

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.



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

Sara's Nevat Cheese



Nevat is a soft paste cheese made with pasteurized goat's milk and aged 2-3 months. Produced in the Barcelona region of Spain, Nevat is a white mold ripened cheese created by Mr. Josep Cuixart using the milk of Murcia and Grenadine goats. Yielding a milk that is richer in fat than French Alpine goats, the resulting cheese is fuller in flavor with a slightly sweet tang not found in the French pâte molle cheese. The goats graze on typical Mediterranean vegetation in the region Vilassar de Dalt 15 kms. north of Barcelona near the seacoast. Hints of rosemary, thyme, and olive are detectable in their milk. The goats do not consume artificial fodder or additives in accordance with a practice strictly controlled by the Catalan Authorities.



Nevat, which means "snowy" in Catalan, owes its name to the white velvet mold of the rind fostered with penicillium candidum. The cheese is 55% butterfat and 45% moisture with a 25% protein content

Cava Sweet/Dry Indications

Brut --> Extra dry
Seco --> Dry
Semiseco --> Medium

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Palacio de Fefiñanes 2003 Palacio de Fefiñanes, Albariño

This is a classic Albariño which is good young, but actually improves over two to three years and remains quite drinkable for up to five years. Owner Juan Gil comments that the wine really starts to come into its own in June/July, and he actually prefers it 18 or more months after it's made. A Fefiñanes "vertical" of three or four vintages can provide some most interesting surprises.

The Estate

Founded in 1904, Palacio de Fefinanes is housed inside a spectacular baronial palace which sits on the lovely main square of coastal Cambados. The facility was built in 1647 by vicount of Fefiñanes Gonzalo Sarmiento Valladares (1583-1659). Palacio de Fefiñanes was the first producer to bottle wine under the D.O. Rías Baixas denomination. The label design dates from 1928 and shows an engraving of the Fefiñanes Palace.



The Vineyards

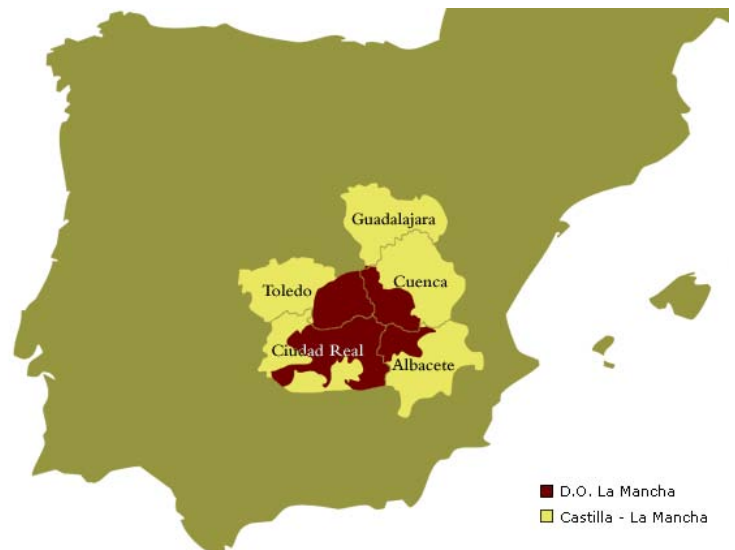
Produced in the Rías Baixas region, where the vineyards are quite windy due to the proximity of the Atlantic Ocean. It also provides acidity and freshness to the wine. The winery has only a token acreage, and buys its Albariño grapes from producers under long-term contract and with technical assistance from the winery's enologist. They make two 100% Albariño wines: Albariño de Fefiñanes, a young traditional style Rías Baixas white (30,000 bottles/year); and 1583 Albariño de Fefiñanes, aged six months in 600 liter sherry butts (4,000 bottles/year - annual production: 100,000 liters). Year after year, local critics rate Albariño de Fefiñanes as one of the best.

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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WINE: Casamaro

REGION: Rueda

GRAPE: Verdejo and Viura

VINIFICATION: Temperature controlled fermentation.

VINTAGE: 2003



WINE MAKERS NOTES : 100% free run juice from the younger vines, fermented in stainless steel and bottled directly from the tanks.

Garciarevalo is a family owned winery established in 1991 in Matapozuelos in the heart of Rueda. They specialize in Verdejo with additional plantings of Viura. They have 40 hectares of over 100 year old vines including Verdejo vines that are up to 130 years old. The unique qualities of this site are evident in the soils that differ from most other areas of Rueda. The soil is sand here and it allows for excellent drainage and greater difference between day and night temperatures. Long winters with late frosts combine with hot and dry summers create the ideal situation to cultivate grapes with the perfect balance of sugar and acidity.

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/ LA MANCHA

MAS QUE VINOS, ERCAVIO, MESA DE OCANA

Ercavio 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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Vino de Mesa de Zamora

Dehesa la Granja 2000 A hallmark vintage.

A highly-extracted, polished red wine, aged 25 months in American and French oak. Like the wines from neighboring Toro, showing powerful structure and ageworthiness, with a balance of clean fruit and palate length so typical of a Fernández wine.

Bodegas y Viñedos Fernández Rivera, Vadillo de la Guareña

In 1998, Alejandro was offered the opportunity to acquire the historic and prominent 'La Granja' estate: 1800 acres of valley floor and southfacing hillsides with a central hilltop compound and extensive hand-carved 17th century cellars. In semi-ruin following a century devoted to raising fighting bulls, the estate has been redeveloped in its entirety. New vineyards total 300 acres of Tempranillo clones taken from Fernández' oldest vineyards in Pesquera, planted to a large extent using its own rootstock (ungrafted) in the estate's compact sandy soils.



Pairing Thoughts: _____

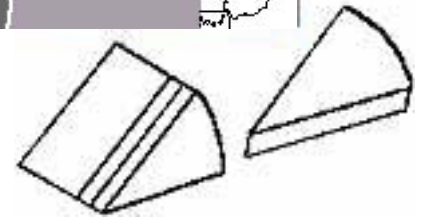
Zamorano - sheep's milk

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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Denominación de Origen El Bierzo Albares 2003/2004

Dominio de Tares makes this exception to its oak-only philosophy in order to demonstrate the pure and seductive primary flavors of Mencía from vines over 40 years old. Limited release.

Dominio de Tares, San Román de Bemibre Bierzo's geographical isolation, ringed by mountains with an Atlantic-influenced climate at high altitudes, gives rise to a noble terroir. The local Mencía variety, widely considered a relative of Cabernet Franc, clearly transmits the slate/gravel minerality of the region's soils while retaining fresh and intense flavors at higher alcohol levels.



Tasting Notes:

Dominio de Tares Mencía 2000) "Nervy and intense. This finely etched red has concentration without heaviness, showing crisp black cherry, toast, gamy and spicy flavors, with firm tannins and a clean, spicy finish. Drink now through 2006." 89

--- Wine Spectator, August 2002

El Bierzo is a widening of the Sil River Valley ringed by snowcapped peaks. It is said that a rather substantial lake existed in ancient times, drained by the Romans to access the mineral riches beneath its waters (Las Médulas, the ruins of one of the largest gold mining operations in the Roman Empire, is an International Patrimony). On the frontier between Castilla y León and Galicia, Bierzo's climate is typified by a mixture of Continental and Atlantic influence, at relatively high altitude. Soils are mineral, with slate and quartzite predominating. El Bierzo's predominant local variety is the Mencía, descended from grapes brought by the Roman settlers and widely regarded as the immediate precursor to the Cabernet Franc. Nearly all of the vines are over 30 years old, with a preponderance of vines over 100 years old.

Pairing Thoughts: _____



Manchego Cheese

Manchego cheese is the most important and well-known sheep's milk cheese in Spain. The shape of this cheese is very characteristic and defined, due to the traditional use of esparto grass molds which imprints a zigzag pattern along the side of the cheese. The small wooden boards used for pressing the cheese also imprints the typical wheat ear pattern on the top and bottom.

This rustic molds are used outside of La Mancha as well. Thus, there are other Spanish sheep's milk cheese with similar shape and markings, known commonly as "Manchego style" cheese.

The true Manchego cheese, however, is made only from whole milk of the Manchega sheep raised in the "La Mancha" region. This region is a vast high plateau, more than 600 meters above sea level, which extends from east to west and north to south, adjoining the provinces of Toledo, Cuenca, Ciudad Real and Albacete, all in the Castile-La Mancha Autonomous Region southeast of Madrid.

unique pairings in wine and cheese

Pasanau Germans s.l., La Morera de Montsant (Tarragona)

Denominación de Origen: Priorat

Tasting Notes:

"Giant and muscled, with potent aromas of smoke, tar, maple and prune. At 14% alcohol, not much is held back; the palate is at first sweet and rich, with the full allotment of plum, raisin and black cherry. On the finish comes mammoth tannins and some of the toastiest, burnt coffee note you'll find. A real bruiser with a full tank of fuel behind it. Editor's Choice. 92 Points"
--- Michael Schachner, Wine Enthusiast Magazine, March, 2004

"Medium red-ruby. Reduced aromas of minerals, smoke and nuts. Silkier and fatter in the mouth, with very ripe, sweet red fruit, smoke and meat flavors. A broad wine with considerable palate presence and a slightly baked quality. Finishes with sweet tannins and very good length. 89"
---Stephen Tanzer, International Wine Cellar, July/August 2003



At over 2,400 feet, Pasanau's Finca La Planeta dominates the regional landscape and experiences Priorat's widest daily temperature variation. This helps to retain freshness in the concentrated, late-harvested grapes, resulting in a uniquely tight-knit, albeit typically powerful Priorat style.

Llicorella (decomposed slate) soils and a long, arid growing season, as elsewhere in Priorat, severely limit yields while packing the fruit with mineral extract and complexity.

Finca La Planeta is a three-hectare clearing hewn from the rocky base of the cliffs in the early 1980's, with gravelly topsoils covering the underlying regional slate (llicorella). The soil and altitude prompted Ricard Pasanau to plant Cabernet Sauvignon, vines now well over 20 years old. As in the rest of Priorat, yields are minuscule, only 13,000 bottles per year produced from this site.

In 1995 a modern bodega was completed for a maximum production of 50,000 bottles. Grapes are picked in mid- to late-October and transported to the bodega in 40-pound boxes for a light crushing and destemming. The must flows by gravity to stainless steel tanks of 5,000 and 10,000-liter capacity for fermentation at a maximum of 26° Centigrade. The freerun wine is aged nearly one year in a mixture of new American and French oak types. Clarification is done through racking and light egg white fining prior to bottling in late Spring, always during a full moon.

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

