



IN DEFENSE OF SCREW TOPS

GAVIN NEWSOM, PLUMPJACK WINERY FOUNDER AND MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO

> "Everyone in the industry was saying, 'You first, you first,' so we went first. I own a winery; corks are a really serious issue for me. The idea that 5 percent of our wines—thousands of bottles—would be corked was unacceptable. We started seeing a real problem with the quality of corks in the late '90s and needed to find an alternative. Screw tops worked. We were nervous about them and what our customers would think, especially at the high end, where we were selling a reserve bottle for over \$125 and closing it with a screw top. But we wanted to make the case that our best wines could be protected not with a cork but with a screw top. In terms of aging, some of these bottles are ten years old now, and every time we have a tasting, nobody gets it right—nobody knows that they have screw tops. We all come in with preconceived notions about what screw tops do and what corks do over time, and we're always dead wrong."—H.K.