The discovery of the natural parents of Cabernet Sauvignon in 1997 opened the new era of ‘historical genetics’. The reconstruction of this complete pedigree of natural crosses traverses France and unexpectedly includes such world-famous varieties as Savagnin (Traminer), Chenin Blanc, Merlot and Cot (Malbec). Since question marks represent unknown (and probably extinct) varieties, the inverse relationships are also possible, so that in theory Abouriou, Morenoa and Hondarribi Beltza could be the parents rather than – as illustrated here – the offspring (this is not true for Sauvignon Blanc and Chenin Blanc because they have been shown to be siblings).

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(Cabernet Sauvignon Pedigree Diagram)

Prunelard

Cabernet Sauvignon

Chenin Blanc

Sauvignon Blanc

Magdeleine Noire des Charentes

Folle Blanche

Merlot

Merlot Blanc

Monbadon

Pruéras

Trebiano Toscano

Jurançon Noir

Jurançon Blanc

Basque Country (Spain)

Charente (France)

Gironde (France)

Loire (France)

Lot (France)

north-east France or south-west Germany

Tarn (France)

Toscana (Italy)