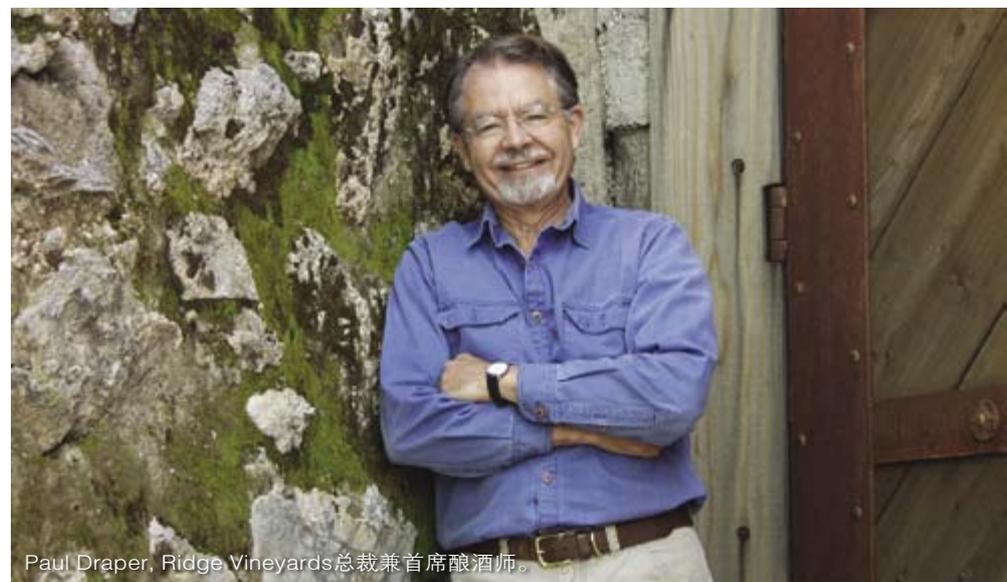
Draper给人的第一印象是一位乡绅。生于1936年，Draper在斯丹福大学

毕业后被征入美军服役并驻扎在意大利北部两年。在这期间，他经常骑着摩托车游历各村落，沉浸在当地的饮食文化中。Ridge Vineyards的命脉似乎与斯丹福大学大有联系，Draper在完成兵役后遇上了另一位校友而开始了他在智利的酿酒生涯。开始时对酿酒学一窍不通，Draper在图书馆内找到一本19世纪的酿酒教科书，以最基本的器材酿制葡萄酒。经过一番研究，他意识到法国橡木桶并不是理所当然的选择，因为波尔多酒庄在1914年之前根本就没用上法国橡木。这个经历塑造了Draper的酿酒理念 – 以最天然的方法酿造一款能够诠释出品种特征及风土条件的葡萄酒。当他接手管理酒庄时发现丽山的土质非常特别，石灰石中含有大量枯晦的海洋生物。这些石头是经过数百年堆积而成的，拥有丰富的矿物质，类似勃艮第的土壤特质。丽山峰高2300尺，气候凉爽，整百年的酿造沉积使这里的空气中含有多种利于酿酒的微生物及酵母，这些得天独厚的优势决定了Monte Bello葡萄酒的独特风格。

Ridge Vineyards自从创立以来不曾灌溉丽山的葡萄园，高山多雨导致土壤水分充足，这是高海拔种植的一大优势。除此之外，凉爽气候使果实在成熟过程中保存了优雅的酸味，促进口感平衡。同时，Draper倡导酿造酒精度适中的葡萄酒，这是他与其它酒庄不同的地方。整个酿造过程没有采用任何特制酵母，在美国橡木桶中熟化，葡萄酒可谓是“原汁原味”的另类表现。Monte Bello包含了波尔多左岸以赤霞珠为主的典型混酿组合。口感香醇，风格优雅自然不在话下，其果味的鲜度在没有人工干预的情况下几乎是在完美状态。当Draper打开一瓶1985年分的Monte Bello时，扑鼻而来的尽是浓郁的果香，香气如正在绽放的花朵，一层一层地渐次而出。顷刻间，我终于明白为何Monte Bello能在盲品中击败顶级名庄！

Paul Draper是1971年份Monte Bello的原创者，这款堪称里程碑式的佳酿为Ridge Vineyards赢得了“加州拉图Château Latour of California”的美誉。在他的品酒历程中可有其它葡萄酒让他铭记在心？那是一瓶他在1970年从佳士得拍卖行以350美元买回来的1864年份波尔多拉菲。这瓶整百年酒龄的佳酿对他来说意义重大，他从品尝中体会到严谨的酿酒程序可以使葡萄酒百年不衰。从那一刻起，他就决定了Monte Bello将会成为一款伟大的葡萄酒。

45年后的今天，Paul Draper在葡萄酒业里已然是一位传奇人物。他所获得的荣誉与奖项数之不尽，同业对他的尊敬可见一斑。虽然Ridge Vineyards 也生产品质优秀的仙粉黛 (Zinfandel) 与霞多丽 (Chardonnay) 葡萄酒，Monte Bello 赤霞珠依然是酒庄的旗舰产品。能够年复一年的维持品质而其贯彻的气质却从未改变，这都反映了Draper的毕生精华，也是他给天下爱酒人士的最佳献礼。🍷



Paul Draper, Ridge Vineyards 总裁兼首席酿酒师。



Monte Bello Vineyard.

In 1976, a British wine merchant by the name of Steven Spurrier organised a wine-tasting in Paris, to celebrate the bicentennial of the American independence. He pitched six top but relatively unknown Californian reds and whites against four world-renowned Bordeaux and four white Burgundies.

Nine French personalities, including Pierre Brejoux from the Institute of Appellations of Origin, Odette Kahn, editor of *La Revue du Vin de France*, and Christian Vanneque, head sommelier of a three-star restaurant in Paris, were invited as judges, with Spurrier and an American as the only non-French.

To the chagrin of the French, the Californian wines more than held their own, coming up tops in both the red and white categories; Ridge Monte Bello 1971 came up a respectable fifth in its category. This seminal event was reported in *Time* magazine and, over time, achieved prominence and became known as The Judgment of Paris.

In 2006, a re-enactment of the event was organized in association with Spurrier. This time it was held simultaneously in London and Napa. A new panel of judges was appointed, comprising several well-known and credible wine experts such as Jancis Robinson and Hugh Johnson. Only one French judge, Christian Vanneque, remained from the original panel. Ridge Monte Bello 1971 came out top this time, defying popular belief that “new world” wines would not age.

The Beginnings

Most associate Californian wines with Napa and Sonoma. It is generally not obvious that there is a winery in Cupertino, let alone one with such a repute. About 16km away from the headquarters of Apple Inc lies the elevated vineyard that produces the Ridge Monte Bello. Coincidentally, the wine’s rise to prominence also marks the founding and ascent of the computer giant.

The first to recognise the potential of this area was Osea Perrone, a doctor of Italian origin from San Francisco, who bought 180 acres near the top of the Monte Bello ridge in 1885 and built the Monte Bello Winery. His first vintage, bearing the name of Monte Bello, was produced in 1892. By the 1940s, the winery was acquired by William Short, who also bought vineyards below the winery. He subsequently replanted some of the vines with Cabernet Sauvignon to improve quality.

In 1960, three research scientists from Stanford Research Institute acquired the winery and vineyard. The partners made their first vintage comprising of a quarter barrel of Cabernet. The wine was of such fine quality that the partners decided to reopen the winery in time for the 1962 harvest.

Besides Cabernet, other Bordeaux grapes such as Merlot were planted after 1965. By 1968, the partner-scientists, with David Bennion as their designated winemaker, had increased their production to almost 3,000 cases. In 1969, the partners made the astute decision to hire Paul Draper, who as it turned out, was also from Stanford.

Born in 1936, Draper had graduated from Stanford University with a degree in philosophy in 1958. During the years of compulsory military service following the Korean War, he spent two years in Northern Italy, followed by a year in Paris. Prior to returning to California and then joining Ridge, he was making wines from Cabernets in Chile, where he had a joint venture with a friend from Stanford. These overseas sojourns exposed Draper to the various styles of European wines and influenced his world-view of wines.

We spoke to Draper to get his perspective on the making of the Monte Bello. According to him, the geology in Monte Bello is unique.

Unlike in Napa, the Ridge is mainly limestone created centuries ago from dead sea-life near the Equator and moved north on the Pacific plate until it jammed against the North America. In fact, the tectonic shift created the San Andreas fault, which is just a stone’s throw away from the winery. This “exotic” terroir and the climatic conditions afforded by its 2,300-foot elevation create the unique conditions of sufficient rainfall and lower temperature for the vines, especially the Cabernets, to thrive.

Draper is, in his own words, largely a self-taught winemaker. In his early winemaking years, he relied on a 19th century book on American winemaking that he had found in a library. As a reflection of his wine-making philosophy, he prefers to be called a vigneron or oenologist rather than winemaker – he takes a non-interventionist approach, which he terms “pre-industrial”, where the wine is allowed to express its natural fruit devoid of invasive processes and unnecessary additives. He also uses only natural yeasts.

Pre-industrial Techniques

One can see clearly that Draper has developed a taste for the finest wines when he reminisces about how he had bought Bordeaux wines from auctions in the 1970s at relatively bargain prices. A 1864 Lafite was acquired for US\$350, he recounts, and he had let it rest for one to two months before marveling at the meticulous winemaking that went into every drop.

That kind of passion and detail appeals to the purist and perfectionist in him. Instead of observing convention by using French oak barrels, for example, he decided to conduct his own research, which led him to discover that up to 1914, Bordeaux wines did not use French oak. Accordingly, he uses mostly American oak and has good reasons for doing so.

Draper’s pre-industrial approach does not mean he retreats to the 19th century practices of the best Californian wineries and Bordeaux chateaux. He incorporates the use of the best, non-intrusive modern equipment. In fact, Ridge has a full-fledged modern laboratory, which provides him with data and analysis to control the quality of his wines. This is complementary to the winemaking technique of minimising the use of sulphur dioxide.

Many signs point to Draper as being a level-headed winemaker and not a dogmatic romantic. Perhaps his early scientist partners have had an influence on him. Draper is also a strong proponent of ingredient-labeling, whereby the processes used by the winery and the ingredients used are voluntarily listed on the bottle.

So what is a Draper’s Ridge Monte Bello? The 1985 vintage we tasted was elegantly structured with well-balanced tannins and acidity, with a palate of ripe red and dark fruits, and savoury notes. It was relatively low in alcohol.

In 2001, Jancis Robinson, a renowned wine authority, described a tasting of a flight of Monte Bello as such: “This lovely and well-proven wine was certainly distinctive, consistently delicious and characterful, well balanced, not too big, and the best wine was, tellingly, the oldest. This is a Californian wine made to a more recognisably European formula.”

Now almost 45 years after joining Ridge Vineyards, Draper remains its chief winemaker. Of course, he is now also the CEO and owner. His wines are critically acclaimed and he has received recognition and awards from the wine industry and his peers. Although Ridge also produces fine wines from Zinfandel and Chardonnay, the Monte Bello remains the flagship. Maintaining the quality and consistency over decades is truly an amazing feat of winemaking.