

ARGENTINA

Making the taste of this end of the earth

By Joe Ray
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

GENERAL ROCA — Speeding down the road, Hans Vinding-Diers shouts over the phone:

“V2 point two. Point four today? Pigeage and vit. Pump over five minutes. Open.”

Turning onto the dirt road to Bodega Noemía de Patagonia, the car’s wheels lose contact with the ground. With one hand on the phone and the other on the gearshift, Vinding-Diers is doing what my father calls “fancy knee driving” and cackling like a madman.

It sounds like he’s homogenizing wines around the world but instead, we pull into the winery and he continues the conversation with his assistant Jesse Katz face to face.

It’s all part of harvest time at the end of the world.

I spent a week in Patagonia picking, hauling, destemming, and crushing grapes with my feet at Vinding-Diers’s Bodega Noemía and the neighboring Bodega Chacra, run by Piero Incisa della Rocchetta, an Italian wine magnate. Vinding-Diers, a Dane, has worked at top wineries on a few continents and Rocchetta is heir to the throne of Tuscany’s Tenuta San Guido estate.

Through them, I learned the

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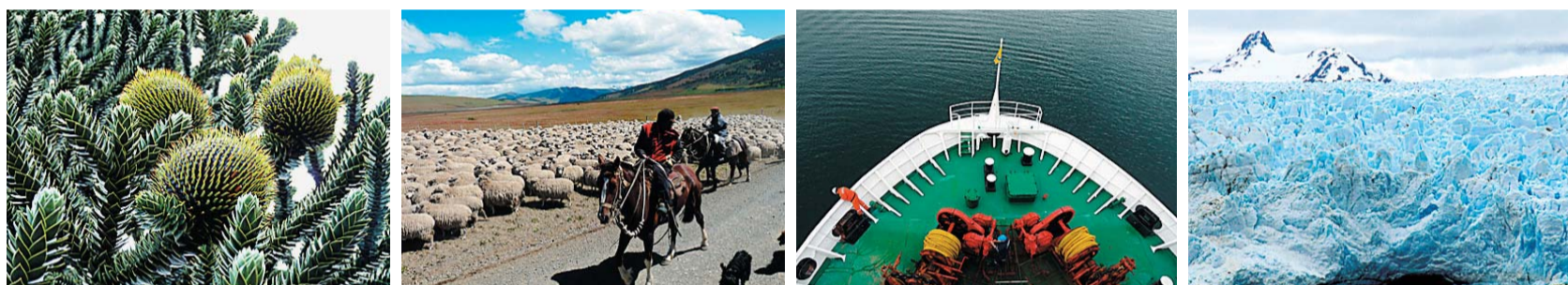
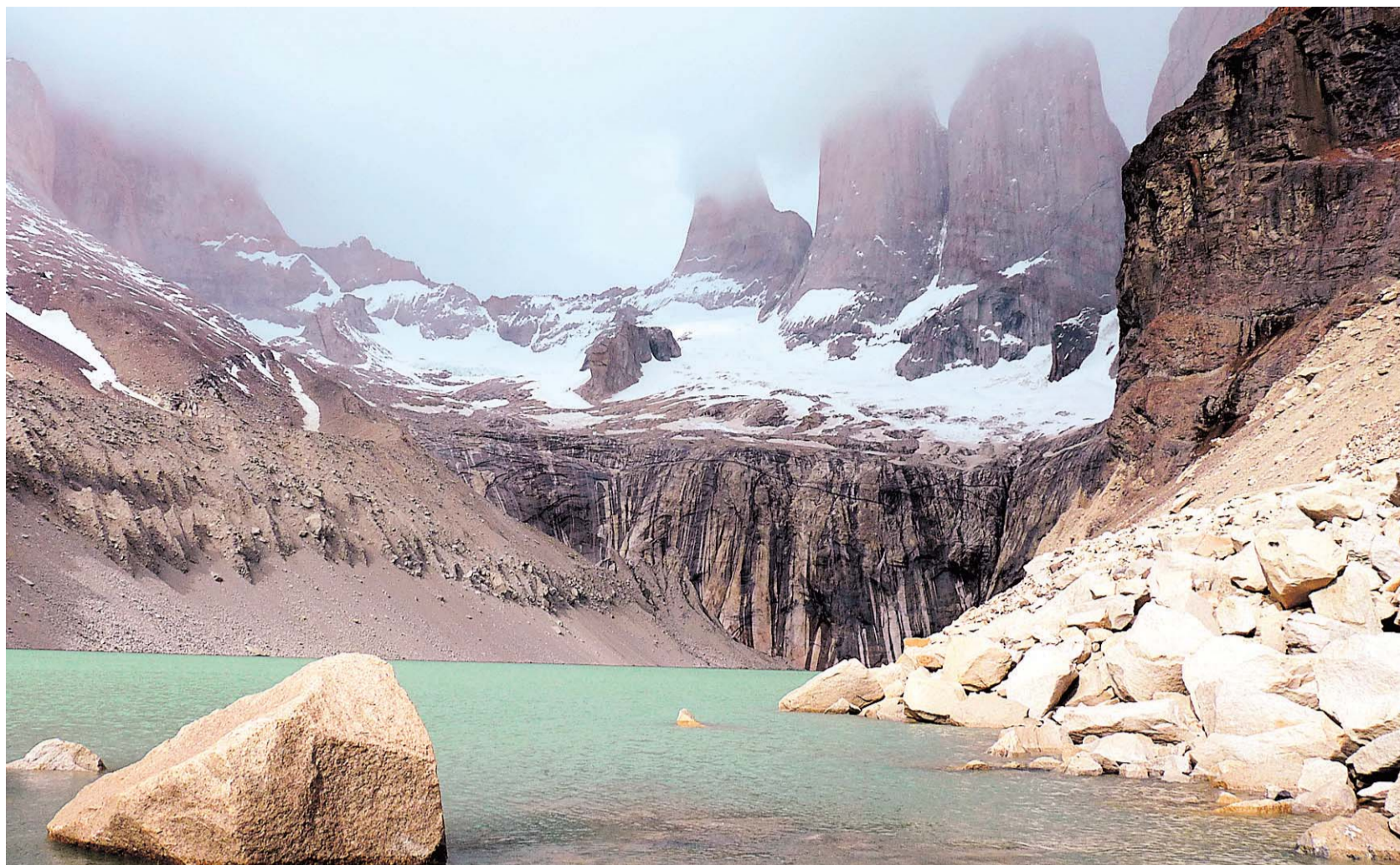
Winemakers Hans Vinding-Diers at Bodega Noemía (top) and his neighbor Piero Incisa della Rocchetta at Bodega Chacra.



PHOTOS BY JOE RAY/FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

“To do something like this in Europe is almost impossible.”

PIERO INCISA DELLA ROCCHETTA



PHOTOS BY DAVID ABEL/GLOBE STAFF

Torres del Paine (top), Chile’s premier national park, near Puerto Natales; a branch of the indigenous evergreen monkey puzzle tree; a herd near the entrance to Torres del Paine; the Navimag ferry motors through a fiord from which passengers see Pio XI, the continent’s largest glacier.

Getting to glacial

Crossing mountain and meadow, sand and rock and snow, and lastly the icy sea

BY DAVID ABEL | GLOBE STAFF

GOLFO DE PENAS — Well before we boarded the old cargo ship, before it plodded past the protection of the mountainous fiords, before the skies turned stormy and the seas swelled, we were warned.

CHILE

We were warned not to expect a cruise, about the smell of the cattle often herded below deck, and the inevitable nausea.

So when the smoky, diesel engines of the 360-foot ship prodded us into the open sea and the waves began sloshing us around, we expected to feel it in our stomachs. What we didn’t expect was that the pummeling would last nearly a full day — through difficult-to-digest meals, perilous showers, and a lot of restless sleep — and that Dramamine would be no cure for the persistent urge to hurl.

“It’s called the Gulf of Punishment for a reason,” said German Balboa, the ship’s second mate, who like most of the crew seemed impervious to the queasiness as he monitored our course for southern Patagonia.

The passage through the Pacific was one leg of a 15-day trip my fiancée,

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Rattled, but moving forward

It ranks among the 10 most powerful earthquakes ever recorded. Its tremors were so strong that scientists say they shortened the length of the day and moved the Earth’s axis.

To put the 8.8-magnitude earthquake that rocked central Chile last month in perspective, it was 500 times more powerful than the 7.0-magnitude quake that hit Haiti in January.

It triggered tsunami warnings in more than 50 countries and was felt as far away as Buenos Aires and parts of

Peru. About 700 people have been reported to have died in Chile as a result of the earthquake, which damaged some 500,000 buildings at a cost that government officials estimate could reach nearly \$30 billion.

“Given that the area impacted by the earthquake is where 80 percent of the people of Chile live, we are lucky that more didn’t die,” said Andrea Lagos, a spokes-

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Tremors from the earthquake’s epicenter were felt in Buenos Aires and Peru.

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