

This Spanish tasting meanders through some of the famous wine regions of Spain as well as the less well trodden path to the cooler climate northern regions of Valdeorras, Mencia and Galicia.

We begin with two fresh white wines from the north and north east. Spain produces some racy white wines which have only come to prominence in recent times. The two main quality grapes are the Albarino and Godello grapes.

We will then sample more familiar wines from Rioja albeit in two different styles, a modern fruity style and a more traditional lighter and barrique influenced style. Moving on we shall taste the Pinot Noir of Spain made from the Mencia grape which is becoming very fashionable in wine circles. Then we end the red wine tasting with the highly regarded cult wine from Priorat, Clos Mogador made predominantly from old vine Garnacha grapes.

Finally, we complete the tasting with a sweet liqueur wine made from sun kissed Pedro Ximenez grapes of the Mediterranean. This wine is made from blended wines which are older than 80 years old.

4 types of Spanish cheeses will be served during the tasting as well.

Cheeses

We shall pair the wines with a selection of 4 Spanish cheeses.

San Simon - A cheese from the region of Galicia. The cheese is semi-firm and smooth with occasional holes and pale yellow in color. Flavors are mild, nutty and sweetly earthy with tastes of butter and signature delicate smoky flavours.

Manchego - Manchego is an aged cheese, either semi-cured to cured, made only with milk from the Manchega sheep breed, normally pasteurized. The cheese can only be produced in the region of La Mancha.

Goat's Cheese - A cheese from the region of Ibores in the remote Extremadura region. Has gentle to moderate savoury aromas, a characteristic taste of goat's cheese with some slight acidity, at times a little peppery and slightly salty.

Spanish Picon blue cheese - A mixture of cow's, sheep's and goat's milk is used in its production. This cheese is aged in limestone caves for at least 2 months in the region of Cantabria in Northern Spain.

Wines

Martin Castro Albarino 2011 (Rias Baixas)

Restrained example of Albarino, with green, refreshing acidity and a long, stony finish. Well-made and full of green peaches, green apple and white flowers.

Val de Sil Godello 2010 (Valdeorras)

Light, bright gold. Expressive aromas of citrus, white peaches and floral notes. Richly textured and dry, with a clarity of the gently smoky orchard fruit flavors dominated with fresh apricots and peaches. Finishes on a firm mineral note and some lees influence with firm and well judged acidity.

Altos de Losada 2007 (Mencia)

Bright violet. Pungent, mineral-accented cherry and cassis on the nose, with flowers and musky spices adding complexity. Firm, focused and densely packed, with very good clarity and lift to its bitter cherry, licorice and violet pastille flavors. Shows very good intensity on the finish, with the mineral and licorice notes carrying through.

Bodegas Faustino Gran Reserva Rioja 1999 (Rioja)

A traditional styled Rioja with lighter ruby red tints and some bricking on the edges. Cherries and sour plums dominate the nose and palate which has refreshing acidity. There are hints of cedar and sweet spice from the oak influence and some rustic herbal accents on the deceptively long finish.

Sierra Cantabria Gran Reserva 2004 (Rioja)

Vivid ruby. Expansive aromas of cherry-cola, vanilla, sandalwood and dried rose, with a strong mineral undertone. Lush and creamy in texture, with sweet cherry and red berry compote flavors, gentle tannins and a strong note of candied flowers. The floral note builds on the finish, which is strikingly fresh, focused and persistent. Extremely elegant wine that's built to age. (Tanzer 92 points)

Clos Mogador 2008

The 2008 Clos Mogador has a very fine bouquet of blackberry, blueberry and violet with great delineation and poise. The palate is medium-bodied with slightly grainy, coarse tannins that neatly juxtapose the core of sweet dark fruit. With impressive tension and poise, this is an excellent Priorat for long-term aging. (Parker 93 points)

Alvear Pedro Ximenez Solera 1927

The impressive 1927 Pedro Ximenez Solera, from a Solera begun nearly 80 years ago, boasts a dark amber color as well as an extraordinary nose of creme brulee, liquefied nuts, marmalade, and maple syrup. Huge and viscous, yet neither cloyingly sweet nor heavy, it is a profound effort (Parker 97 points)