

# MICHAEL AUSTIN WINES

---



Properties list:  
range of products  
update  
wine  
labels and sleeves  
bottle  
glass and ceramics  
contemporary  
identity by illustration  
unusual visual association  
end-user packaging

Michael Austin Wines: "Each wine label recounts a story loosely inspired by anecdotes of the two founders' lives...very loosely, that is" Gaby Brink, Creative Director of Temple Brink The Michael Austin Winery was started in California by two long-time friends. The person Michael Austin does not actually exist - Michael and Austin are the middle names of the two founders. Approached to create the branding and packaging for the winery, design consultancy Temple Brink turned this fact into a unique angle that would help enrich every every aspect of the brand's communication, inventing a fictitious character and creating stories about him to give personality and humour to each of the wines. The stories are based on real anecdotes from the founders' lives. Bad habit refers to how the two met as young men in a Catholic high school; High Flyer relates to the fact that one of them flies small airplanes as a hobby. Complicit in this playful fiction, the savvy customer is entertained by these far-fetched tales. Thus, we are led to believe: "Michael Austin grew up in a monastery on the outskirts of France. He was raised by a pack of wild nuns who taught him how to live on a strict diet of wine, cheese, and real estate investments. Today, he is religious about only one thing - making great wine". Humorous illustrations adorn the labels in a palette of deliciously muted tones. In a sector that often relies on quirky names and punchy copy to create distinctiveness, this packaging achieves the perfect balance of humor and sophistication - leading AIGA jurors to commend the design's whimsical naming and provocative style, commenting: "Everything about it has that handcrafted quality, personal touch. It feels like they made that batch just for you".

---

Reference: [Mark Hampshire, Keith Stephenson, DemoGraphics Packaging, Logos, Modena, 2007](#)

---

**Credits:**

**Agency:** Templin Brink

**Designer:** Gaby Brink

Other images:



**BAD HABIT**

Michael Austin grew up in a monastery on the outskirts of France. He was raised by a pack of wild men who taught him how to live on a strict diet of wine, cheese and real estate investments. Today, he is religious about only one thing—making great wine.



**GRAPES GAMES**

Michael Austin spent his wonder years far out the beaten path in the heart of Great Leap district. It was there he took his first steps towards madness, named his first wild grape and invented his first ISO (that's Initial Grape Drinking). Today, he's a grown man with just one thing on his mind—making great wine and drinking it. Or, two things.



**HIDE PLATE**

Michael Austin spent his post-creative years exploring the landscape from above. He found that grapes actually look a lot smaller from 20,000 feet up, but taste about the same. Today, he spends most of his time navigating the fine art of wine making with both feet squarely on the ground.



**MORAL COMPASS**

Michael Austin spent his elementary years studying the inner life of grapes. He realized that, unlike humans, grapes don't have a moral compass—although they do have an amazing sense of direction. Today, Michael Austin has spent his knowledge into bottles of fine wine.

