

## Vegetable-based closures for wines with aging potential

Today I opened a slightly too cool Montepulciano d'Abruzzo - vintage 2020 - and was surprised to find that the producer now uses corks with the designation NOMACORC. Since I had done an exhibit on cork years ago, I wanted to know more and looked at the net page of this company: with Nomacorc Green Line, a new "category" of closures was created, so-called PLANTCORC™ closures, made from sustainably grown raw materials based on sugar cane. Through constant innovation, sustainability, and continuous improvement, the Nomacorc Green Line offers tremendous improvements in performance, design, and sustainability of wine closures.

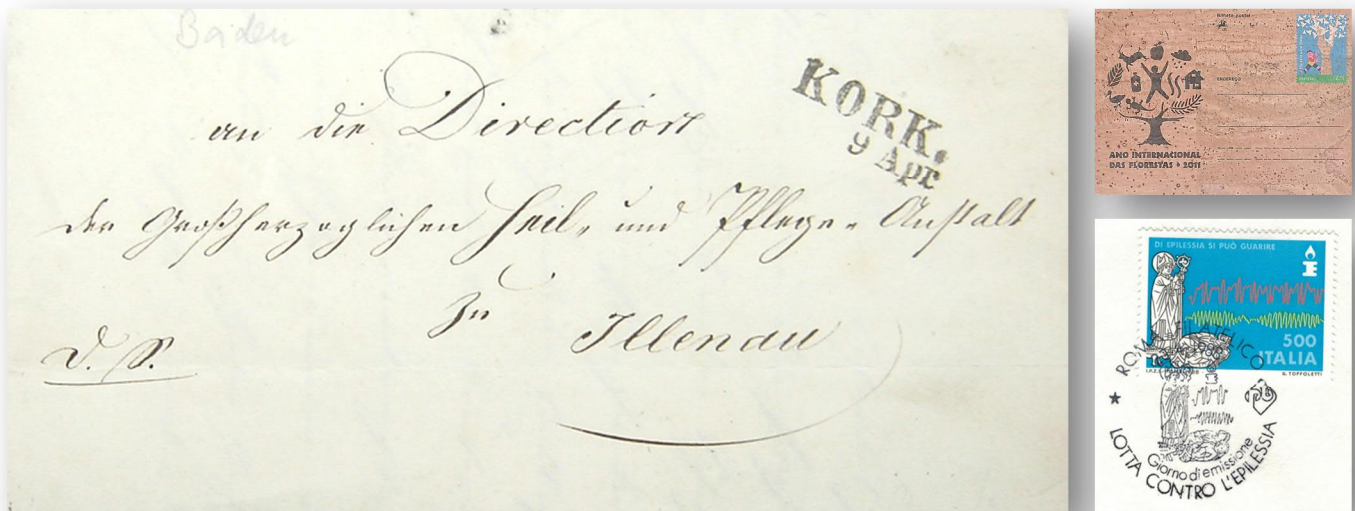


My Montepulciano wine was sealed with a cork made from sugarcane-based raw materials (top left).

Now, I must first confess that wines have no aging potential with me, because they will be drunk in the foreseeable future. So this statement is relative from my point of view, unless the uncle doctor would forbid me to keep adding tannins to my body. The next announcement regarding new category is not quite understandable, because this cork is also round, 45 millimeters long - and it was stuck in a bottle neck. Where is the difference to previous categories? Sustainably? Sustainable grown raw materials are on many people's lips these days. I prefer wine there in principle, because it does the same thing - age. Moreover, if this special "raw material" is brought to perfection, it can certainly embellish an evening.

But now the manufacturer lets the cat out of the bag - the new category is probably: corks based on sugar cane. Now, of course, I wonder why they don't use native grass. Probably this sugar cane base is a waste product - after the sugar syrup has been squeezed out of the sugar cane plant, the pomace remains, so to speak. Experts refer to this pomace as bagasse. It consists of 40-60% cellulose, 20-30% hemicellulose [plant biomass], 20% lignin. Bagasse can be converted into thermal energy, i.e. by combustion. Electricity in Mauritius is generated from 30% bagasse. It can be pressed into briquettes to keep warm at home. Bagasse can also be used in papermaking; plates, bowls and cups can be made from it [though it has been found that hot drinks can dissolve processed plastics from the cups]. Anyway, this tableware would be biodegradable, at least that is how it is advertised. Furfural can be produced from bagasse: Furfural

has great potential to be used to make platform chemicals. Furthermore, after heating and adding lime and storing it for several months, bagasse can be used to produce a soil conditioner and be used in agriculture.



Letter from Kork (Baden, pre-postage stamp), postal stationery from Cork (Spain - for the preservation of cork tree forests, 2011), postmark and stamp with epilepsy theme (Italy, 1988).

But also corks from cork should be used sustainably to preserve the cork forests. The campaign "Kork for Kork", which has been in existence since 1991, is based on the association of the material cork with the place name "Kork". In the Ortenau/Baden region, the name "Kork" is also short for the Diakonie Kork, a center for epilepsy patients.

The spontaneous response to this collection campaign was very good among the population right from the start. Currently, there are more than 3,000 collection points in Germany, ranging from the large collection point of a recycling yard to the dedicated school, church community or private individual. A forwarding agent collects the corks from a minimum quantity of 5 cubic meters nationwide and in France. After the collected cork was initially processed in the Diakonie workshops themselves, all collected corks have been sold to a long-standing partner company since July 1, 2014. Until then, this company had already paid the Diakonie workshops for sorted natural and pressed cork for further processing into cork sheets.

Now the Montepulciano has probably become a little warmer, but this has not had much effect on the palate and the finish - I wonder if it is due to NOMACORC?

## Exhibit on the subject of cork:

- <https://wirbellose.at/kork-fuer-kork>

## Further reading:

- <https://www.vinventions.com/de/nomacorc>
- [Wikipedia](#)
- <https://natuerlichkork.de/nachhaltigkeit/korken-fur-kork/>