



AN EVENING IN SPAIN

with

Marcel Bregstein



SPANISH WINES

The history of viticulture in Spain goes as far back as the year 4000 BC. Under the Roman Empire, during the colonization of the Americas, Spanish missionaries brought vines with them and introduced viticulture to the conquered lands. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, Spanish wine production benefited from the phylloxera epidemic which ravaged many of the French old vines and created a shortage in European supply. Many French producers moved to Spain bringing with them their expertise and introducing progress in the production method. For a long time, Spanish wine was considered by some of inferior quality to the wine of its neighbours, but since the late 20th Century, Spain has established itself as a serious producer with some top quality wines appreciated the world round.

Spain is the third largest producer of the wine in the world, behind only France and Italy, and is famous for big names such as Rioja and Ribera del Duero. With so much to choose from, navigating a Spanish wine list can be a little tricky if you don't know what to look out for. We've compiled an easy guide to understanding and appreciating the best of Spanish vino.

One of the things that make Spanish wine special is that many Spanish wineries age the wine for you, in oak barrels and in the bottle. This means you get a chance to taste cellared wines that have aged to the point of tasting their best without investing in storage space at home. When you look at a Spanish wine and see the terms Joven, Crianza, Reserva, or Gran Reserva, they're telling you about how long the aging was: those Gran Reservas have been cellared the longest, and a bottle with 'Joven' on the label didn't spend nearly as much time resting at the winery.

The top of the Spanish wine quality pyramid is Denominación de Origen Calificada (it has several abbreviations because of regional dialects: DOCa, DOC or DOQ). There are only two DOCs: Rioja and Priorat. Spain also has a unique category, called DO Pago, which is for single estates.

When you're looking at bottles of Spanish wine, you'll often see the primary grape front and center on the label, or otherwise, on the back. One thing you will notice is that because of regional language differences, sometimes grapes or areas may look just a little different. Garnacha in Catalonia, for example, will appear as Garnatxa.

Spanish Red Grapes

Tempranillo: Spain's most famous and noble grape. Also known as Ull de Llebre, Cencibel, Tinto Fino. Grown in many regions including Rioja, Ribera del Duero, La Mancha and Penedes

Garnacha: known as Grenache in France & America, this is the most prominent grape in Priorat

Mencia: Spain's hot and upcoming cult grape used in Bierzo, and also in Valdeorras

Graciano: Also known as Morrastel, Courouillade in France and Xres in California

Mazuelo: Also known as Mazuelo Tinto, Cariñena, and Carignan in France

Manto Negro: the main grape in Mallorca, used to make some very interesting wines

Listan Negro: most common red grape in the Canary Island, particularly Tenerife. Main grape in top wine "Crater"

Negramoll: another red varietal from the Canary Islands, often mixed with Listan Negro

Bobal: used in the Levante to make mainly rosé wines

Cariñena: main red grape in Calatayud and Aragon in general. Carignan in France.

Monastrell: interesting red used mainly in Jumilla (Murcia) and Catalonia, makes juicy wines, Known as Mourvèdre in France.

Moristel: unusual grape found in Somontano and Aragon, makes young fruity wine

Spanish White Grapes

Verdejo: the "it grape" of the moment, grown in Rueda and used for grassy young whites

Albariño: considered by many to be strain of Riesling, this grape is grown in Rias Baixas and makes Spain's most elegant white wines.

Viura/Macabeo: Also known as Maccabeu in France. Main white grape in Rioja and in Penedes. *Cava*

Pedro Ximenez: the best grape used in quality Sherry and Montilla production, aged and used to produce ultra-unctuous sweet wines

Malvasia: This grape originated in Greece. Also known as Subirat-Parent, Blanca-Roja and Malvasia Fina in Italy and Portugal, this is a blender grape

Xarel.lo: Also known as Pansa Blanca in Alella. One of the Cava grapes, also seen more and more in single varietal wines

Parellada: Also known as Montonec, native to Catalonia, key component of Cava

Treixadura: a varietal found in Rias Baixas (Galicia), used on its own and for blending

Moscatel: a delicious "grapey" grape, found prominently in Alicante and more and more in Navarra

Merseguera: a common white grape used for everyday wines in Valencia

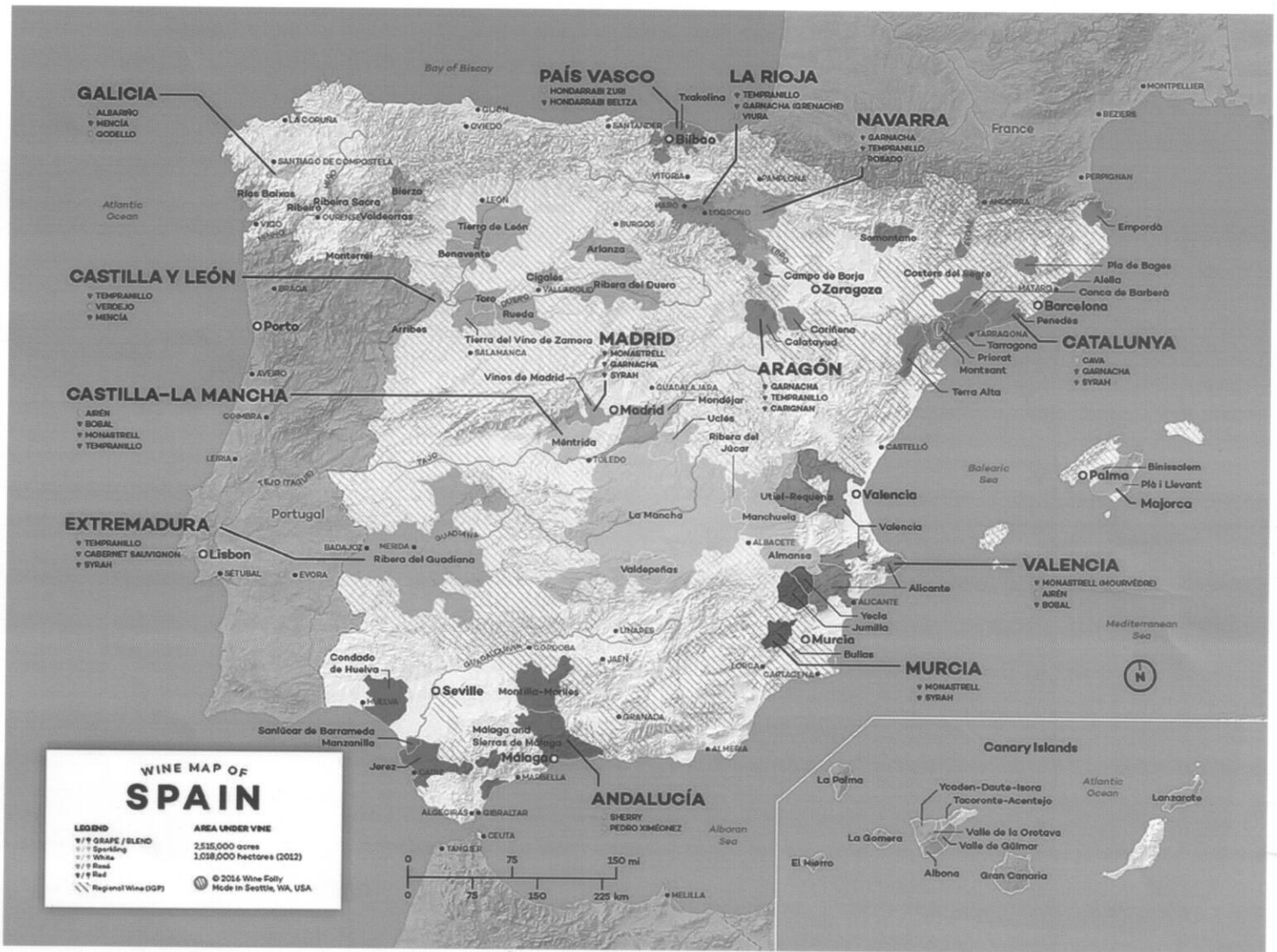
Airén: most abundant white grape in Spain, is slowly being eradicated in favor of other varietals that offer more voluptuous whites.

Godello: main white grape found in the beautiful Ribeiro wine region of Galicia

Hondarrabi Zuri: the near impossible to pronounce grape used to make Basque Country's zippy Txakoli wines

Palomino: main grape used in the production of finos in Jerez

Jerez = brandy Jerez, Galicia



GALICIA

ALBARIÑO
MENCIA
GODELLO

PAÍS VASCO

HONDARRABI ZURI
HONDARRABI BELTZA

LA RIOJA

TEMPRANILLO
GARNACHA
GRENACHE
VUSA

NAVARRA

GARNACHA
TEMPRANILLO
ROSAO

CASTILLA Y LEÓN

TEMPRANILLO
VERDEJO
MENCIA

CASTILLA-LA MANCHA

AREN
BOBAL
MONASTRELL
TEMPRANILLO

EXTREMADURA

TEMPRANILLO
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
SYRAH

MADRID

MONASTRELL
GARNACHA
SYRAH

ARAGÓN

GARNACHA
TEMPRANILLO
CARIGNAN

CATALUNYA

CAVA
GARNACHA
SYRAH

VALENCIA

MONASTRELL
GOURVÉDRE
AREN
BOBAL

MURCIA

MONASTRELL
SYRAH

ANDALUCÍA

SHERRY
PEDRO XIMÉNEZ

Canary Islands

La Palma
La Gomera
El Hierro

Yeaden-Daute-Isora
Tacoronte-Acentejo
Valle de la Orotava
Valle de Güimar

Albana
Gran Canaria

Lanzarote



Regions with Qualifications
 DOC *
 DOCA
 DO * - Same different region - Catalonia

Young Garnacha

Garnacha is known as Grenache in France, but the grape originated in Spain. This fresh and juicy style of Garnacha has a bouquet of sweet red fruit and a smooth iced tea like finish. You'll find this style of Garnacha in Northern Spain close to the border of France in the encompassing regions of Aragon and Navarra. Young Garnacha typically makes a wonderfully candied red fruit flavored Sangria.

Fine Granacjha

Tasting Notes: Grilled Plum, Red Licorice, Juniper and Crushed Gravel

Regions: Vinos de Madrid, Campo de Borja, Priorat, Métrida

High end Garnachas are bold and complex with high tannin and dark raspberry flavors. These wines are aged longer and typically come from older vineyards. You can find single varietal Garnacha around Madrid, where old vines in high elevation vineyards produce concentrated wines. In Spain, blended Garnacha is matched with Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cariñena and delivers bolder styles with blackberry and licorice.

Young Tempranillo

Tasting Notes: Sour Cherry, Plum, Spicy Black Pepper and Bay Leaf

Regions: Rioja *Crianza*, Ribera del Duero *Roble* and *Crianza*, Valdepeñas, Tinto de Toro, La Mancha, Castilla-León, Extremadura

A juicy and spicy style of Tempranillo that typically receives less than a year of aging. Because wines are not aged long, they are spicy, fleshy and tart. Most value-driven Tempranillo tastes this way and the most well-known example of it is Rioja *Crianza*. In Central Spain, there are sub-\$10 wines which are ideal for traditional Spanish Sangria.

Aged Tempranillo

Tasting Notes: Cherry, Dried Fig, Vanilla and Cedar

Regions: Rioja *Reserva*, Ribera del Duero *Reserva*, Toro *Reserva*, Aged Castilla-León

Bold high tannin wines that embellish Tempranillo's best qualities that are aged for several years in oak and bottle. The aging of Tempranillo softens the variety's spiciness and flavors become almost sweet and dried. The extended cost of aging explains why this style typically costs more. Keep your eyes peeled for wines labeled with *Reserva* and *Gran Reserva*.

Albillo is a white wine grape variety grown in northwestern Spain, notably in Galicia. It also grows further to the south and inland towards Madrid, and eastwards in Ribera del Duero where it may also be called *Pardina*. Although it is, at best, only lightly aromatic, Albillo produces wines with tropical notes and a rich mouthfeel. This makes it useful in blends with thinner Viura, Muscat Blanc a Petits Grains, or aromatic grapes such as Verdejo or Albarino, but it is most commonly used to make single-variety wines.

The vineyards of central northern Spain are located at around 1800ft (600m) above sea level, ensuring cool nights and hot days. This pronounced diurnal temperature variation allows Albillo grapes to achieve full ripeness without losing the acidity essential to the quality and aging potential of the final wines.

Muscat of Alexandria is an ancient grape variety used both for table grapes and wine production. Despite its long history, the variety remains rather undistinguished and lies in the shadow of its finer, more aromatic cousin Muscat Blanc a Petits Grains. Nevertheless, there are a handful of wine regions that make high-quality wines from Muscat of Alexandria, most often sweet or fortified styles.

Pedro Ximenez is a white wine grape best known for its role in the sweet sherries of Jerez, Spain. Largely unsuited to table wine production due to its very low acidity, Pedro Ximenez shines as fortified wine either in the Sherry Blend, or as a fortified single-variety wine known as *PX*. It is grown throughout Andalusia (particularly in Montilla-Moriles) and to a lesser extent in other southern Spanish regions including Valencia, Extremadura and the Canary Islands.

Although Pedro Ximenez is most commonly associated with Jerez, it is actually in Montilla-Moriles that the bulk of Sherry-bound Pedro Ximenez is grown. Around 70 percent of the region's vineyard area is planted to Pedro Ximenez, compared to less than 5 percent in Jerez. Consequently, the local Sherry laws allow Pedro Ximenez grape must from Montilla-Moriles to be imported to Jerez, where Sherry production takes place.

Macabeo (or *Viura* in Rioja) is a white wine grape used on either side of the Pyrenees, in the north and east of Spain and the southernmost reaches of France. A relatively versatile grape, it is used in still, sparkling, dry and sweet wines. There are few universal truths about how Macabeo tastes; the wines can be fresh, floral and aromatic when harvested sufficiently early and aged in stainless steel, but weighty, honeyed and nutty when aged in oak and harvested slightly later.

Graciano is a black-skinned wine grape from northern Spain, grown principally in Navarra and Rioja. Although rarely seen outside Spain, the variety is found in small quantities in Australia and California. Under the name *Morrastel*, it is also grown in small quantities in the Languedoc. The classic Graciano wine is moderately tannic, deeply colored and intensely perfumed, with aromas of mulberry, violets and chocolate. In Rioja, where most red wines are aged in oak, these notes are complemented by vanilla and sweet spices – the trademarks of barrel-aged red wine.

WINES FOR TASTING

Ribera del Jucar is a wine region in Castilla-La Mancha, central Spain. It is bordered to the north, west and south by La Mancha and to the east by Manchuela. Like Manchuela, it was once part of the huge *La Mancha* DO zone, but was awarded its own independent DO title in 2003 and is now administered by its own Consejo Regulador (wine authority). The name *Ribera del Jucar* means 'banks of the Jucar', the river that hugs the region's eastern border.

Ribera del Jucar sits on a rolling plain, 2460ft (750m) above sea level. Vines sit side-by-side with olives, fruit orchards and cereals in the terracotta-colored earth. The topsoils are made up of loose pebbles from the old river bed of the Jucar. These provide good drainage, another essential ingredient for viticultural quality. Clay sits below these stones

1)Ribera del Jucar - Bodegas Seniorio del Jucar 2015 Cuevallana Macabeo - 100% Macabeo - 40 to 60 year old vines \$21.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Bodega Seniorio del Jucar. For a century, three generations have consolidated their knowledge of the vine and its fruit, passing down from father to son the steps and professional charisma necessary to make good wine.

Selecting the best raw materials: grapes from surrounding vineyards, caressed by the ever-present sun and irrigated with waters from the Júcar and Cabriel.

The harvest is studied and scheduled so that the grapes are in their optimum state at the exact time of harvesting.

Exhaustive quality control in the receipt and processing of the grapes in the winery, as well as must fermentation control, making the most of their properties, resulting in a wine that integrates tradition with renewal.

Granada is a vast Spanish *Vino de Calidad* title used in the sunbaked Andalucía, southern Spain. The VC shadows the boundaries of Granada province, from which it borrows its name, in central-eastern Andalucía. Granada became a VC in 2009, and is working on its application for DO status for the near future. Granada has one subzone, *Contraviesa-Alpujarra* which occupies the south-eastern corner, bordering the sea.

2) Bodegas H. Calvente 2014 Guindara Blanco - Muscatel - \$26.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Bodegas H. Calvente was born of the dream and vision of entrepreneur Horacio Calvente, who was determined to recover old, forgotten vineyards. He built on the passion and experience of his predecessors, adding a constant dedication to continuous improvement. His determination led to the production of fascinating wines.

Bodegas H. Calvente is a small, artisanal winery. Craftsmanship and low production allow us to strive for true excellence in the end product: singular wines with a distinct personality. That is what makes our wine so exclusive.

Castilla-La Mancha is a large region which lies south and east of the Spanish capital Madrid. Although famous for its Manchego cheese and Don Quixote, Castilla-La Mancha also has a deep cultural history here; scattered throughout the region are various World Heritage sites, including medieval castles, Stone Age rock paintings, and the historic cities of Toledo and Cuenca.

'Harsh' is the best way to sum up the vine-growing conditions in, hot, dry Castilla-La Mancha. Despite this, the region has traditionally been known as a source of low-quality bulk wine; more than half of Spain's grapes are grown here. In recent decades however (and particularly since 1986, when Spain joined the European Union), a winemaking revolution has begun to transform this image of Castilla-La Mancha's wines.

3) 2015 Arrayan Albillo Real - 100% Albillo Real - \$31.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

4) La Verdosa - Arrayan 2013 Arrayan Selección - 30% Syrah, 30% Merlot, 30% Cab Sauv - \$26.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Bodegas Arrayán was founded in 1999 as a personal project of entrepreneur José María Entrecanales and his wife, María Marsans, on their estate, La Verdosa, which is located in Santa Cruz de Retamar, Toledo.

Renowned Australian viticulturist, Richard Smart, was commissioned to perform an exhaustive study of the terrain, soil, and climate in order to choose the optimal exposures, orientations and varieties in accordance with the winery's goals. Planting of Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot commenced in the section of the vineyard with the highest altitude, in harmony with the holm oak trees scattered around the estate.

The winery's first vintage went on sale at the end of 2003.

The appointment of Maite Sánchez as oenologist in 2009 marked a new era for Arrayán in terms of both the process of making its existing wines and her focus on adding autochthonous varieties to our range.

5) Castilla-La Mancha

2011 Guindalera Tinto - Tempranillo, Syrah, Cab, Merlot - \$25.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Aragon is one of the 17 autonomous communities of Spain. Located in the country's north, it stretches from the imposing Pyrenees mountains south to the expansive central Iberian plateau. To the east of Aragon lies Catalonia, while La Rioja, Castilla y Leon and Navarra are its neighbors to the west.

Aragon encompasses the eastward-flowing Ebro River and its vast valley, the river being one of the largest and most important in Spain. The waterway also divides Aragon's wine regions, with Somontano occupying the north and three smaller regions located further south.

6) Aragon Region Bodegas Sierra de Guara S.L. 2014 Evohe Garnacha - \$16.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Bodegas Sierra de Guara was founded in 1997 with the aim of creating Wines which reflect all our character and express the uniqueness of the terroir and natural environment, the Sierra de Guara Mountains. In order to achieve it, the winery was superbly equipped with cutting edge winemaking technologies at all stages through the whole winemaking process from the arrival of grapes at the winery to vacuum-bottling. All of it under the control of our dynamic team.

The contrast between cold winters (because of the influence of high mountains) and hot and dry summers in our area (with high thermal difference in summer between the day and the night) is a key factor determining the good state of our vineyards through the year and also the quality of our Wines. The Wines of Bodegas Sierra de Guara keep the heritage of the Bordeaux winemakers who established in the Aragón area of the Pyrenees after the phylloxera epidemic

Catalonia (*Catalunya* in Catalan and *Cataluña* in Spanish) is a proudly independent region in the north-east of Spain. It stretches from the historic county (*comarca*) of Montsia in the south to the border with France in the north. The Mediterranean Sea forms its eastern border and offers 360 miles (580km) of coastline.

The *Catalunya DO* appellation was Spain's first region-wide, cover-all DO title. Created in 1999, it covers all of the scattered vineyards that were not covered by any of the region's other 11 DOs.

7) Catalan Region Penedes - Mas Rodo 2014 Montonega - 100% Montonega - Only Producer - \$26.49

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Bodega Mas Rodo The winery is located in the middle of the vineyards, where the grapes are manually harvested and carefully crafted into high quality wine. Both the winery and vineyards are designed for low yield in order to coax more richness and expression in our wines.

The characteristics of the vineyards allow us to have white varieties as Parellada, Montonega, Macabeo, Muscat, and Riesling, and red varieties as Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo and Merlot and combine them with experimental varieties of perfect acclimatization planted in our property, including Marcellan, Prieto Picudo and Verdejo.

Grapes are harvested manually, even on trellised vines, then collected in boxes and loaded on small trailers, needing no travel time to be delivered to the winery. The selected grapes of the highest quality and in best conditions reach the winery where they undergo the second selection.

Rioja – the home of bright, berry-scented, barrel-aged red wines made from Tempranillo and Garnacha – is arguably Spain's top wine region. It is certainly the most famous, rivaled only by Jerez. Located in northern Spain, Rioja's vineyards trace the course of the Ebro River for roughly 60 miles (100km) between the towns of Haro and Alfaro.

The Rioja wine region is contained mostly within the La Rioja administrative region after which it is named (itself named after the *Rio Oja* river which flows through it), although its northernmost vineyards creep over into neighboring Navarra and Pais Vasco (see Rioja Alavesa). The region is demarcated less by political and administrative boundaries and more by geographical features, namely the Ebro and foothills of the *Sierra de la Demanda* and *Sierra de Cantabria* mountain ranges.

8) Rioja - Bodegas Y Vinedos Tritium S.L. 2011 Tritium Reserva - 100% Tempranillo - \$27.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Bodegas Tritium was born from our depth of feeling for our old family vineyards: a love and care that today allows us to have eight hectares of different varieties aged between 90 and 113 years old. These vineyards were never subject to the great uprooting that occurred in La Rioja: the first of these took place in the 1960s-1970s, spurred on by the arrival of mechanised labour and the second in the 1980s-1990s with the arrival of the multinationals in the wine business.

Tritium Unlike in France where vineyard owners adapted their tractors to the width of the traditional vines, in the 60s and 70s Spanish vines were uprooted to allow a greater use of machinery and to simplify the tractors' entrance into the vineyards. In the 80s and 90s a large demand for grapes within the Rioja AO, good prices (with almost no respect for quality) and the subsequent arrival of large corporate ownership saw the substitution of old varieties for new, high yielding ones. The subsequent loss of vineyards and viticultural heritage was very high for the sake of higher yields and profits.

9) Rioja Castillo de Mendoza 2013 Noralba Tinto Crianza Organic - \$30.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Castillo de Mendoza The establishment of Castillo de Mendoza winery dates back to 1994, when the Mendoza-Cadarso family, descendants of several generations of wine growers, decided to resume the family tradition and thus fulfill one of their dreams: opening their own winery. The winery is located in the riojan area of San Vicente de la Sonsierra, where the family comes from, located in La Rioja Alta (High Rioja) and worldwidely known for the extraordinary quality of its wines as well as its old vine growing tradition. An old distillery of the 17th, century restored and fitted out for its new use, will receive the winery's first years of life.

Equipped with the best and latest technology, the new winery, of 2800m², combines modern facilities with an underground wine cellar dug in bare rock following the old tradition of this emblematic Rioja region.

Ribera del Duero is an important wine-producing area in Castilla y Leon, northern Spain. Its reputation is largely thanks to the high-quality of its red Tempranillo-based wines, the best examples of which are renowned throughout the world. The capital of Ribera del Duero is the historic town of Aranda de Duero, which boasts a series of antique underground cellars (*bodegas*) built to store wine. The interconnecting cellars reach a depth of 40ft (12m) in places. Despite a long history of winemaking, Ribera del Duero was not awarded DO status until 1982. A corresponding Consejo Regulador (wine-regulating authority) was then established to administer it.

10) 2011 Mibal Crianza -Bodegas Hornillos Ballesteros 100% Tempranillo - 50 Yr Old Vines - \$30.95

Colour:

Nose:

Taste:

Ambos descendientes de familias de viticultores, Miguel Hornillos y Javier Ballesteros decidieron un buen día unir sus conocimientos y su pasión por el vino y la uva en un proyecto lleno de ilusión para producir vinos de calidad. Nuestra bodega nació en 2002 de corte familiar y con producción propia.

**Special thanks to
Bob Yakimetz & Artisanal Wine Imports**

&

The Royal Canadian Yacht Club

