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ARTS & CULTURE | FOOD & COOKING | ON WINE

## Gifts for Wine Lovers: This Season's Must-Read Books for Oenophiles

From Burgundy to Bordeaux to the North Fork of Long Island, the wine business is a wild ride. In three recent memoirs, veteran winemakers take readers along, offering insights your favorite wine lover will appreciate.



By [Lettie Teague](#) [Follow](#)

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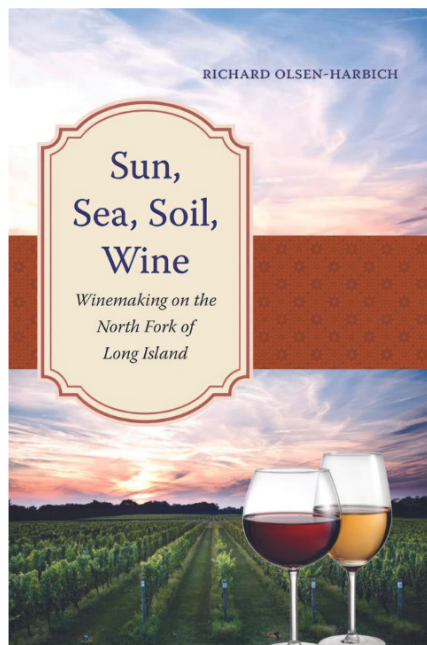


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GOOD READS For any oenophile, these memoirs offer a view into winemaking that can enhance appreciation not only for the authors' own wines, but for wine itself. ILLUSTRATION: FRANCESCO ZORZI

**MAKING WINE** and writing books demand quite different talents, and yet in three new memoirs, veteran wine producers establish themselves as authors of distinction. As varied as the winemakers who wrote them and the wines they make, these books all offer fascinating glimpses into winemaking as a business and a way of life. They're gifts oenophiles can savor well beyond the holiday season.



**'Sun, Sea, Soil, Wine: Winemaking on the North Fork of Long Island' by Richard Olsen-Harbich (Excelsior Editions)**

When Richard Olsen-Harbich of Bedell Cellars began making wine on the North Fork of Long Island 42 vintages ago, the region was better known for producing potatoes than wines. Now famous for its Merlot, Chardonnay and Cabernet, the North Fork is so hip that when Olsen-Harbich likens it to Brooklyn, the comparison seems almost apt.

The early years brought bad weather and various viticultural challenges. "There was a huge learning curve, as no information on Long Island

winemaking was available," Olsen-Harbich writes. "The reference books I had were either from the West Coast or in another language." He's refreshingly frank about the mistakes he made working for many of the region's best-known wineries.

Clearly Olsen-Harbich figured the winemaking out: His wines have received high scores from critics; some have even been served at the White House. While the book's emphasis is on winemaking on this spit of land sandwiched between Long Island Sound and Peconic Bay, Olsen-Harbich explores other topics as well, including wine tasting and the value of numerical scores. "Let's be honest: wines from more famous regions and producers often benefit from a well-entrenched mythology of supposed 'enological greatness' that is rarely challenged by reviewers," he writes. The book officially publishes in January, but signed copies are available now at [BedellCellars.com](http://BedellCellars.com).