



The Luscious Red Wines of Spain

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Registration: 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:30 PM

Faculty Club, Univ. of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$105; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$130

For our March event the **Toronto Vintners Club** is presenting a theme chosen to broaden our knowledge and appreciation of the diverse wines of Spain. Our speaker will be Jason Axmith, winemaker, wine enthusiast, and founder and principal of Cosecha Imports, a boutique Ontario wine agency that represents artisan wines from Italy, Portugal, and an extensive lineup from Spain.

Spain has a rich and diverse wine-making history, dating back to the Phoenicians who introduced grape vines to the country more than 3,000 years ago. Today, Spain is the world's third-largest wine producer and home to a vast array of indigenous grape varieties and wine styles. Our tasting will take us on a journey that explores seven different wine regions of Spain, the grapes that are grown there, and the styles of wine that are produced.

Rioja, perhaps the most famous wine region of Spain, is located in the north-central part of the country and is known for producing some of Spain's finest red wines. Made primarily from the Tempranillo grape, the wines from Rioja are known for their bold, full-bodied character and having notes of dark fruit and spice. For this tasting, we will explore two wines from Rioja; one crafted in a modern style and one made in a traditional style, a contrast that reflects the region's present winemaking debate.

Slightly south-west of Rioja is another famous region, **Ribera del Duero**, which is known for producing rich, full-bodied red wines, also made from the Tempranillo grape (often called Tinto Fino locally). Our tasting features a wine made from 120 year old vines. At that time it was common to plant red and white grapes on the same vineyard (the white grapes adding a refreshing acidity to the wine).

In the northwest corner of Spain, just north of Portugal, we will explore the region of **Bierzo**, located in the Province of Castilla y León. Bierzo is home to the Mencia grape and the master of making wine from Mencia is Raul Perez, a person many consider to be one of the greatest winemakers anywhere. Our tasting will include a wine from an estate the Perez family has owned since 1752.

Moving east, near Barcelona, we will discover the **Priorat** wine region in Catalonia. Priorat wine is typically made from old-vine Garnacha and from Carignan. Our selection for this region will be an old vines blend that is mainly made from Carignan (66%) with Garnacha (Grenache), Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon playing a supporting role.

Turning south, along the Mediterranean coast, we will arrive in **Valencia**, the birthplace of the wonderful saffron rice dish, Paella. The heavier wines from the north may not work well with the local cuisine but a Valencia red wine made from the local grape Bobal will provide something fresh with elegance and good acidity.

Not much farther south of Valencia is a little known Denominación de Origen (DO) called **Jumilla**. Here Monastrell dominates and Garnacha is becoming increasingly important as the terroir shares similarity to that found in the southern Rhone. José María Vicente, the winemaker of the wine in our tasting (75% old vines Monastrell and 25% Garnacha) is famous in Spain, known as "Patrón" in the industry and is an icon to many younger Spanish winemakers.

Our final destination is a place one might consider more African than Spanish, but culturally and stylistically, the **Canary Islands** are very Spanish. The wines from the island of Tenerife are the most unconventional in this tasting. The varietals have obscure names and are ungrafted, centenarian vines as these islands were sheltered from the impact of phylloxera. The wine representing this region has depth, intrigue, and energy that characterize the style of wines produced on the island.

The event price includes reception wine, bread, appetizers and, of course, our main wines! Newcomers and those who would like more tutoring are encouraged to sign up for our Newcomers' Table on our registration page. We look forward to seeing you!

REGISTER/BUY TICKETS online at [Spanish Wines March 21](#) and then pay by e-transfer, credit card (via PayPal) or by cheque. E-transfer/cheques must be received by Friday, April 14. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. All ticket sales/reservations are final. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.



Tasting Notes and Information – Wines of Spain

(Prices are as of date of purchase)

2016 Goyo-Garcia Viadero Finca el Peruco Ribera del Duero (Blend)

\$104

No professional reviews available. From agency website: Incredibly old vines (120 years), from a time where it was not uncommon to plant red and white grapes on the same vineyard. This is 85% Tempranillo and 15% Albillo co-fermented for 15 days. This otherwise very deep, dark and complex wine, has a good acidity that comes from the Albillo grapes. Intense on the nose with notes of red fruit, a slight hint of florals, light toasting, some coffee, slightly sweet spices and a fresh contribution from Albillo. Broad on the palate with structured, tannin present, contributions of fruit very hand in hand with the spices of the barrel. Good volume which maintains good acidity that gives the wine good persistence.

2019 Castro Ventosa Valtuille El Rapoloa Bierzo Bierzo (Mencia)

\$85

"The 2019 Valtuille El Rapoloa, now a Vino de Paraje, fermented with 100% full clusters with a long maceration and matured in well-seasoned, neutral 500-liter oak barrels (which might be eight years old now), the modus operandi for all of the single-vineyard reds. It's perfumed and heady, as it comes from a plot that also has some fruit trees, in a v-shape, planted along with some 8% Malvasía grapes that have been added since 2018 and have given it finesse. It's more exuberant on the nose, something that seems to define this wine that is quite unique and different from its siblings. It's medium-bodied with around 13% alcohol; winemaker César Márquez feels that when these wines are riper than 13.5% they are too rustic. 1,200 bottles produced. It was bottled in December 2020. Drink 2022-2029." 96 pts Luis Gutierrez Wine Advocate

2020 La Santa de Ursula Envinante Canary Islands (Blend)

\$82

No professional reviews available. From agency website: La Santa de Úrsula hails from an area called La Carujera, in the DO Tacoronte-Acentejo on the milder, more humid northeastern coast of Tenerife. It's a blend of 3 parcels of 100+ year old vines grown in sand, clay and basalt soils situated between 350 and 650m above sea level. 48% Negramoll, 50% Listán Negro, and 2% Listán Blanco are vinified partially with whole clusters in cement and aged in small neutral oak barrels. Depth and intrigue here, with all that wild Tenerife derived energy that we've come to expect and love from the best wines produced on the island.

2015 Bodegas Muga Selección Especial Rioja Rioja (Tempranillo)

\$49

"Velvety yet vivacious, this red has a lovely texture. Expressive flavors of maraschino cherry, red currant, orange peel, clove and vanilla are supported by round tannins and citrusy acidity. Fresh and focused, in the traditional style. Drink now through 2030." 93 pts Wine Spectator

2010 R. Lopez de Heredia Vina Tondonia Reserva Rioja Rioja (Tempranillo)

\$67

"This elegant red is fine and creamy on the palate, with notes of sun-dried cherry, iron, spiced orange peel, graphite and mocha that slowly unfurl. A bit high-toned on the nose as well as loaded with mineral aromas. Muscular tannins are deftly integrated, while savory dried mint and eucalyptus notes play on the lasting finish. Tempranillo, Garnacho, Graciano and Mazuelo. Drink now through 2030" 93 pts Wine Spectator

2017 Ferrer Bobet Priorat Priorat Red (Blend)

\$60

"A toasty edge marks the cherry and plum notes in this sleek red, giving way to mineral, tar and herb details. Shows nice texture and balance. Carignan, Grenache, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2030." 91 pts Wine Spectator

2017 Casa Castillo Las Gravas Jumilla (Monastrell)

\$89

"The 2017 Las Gravas is surprisingly floral and ethereal, perfumed and elegant. Syrah has disappeared from the blend of this wine—it now has 20% Garnacha to complement the 80% Monastrell. The wine matured in 500-liter barrels and then spent four months in 5,000-liter vats after the blend was done. There are no aromas of oak whatsoever, and the wine is fresh, as if the Garnacha helps to contain the power of Monastrell on the gravel soils, adding texture and perfume." 95 pts Robert Parker.

2019 La Comarcal Carmen Valencia (Bobal)

\$50

No professional reviews available. From agency website: Made with 100% Bobal, Carmen is a fresh Valencia red wine with distinct minerality and crisp aromas. Fresh on the palate, with some Mediterranean herb character, this is an extremely elegant wine. About the producer: "La Comarcal is the road we travel and the way we seek to expand our portfolio with new vineyards and new varieties," they explain. "We want to collaborate with friends and bottle the unique places and moments in time we create with wine - that is the philosophy of La Comarcal"