



"The New Spain" w/ Eric Solomon

Founded in 1989, European Cellars is an importer of hand-selected wines from France, Spain, and Portugal. Our mission is simple: To select wineries that represent the best of their regions and market them with care and integrity to the U.S. marketplace. The company is owned and managed by internationally-known importer Eric Solomon, whose commitment to the wines he represents has been praised extensively by Robert Parker, Steven Tanzer, and thousands of consumers who enjoy these delicious products. To us, the role of an importer is to represent and champion the work of the producer by achieving the highest possible level of quality distribution, awareness, and image in the U.S. market for the producer. We strive to recognize and represent great and unique winemakers and their vineyards from both classic/established regions as well as newly emerging areas.

SPECIALTY IMPORTERS

One of the most positive developments of the last decade has been the growth and success of specialty importers who sell wines from some of the world's greatest small wine producers. Because of the limited quantities of their wines, these specialty importers frequently give exclusivities to one or two retailers within each major metropolitan area. The following innovative importers have established new quality standards because of their passion for wine.

Eric Solomon of European Cellars is another exceptionally talented individual who has a penchant for ferreting out superb, generally unknown estates from the Rhone Valley and Languedoc-Roussillon regions of France. He also has ventured into Spain with considerable success. By 1989, "tired of the corporate wine world's mentality", he established European Cellars, which is dedicated to working with "small, intensely serious wine-makers in both classic and emerging wines regions throughout Europe". Like other specialty importers, Solomon believes in shipping all his wines in temperature-controlled containers and, assuming the wines are stable and free of potential problems, he insists that the wines be bottled with no filtration.



Following are some of the top choices from Eric Solomon's portfolio

"The Name of Eric Solomon On A Bottle of Wine Is Synonymous With High Quality" -- Robert Parker

Cava Information Sheet

Cava is Spain's traditional sparkling wine, produced mainly in the Penedès region in northeastern Spain. Crisp, fruity and well-balanced, cava has grown in popularity over the years. As The Wine Spectator's renowned critic Thomas Matthews commented, "Today's cavas are fresher and livelier, with more fruit yet more sophistication."

History of Cava. Cava was created and fostered by the climate and history of Spain's Catalunya region. The homeland of cava is Penedès, located approximately 40km southwest of Barcelona. The region is surrounded by rough and rocky elevation of Montserrat, and enjoys the ideal climate for wine-making, protected from the heat and humidity of the Mediterranean and the harsh northern and eastern winds, known as levanter. The soil of the Penedès region is excellent for grape-growing, with chalky top layers over clay and a deeper layer of rocky, poor soil, causing the vines to thrive with deep roots.

Cava was born in the second half of the nineteenth century from a change in grape variety and one man's idea: In the second half of the nineteenth century, the vineyards of Penedès were badly infested by phylloxerae (grape root bugs). When the vineyards were replanted, white grapes were planted instead of the traditional red grapes. At that time, Jose

Rabentos, who was traveling in the Champagne region of France, saw that region's distinctive sparkling wine and thought of producing such a wine himself. In 1872, he succeeded in producing Spain's first sparkling wine, called cava. In a short time, cava gained tremendous popularity in the market.

About the Cork The label and cork guarantee that the wine is cava. As D.O. (Denomination of Origin) wines, all cavas are authorized by law to carry specific labeling. The cork of a cava wine are always stamped with the maker's logo and a four-pointed star on the base. These markings guarantee the certain quality of cava wines.

Cava Production Process.

Pressing: The first step is the pressing of freshly picked grapes. Only about 50% of this juice, known as flower must, is used to make cava.

First Fermentation. After removing the skin and fibrous parts by clarification and filtration, the juice is fermented in stainless steel tanks. The temperature is kept at a constant 15-18 degrees Celsius, and the sediment is removed upon completion.

Blending. Wines fermented from different grapes are blended and yeast and cane sugar added before the wine is bottled and temporarily corked.

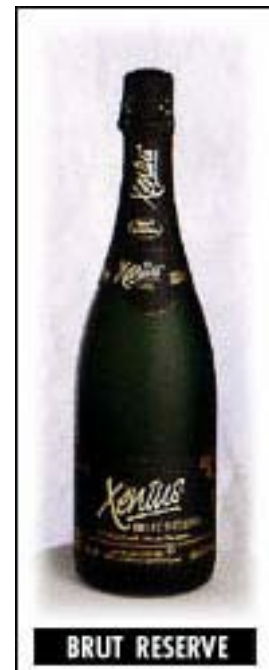
Secondary Fermentation. The wine is fermented a second time in the bottle. The action of the yeast and the cane sugar causes fermentation again, and natural carbon dioxide is released into the wine.

Riddling (Remuage). To remove the sediment produced from the second fermentation, the bottles are turned upside down and rotated so the sediment is collected in the neck of the bottle.

Disgorging (Degorgement). The neck of the bottle, where the sediment has collected, is frozen and the temporary cork removed. The internal pressure forces the frozen sediment out. Wine of the same type and volume is added to fill the bottle.

Corking, Labeling, and Shipment. Finally, a cork with a star mark is used to seal the bottle, a label is attached, and the bottle is ready for shipment.

White Grape Varieties: Macabeo, Xarel-Lo, Parellada and Chardonnay.



XÈNIUS CAVA BRUT RESERVA
SILVER MEDAL - "Wine & Spirit 2002"

Cava Sweet/Dry Indications

Brut --> Extra dry

Seco --> Dry

Semiseco --> Medium

unique pairings in wine and cheese

"eric solomon selections"

SPAIN/GALICIA

Burgans Albarino 2003

Varietals: 100% Albarino

Fresher than the Prince of Bel-Air, fruitier than the Man from Del Monte and more invigorating than an ice-cold plunge pool, Burgans Albarino is the drink of choice for those lazy summer days in the sun.

TASTING NOTE

Joyously aromatic on the nose with apple, peach and apricot aromas. Medium bodied and off dry on the palate with juicy fruit flavours, clean acidity and a long, mineral-dominated finish.

The "Rías Baixas" Denomination of Origin — a label which guarantees that the origin of the wine is from a specific area — refers to the geographically limited region where the mythical grape is cultivated, giving rise to the most prestigious Galician white wine: Albariño.

The Val do Salnés (Salnés Valley), at the very heart of this region, is influenced by Atlantic breezes. The mild temperatures throughout the year bring about ideal conditions, which together with the unique characteristics of the soil, favour a perfect ripening of the grape, turning it into excellent raw material for one of the best quality white wines

The aromatic albariño grape grows in very small clusters, which weigh just over 125 grams. It can be distinguished from other types of grapes by its high sugar content and acidity level, providing our wines with an exclusive freshness and personality. It is currently the most well-known variety from theregion and also the most sough-after.

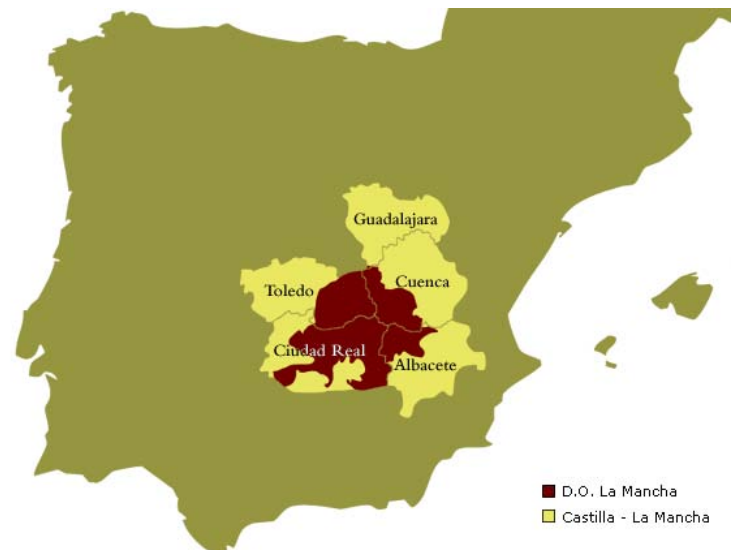
Pairing Thoughts: _____



CAMPO DE MONTALBAN CHEESE (CAM-po day Mohn-tahl-BAHN)

This cheese is a blend of cow, sheep and goat's milk harvested in La Mancha. Aged 90 days, the texture and appearance are similar to Manchego yet the flavor exhibits characteristics of all three milks. Before 1985 this was considered a Manchego cheese. Campo de Montalban is rich and buttery and finishes with a perfect balance in your mouth.

It has a darker, more yellow and greasier body than Manchego, yet it has the same thatched and waxed rind.



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SPAIN/GALICIA
BODEGAS SENORIO
2003 Val de Sil

Varietals: 100% Godello

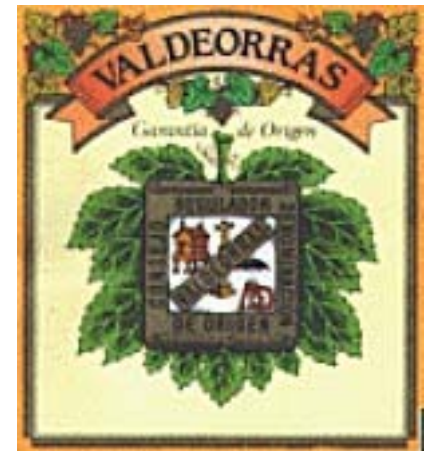
"Fat, rich and highly concentrated, Very intensely flavored with a long lean finish."

The Godello Grape:

This grape and Albariño both come from Galicia. Godello grapes are known for their remarkable aromas, showing a great palate and holding a well balanced body. The wine aroma characterizes swift flowers, usually a very delicate scent with a graceful and mid palate. The varietal is elegant with crisp seductive fruits and finish with a good length.

The privileged valley of Valedorras crossed by the river Sil and natural way into Galicia possess the best climate conditions to cultivate the Godello grape. This varietal grows best on the south face of the hills where the soil is mostly dry.

Pairing Thoughts: _____



RONCAL - Labeled "Denominación de Origen Protegida" (D.O.P.)

Taste of the mountain - "The soul of the Valleys of the Pyrenees"

In the Navarra region of the Spanish Pyrenees, lies the Roncal Valley. Seven villages make up this valley and control the production and marketing of the first Spanish name-controlled cheese, Roncal. Record of this cheese's production dates back as far as the thirteenth century, when the citizens of these towns worked together to raise sheep and to tend horses and the forests of the Pyrenees. Each year they would herd their flocks up the mountains to the high pastures in the spring, and each fall they would lead them back down and take their products to market. Roncal is still a product of the fresh mountain air, and it still made from raw sheep's milk. It is ripened slowly over the course of several months to develop a rustic, nutty and olivey flavor and a moist, smooth texture.

The traditional hand crafted methods of making Roncal cheese are jealously guarded family secrets, unwritten and handed down through the ages from one generation to the next.

Characteristics.

Type of milk: Navarre and Latxa sheep.

Aging period: Minimum 4 months. From cured to very old.

Shape: Cylindrical, usually with dark gray or straw-colored rind.

Flavor: Well-developed and structured, buttery with an aroma of straw, dried fruit and mushrooms



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SPAIN/CIGALES

BODEGAS EMETERIO FERNANDEZ, FINCA LA LEGUA

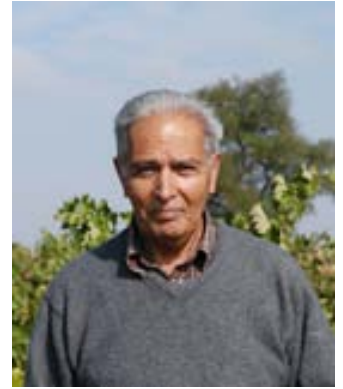
2003 La Legua

Varietals: 96% Tempranillo -- 4% Garnacha

Aromas: Red fruit with notes of cocoa and roasted nuts.

Flavors: Smooth and velvety texture captures your attention with structure from the 12 months in French and American oak. Grown on 25 year old vines.

Finish: The finish is toasty and will gain more elegance over time.



Adolfo Gonzalez Lázaro, who at 27 years of age is one of the youngest and most promising winemaker in Castilla, is conscious of the fact that a good wine begins with the care given to the vine and that to obtain the best results in the bottle, in-depth knowledge is required together with a detailed study of the different soils and characteristics of each of the plots on the estate.

The Finca de la Legua Estate has three different grape varieties. The Tempranillo variety, also known locally as Tinta Fina, takes up the largest surface area, both the Garnacha variety and Cabernet Sauvignon take up small plots on the estates.

Pairing Thoughts: _____

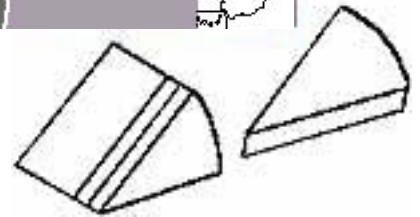
Zamorano - sheep's milk

Cheese-makers of Zamora are famous in all of the Castilian-Leonesa plateau, to the northwest of Madrid. For centuries, entire families would move with their flocks of sheep to new grazing lands. Wherever they settled (temporarily) they made cheese from the milk of their own livestock or from milk purchased from local farmers. Oftentimes they sold the same milk back to the farmers in the form of cheese. When they returned to their homes in the province of Zamora, they sold their cheeses in local markets, leaving the remainder to ripen for long periods in underground cellars previously used for wines. These cheeses were later either consumed by their producers, bartered or sold.

In the second half of this century, these nomadic farmers became sedentary and either farmed their land or continued to produce cheese.

Zamora cheese enjoys great prestige for its quality and character, resulting from the breeds of sheep predominant in the region (Churra and Castellana), the climate conditions (cold and humid) and its long aging in the cellars.

The cheeses would be turned often, and rubbed with olive oil, all this giving the cheese its characteristic dark color.



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SPAIN/ LA MANCHA

MAS QUE VINOS, ERCAVIO, MESA DE OCANA

Ercavio Tempranillo Roble - 100% Tempranillo

Tasting Notes:

Color: red cherry-ruby of good intensity.

Nose: fine and powerful aroma, with fruit and linked notes, memories of fruits in season and lightly toasted bread.

Mouth: very good presence in the mouth, nice balance, flavorful, full bodied volume; average and amiable tannins, average acidity, flavorful with thoughts of mature fruit.

"Deep ruby. Superripe aromas of dark berry liqueur, licorice, clove and tree bark. Lush and fat, with very sweet flavors of roasted blackberry and licorice. Finishes with fine, dusty tannins and lingering sweetness. An excellent value."

~ 88 Points Stephen Tanzer's, International Wine Cellar



The Tempranillo (Cencibel)

This variety is the most important of the red grapes used in La Mancha, as also the grape most acknowledged for its quality at the national level. It is widely used in La Mancha to produce crianza (aged) wines, whether monovarietal or in coupage with other varieties. Production is moderate, although of excellent quality.

In other regions it is known as Ull de Llebre (Ojo de Liebre), Tinto de Toro, Tinto Fino, Tinto del País, Jacibera or Verdiell.

Tempranillo is a grape variety that ripens early ('temprano' means early). It produces a medium-sized cluster, compact and regular. Grapes have a medium-to-thick skin, soft pulp and colourless juice.

CABRA PIMENTAO

A semi-hard goat cheese from the Trasmontana region of Spain. The cheese is rubbed with olive oil and paprika which gives it a pleasantly piquant flavor with a long finish. It comes attractively packaged in a wooden crate.

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SPAIN / VINO DE LA TIERRA DE CASTILLA

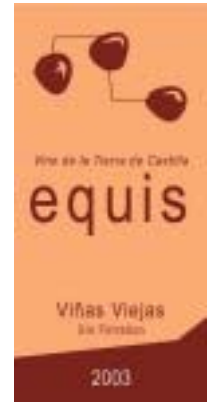
BODEGAS LUAN, ALBACETE

2003 Equis, Vinas Viejas "old vines"

Varietals: 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Bobal, 10% Syrah, 10% Merlot, 10% Tempranillo, 5% Garnacha Tintorera

"Full medium ruby. High-toned aromas of blackberry, pepper, graphite and smoky oak, along with a faint greenness. Sweet and rather fine-grained in texture; suave and nuanced for such a superripe, distinctly warm wine. Finishes with substantial but nicely ripe tannins."

~ 87 Points, Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar



Garnacha- (Grenache), after Tempranillo the second most important red grape used in La Mancha Denomination of Origin wines, is characterised by its productivity. It is a variety present in almost all the winemaking regions of Spain.

In other regions of Spain it goes by the names Garnatxa, Aragonés, Giro, Lladoner, Tinto de Navajcarnero, Tinto Navarro and Gironet. It is said to have its origins in the Ebro Valley. Its name, whose etymology is uncertain, may derive from 'grenate' (garnet), referring to the colour of its wines. The cluster is medium-sized and compact, black in colour, spheroid in shape, with fine-skinned grapes, a juicy pulp and colourless juice.

Syrah- A red grape variety with its origins in the Rhône Valley, Syrah offers excellent results in areas with plenty of sun and high temperatures. It is widely used in Australia and California, where it is known as Shiraz, and is adapting extremely well in La Mancha. Its behaviour in hot climates is excellent, and although it adapts well to colder climates, the wines produced are somewhat lighter. It produces a cylindrical, medium-sized cluster, with blueish-coloured grapes. The skin is of medium thickness and the pulp is juicy.

Bobal- Also dubbed as Provechón or Requena. Native from Mediterranean areas in the Iberian Peninsula. It is the main plantation found in the province of Valencia and the DO's it encompasses, including Utiel-Requena. Its singularity derives from being one of the varieties containing more colour pigments (anthocyanins) in the skins. Used to be employed in the making of deep-coloured reds ('Doble Pasta') for mixing and to lesser extent in the making of rosados. As of late a new wave of Valencian winemakers is exploring its capability for ageing (i.e. attains when perfectly mature acid levels far superior to those of Monastrell). The results obtained are quite astonishing, especially when the plantings are extremely old.

IBORES - Raw goat's milk from Spain.

Queso Ibores is made in Extremadura, which is the most rugged, least developed, and most economically distressed region in Spain. This raw goat's milk cheese reflects its homeland with its full, simple flavor. It is hard and dense and becomes sharper with age. During its two-month aging period, the rustic cheese is rubbed with a mixture of olive oil and sweet paprika. It is hard enough to shave over salads and hot dishes and delicious as a table cheese when served with fresh fruits and vegetables.

Made from raw goat's milk, aged over two months



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*Case Orders Only: Friends of Taste Network receive 15% discounts on wine.
Allow two days for delivery. Thank you for your order.*

NV XÈNIUS CAVA BRUT RESERVA, Cava, Penedes

Grape Varieties: 100% Macabeo - \$13.00

_____ cs/btl

Burgans Albarino 2003, Galicia

Grape Varieties: 100% Albarino - \$14.00

_____ cs/btl

2003 Val de Sil, Galicia

Grape Varieties: 100% Godello - \$18.00

_____ cs/btl

2003 La Legua, Cigales

Grape Varieties: 96% Tempranillo, 4% Garnacha - \$11.50

_____ cs/btl

2003 Ercavio, Tempranillo Roble, La Manch

Grape Varieties: 100% Tempranillo - \$11.75

_____ cs/btl

2003 Equis, "Vinas Viejas", Tierra de Castilla

Grape Varieties: Varietals: 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Bobal, 10% Syrah,
10% Merlot, 10% Tempranillo, 5% Garnacha Tintorera - \$9.50

_____ cs/btl

Name: _____

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