
Top 50 Great Caves 2014

By

Wine Pleasures

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Bubble Lover!

It is my great pleasure to present you to the fourth edition of 50 Great Cavas.

This annual publication reflects the history of cava, outlines how cava is made, clarifies the different cava styles, spotlights successful regions and recognizes outstanding producers. 2014 saw over a 150 cavas in the tastings. Experienced wine tasters reviewed cavas from around Spain in blind tastings over the month of May. We looked at body, colour, clarity and bubbles. We tasted for acidity, mouth-feel and mousse, finish, balance, sweetness and overall flavour. We searched deep for primary and secondary aromas and bouquet.

Cavas were classified and tasted according to dosage and ageing time on the lees. This year's blind tasting has been an exceptional one as (after much debate) all of the 50 Great Cavas 2014 have scored at least 93 points. Some nice prices too ranging from 5 to 50 Euros making them affordable for not only special occasions but also for aperitifs and slow cooking meals with family and friends.

But that's not all! We have also compiled a one page article on all of the participating wineries covering family history, winery philosophy, grape varieties, location and wine tourism options. The majority of the wineries were visited by our wine blogging team to bring you an accurate and objective first hand review of each one. We hope you find them interesting and useful, particularly if you plan a wine tasting tour to one of the various cava regions around Spain. Indeed we have now created a 50 Great Cava Wine Tasting Tour which allows wine lovers to visit and taste the best in Cava.

Many of the 50 Great Cavas may well be difficult to find in your local wine shop. That being the case there is an online solution to tasting the 50 Great Cavas in the comfort of your own home thanks to a synergy with online wine retailers Decántalo. See page 18

There are so many people to thank for their contribution in putting together this unique publication over the past 4 editions and they are highlighted in the section People Behind 50 Great Cavas on page 48.

We hope that you enjoy this list of exciting values, emerging stars, cavas to visit and time-honored stalwarts and that our 50 Great Cavas of 2014 leads you to more deeply explore the world of cava both at home or when in Spain!

Anthony Swift
Director 50 Great Cavas 2014

HISTORY OF CAVA

CAVA ORIGINS

The creation of cava is closely tied to the history of the catalan region. With champagne taking off in france during the 19th century, viticulturists and winemakers from the catalan region followed in the footsteps of their northern neighbors and produced a sparkling wine called cava.

During the 1980's, cava became a protected name, like champagne or prosciutto di parma. the name has a range of meanings, adopted from the spanish word for cellar and it has links with latin, describing a cave.

1870'S

The wine is now one of the most famous exports from Spain reaching all parts of the globe. During the 1870's, in the height of the European phylloxera epidemic, the vines were destroyed and needed to be replanted. Intead of using the traditional grapes varieties found in the Champagne region, local families turned to their own indigenous grapes. Thus, the distinct rich flavor was born and cava began its journey as one of the most popular drinks around the world. Cava is unique in production; it can be made across Spain in 160 municipalities ranging from Valencia to Extremadura.

It is worth emphasizing that the majority of the production comes from the Catalan region, most notably from the area of Penedès. The first bottles were produced in 1872 in the village of Sant Sadurní d'Anoia. The wine is created using the metodo tradicional (*traditional method*) which requires a secondary fermentation in the bottle.

TODAY S MARKET

Today, international interest in cava is at an all time high, with the Cava Regulatory Board, or Consejo Regulador, reporting over 244 million bottles produced during the 2010 vintage. Of these, over 149 million bottles are exported overseas and the rest are consumed domestically. Cava has grown dramatically in importance since 1872 and is now, according to the Chairman of the Board, Garcia Guillamet, “the D.O. Spanish wine with highest international sales”. All wines and bodegas belonging to the “cava” name must report to the Consejo Regulador which conducts quality checks to verify that any wine labeled as cava meets the current laws. They also authorize the use of the terms “cava”, “Reserva” and “Gran Reserva” before rewarding a numbered seal of approval which guarantees to the consumer the origin and quality of the wine. Wines that have met these strict standards embellish the base of their corks with a four pointed star as an additional guarantee to the consumer of high quality. Because of efforts like these, cava is quickly becoming an internationally renowned quality sparkling wine.



THE MAKING OF CAVA

THE CREATION OF CAVA

Cava is the Spanish word for cellar and has links back to the late 19th century within the Catalan region of Spain. Today the wine has evolved into a multibillion dollar industry that spans all corners of the globe. The wine is produced in 160 municipalities from across all over Spain, though the majority of production is made in the Penedes region of Barcelona. Cava is produced in the same style as Champagne, through the traditional method which is adopted throughout the world. Cava is made by a range of grapes, with the major varieties including;

Macabeo. Providing the acidity to the wine

Xarel-lo. Adding aromas and further acidity

Parellada. Offering suppleness and floral tones

Chardonnay. Produces high acidity and gives structure and body to the wine

Pinot Noir. Provides aromatics and color

THE TRADITIONAL METHOD

The traditional method consists of a first fermentation (*about three to five days*) from the grapes, which are vinified separately to create a base wine or cuvée. Then the base wine is blended and the winemaker can input some of their unique presence into the wine. The blending process involves combining the different cuvées and a mixture of reserve wine (*held back from previous years*) to create a consistent style. At this stage, the wine can have a mixture of different grapes from different vineyards and potentially different vintages. After this, a second fermentation (*lasting anywhere from one to two weeks*) in the bottle holds the magic that creates the “bubbles in the bottle”. In order to create the bubbles, the winemaker adds a cocktail of sugar and yeast and seals the bottle so that fermentation can begin. To produce cava, the bottles have to be laid to rest for at least nine months in a cool, dark cellar.

THE FINAL STAGES

At this point, the bottles are slowly riddled, the process of very slowly moving the bottles from a horizontal position to an angled position, allowing the dead yeast to move down to the neck of the bottle. Due to the high labor commitment it takes to riddle the bottles by hand, it is predominately undertaken by machines, though it is still carried out by hand in a few wineries. Following this is disgorgement, in which the dead yeast is removed from the wine by freezing the neck of the bottle in a saline solution and allowing the yeast to shoot out as a pellet. For Brut and Extra Brut, a cocktail of wine, spirit and sugar, commonly referred to as liqueur de expedition, is added back into the bottle, but for Brute Nature, no additional sugars or spirits are used. Each winemaker has their own recipe, with which they create a unique cava to their own tastes. Labeling and dressing the bottles is the final process before the bottles are shipped and ready to be enjoyed by the consumer!

CAVA GRAPES

Xarel-lo

Round, white grape with strong skin. Semi-sweet on the vine, it has a natural acidity that lends fresh, fruit aromas of apples, grapefruits and lemons to the wine. It is one of the primary grapes in cava grown in the following Designations of Origin: Alella, Penedès, Tarragona and Costers del Segre.

Chardonnay

The most widely planted variety in the world and one of the most important grapes for sparkling wines, its inclusion into Spanish sparkling wines in the early 1980's is still controversial since it is not one of the traditional three cava grapes. It adds body and toasted, creamy notes to the wine, and also takes on characteristics of the oak, if used, during the aging process.

Macabeo

This is one of the most widely planted white grapes in the North of Spain. It is responsible for the floral notes in cava wines, is resistant to oxidation and has a low acidity. In addition to being a primary varietal in cava, it has also seen great success in Rioja and Southern France. Also spelled Macabeu in Catalan.

Garnacha

Garnacha or Grenache, requires hot, dry conditions which makes it ideal for growing in Spain. It tends to lack acidity, tannin or color, so it is typically blended with other grapes to add body and a sweet fruitiness to cava.

Trepat

A red wine varietal that is an indigenous grape to Spain. Most Trepat is grown in the Conca de Barberà DO. Has the potential for fine red wines, but is primarily used to add light, subtle characteristics and color to rosado cava.

Parellada

The least planted of the traditional cava grapes, this varietal brings acidity and fresh fruit characteristics to the more prevalent Macabeo and Xarel-lo. While it grows best in higher altitudes, yielding bright, crisp wines, Parellada produces a softer wine in valley floor vineyards.

Pinot Noir

Producing some of the finest wines in the world, but also very delicate and difficult to produce due to its thin skins, Pinot Noir provides cava wine with great floral aromatics and color in Roses.

Monastrell

More commonly known as Mourvèdre, this tannic grape adds structure and color to cava.

Subirat Parent

White grape. Considered a main variety in Penedès DO. It is also grown in Rioja, where it is known as Malvasía Riojana.





TASTING NOTES

BRUT NATURE



AWARD



CAVA
*Vía de la Plata Chardonnay
Brut Nature*

WINERY Via de la Plata

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	12	94	4,75	BN

Fruity fresh entrance. Frothy palate. Short crisp finish.
Appetizing!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Origen Brut Nature

WINERY Vallformosa Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)
2011	12	93	8,15

Notes of pineapple. Fruity entrance. Fresh on the palate.
Crisp short finish

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT NATURE RESERVA



AWARD



CAVA
*Cava Reserva Brut Nature
“PURE”*

WINERY Mascaró

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	24	96	10	BNR

Green apples with hints of peach blossom. Acidity & residual sugar well balanced making for a pleasant fruity entrance & smooth mouthfeel. Elegant!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
*Brut Nature Reserva Ecològica
Cuscó Berga*

WINERY Cuscó Berga

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	26	95	12,5	BNR

Attractive pale pink colour, a touch of rose petal aroma and some sweet raspberry, but sufficient acidity

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
*Brut Nature Tradició
Cuscó Berga*

WINERY Cuscó Berga

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	62	95	7,75	BNR

Straw yellow. Ripe pears & hints of almonds. Fruity & fresh. Lingering acidic finish. Complex!

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT NATURE RESERVA



CAVA
Dionysus Brut Nature - Eco

WINERY Canals & Munné

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	20	95	12,5	BNR

Citric & floral notes. Pleasant acidic entrance. Fruity palate. Medium finish. Lip licking!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Cava Fuchs de Vidal Unic

WINERY Bodegas Capità Vidal

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	24	95	17,5	BNR

Elegant bouquet. Fruity entrance. Acidic palate & finish. Pleasant mouthfeel.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Mas Codina Cava Brut Nature Reserva

WINERY Mas Codina

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	27	93	8	BNR

Green apples with hints of apricot & almonds. Fruity entrance. Smooth mouthfeel

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Celler Vell Brut Nature Reserva

WINERY Celler Vell, S.A. - Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	25	92	6,9	BNR

Citric fruits with underlying pastry notes. Smooth silky mouthfeel. Sharp acidity. Medium finish. Intense!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Parés Baltà Brut Nature

WINERY Parés Baltà

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
NV	24	92	9	BNR

Blend of white fruit & pastry aromas. Fresh but balanced entrance. Fruity long finish. Exquisite

WINE PLEASURES

EXTRA BRUT



CAVA
Gramona Imperial 2007

WINERY Gramona

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2007	72	96	18	EB

Baked apples with underlying citric notes. Creamy mouthfeel. Fruity palate. Crisp lingering pleasant finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Insuperable Brut

WINERY Canals & Munné

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	25	93	11,5	EB

Ripe fruit & pastry notes. Fruity entrance. Balanced palate. Creamy texture. Crisp medium finish

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Celler Vell Extra Brut Gran Reserva 2010

WINERY Celler Vell, S.A. - Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	32	93	9,7	EB

Ripe fruits & nutty aromas. Creamy texture. Complex flavours. Crisp finish. Delightful!

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT



CAVA
Vía de la Plata Chardonnay Brut

WINERY Via de la Plata

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	10	95	4,75	B

Pleasant fruity notes. Crisp entrance. Well rounded palate. Lingering finish

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Origen Brut

WINERY Vallformosa Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	12	95	7,59	B

Green apples with a hint of apricot on the nose. Fruity entrance. Well balanced acidity & sweetness. Short finish. Pleasant!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Tarrida Brut

WINERY Papet del Mas

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	15	93	12,5	B

Pale yellow. Crisp entrance. Frothy mouthfeel. Fruity palate. Pleasant finish

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT RESERVA



CAVA
Brut Reserva Especial

WINERY Dominio de la Vega

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	24	96	17,38	BR

Baked apple & apricot, white flowers & pastry, against a toasted, vanilla backdrop. Creamy entrance. Perfect balance. Harmony!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Cupatge D'Honor Vintage 2011

WINERY Pere Ventura

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	30	93	8,99	BR

Brioche, baked apples, vanilla & subtle citric notes. Fresh entrance & palate. Medium finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Mas Codina Cava Brut Reserva

WINERY Mas Codina

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	27	93	7,5	BR

Fine bubble. White fruit on the nose such as apples & pears. Well balanced sweetness & acidity.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Tresor Brut Reserva

WINERY Pere Ventura

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
NV	24	92	3,99	BR

Green apples with subtle notes of almonds & pastry. Creamy entrance with balanced acidity. Fresh medium finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Bohigas Cava Brut Reserva

WINERY Fermí Bohigas, S.A.

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2013	15	92	8,6	BR

Well stuctured & balanced. Crisp entrance. Creamy mouthfeel. Refreshing!

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT GRAN RESERVA



AWARD



CAVA
Gramona Enoteca Brut 2000

WINERY Gramona

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2000	120	97	140	BGR

Subtle baked apple, prunes & almond blossom on the nose, leesy, nutty weight, and a slightly bitter/ripe fruit finish. Profound!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Gala De Vallformosa Brut Gran Reserva 2008

WINERY Vallformosa Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	30	95	14,99	BGR

Complex mix of fresh pears, ripe figs, nuts & orange. Aromas of apricot arise along with honey & pastries. Finesse!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Brut Gran Reserva

WINERY Agustí Torelló Mata

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	30	95	12	BGR

Delicate ageing aroma with butter & toasted notes against a background of ripe fruit. Fine smooth bubble. Ageing notes blend with ripe fruit & the toasted & nutty nuance. Elegant!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Duran 5v Gran Reserva

WINERY Canals Canals

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	36	95	22	BGR

Mature aromas and good fruit on the palate, a winning combination, elegant and yet full, good length

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Gran Juvé y Camps Brut

WINERY Juvé & Camps, S.A.

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	60	94	32	BGR

Green apple, ripe tropical fruit, lightly toasted bread & floral notes: almond blossom. Delicate bubble. Smooth mouthfeel. Long finish.

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Duran Gran Reserva Brut

WINERY Canals Canals

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	36	93	12,5	BGR

Slow fine & persistent bubble. Fruit & caramel notes against a nutty background. Elegant & balanced!

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT GRAN RESERVA



CAVA
*Pere Mata Cuvee Barcelona
Gran Reserva 2008 Brut*

WINERY Mata i Coloma

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	60	93	12,5	BGR

Tangy notes of citric fruit skins. Fruit explosion through a frothy palate. Pleasant long finish albeit slightly bitter.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Gran Reserva Imperial Brut

WINERY Llopart Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	42	92	17,1	BGR

Ripe fruit aromas with toasty, nutty backgrounds. Vigorous feel. Prolonged fruitfulness. Mild acidity. Pleasing finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
*Brut Gran Reserva Cuscó
Berga*

WINERY Cuscó Berga

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	62	92	5,85	BGR

Citric notes (pineapple), hints of fennel & underlying nutty notes. Fine bubble. Apricots & albaricoque on the palate. Lingering finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
*Pere Mata Gran Coloma Gran
Reserva 2008 Brut*

WINERY Mata i Coloma

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	60	92	12	BGR

A bright fresh nose of ripe figs, apples, honey and orange peel; on the palate a slight toastiness warms the mouth while the same luscious apple tart filling lingers. Balanced out with just enough citrus acidity.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
*Pere Mata L'Origen Gran
Reserva 2009 Brut*

WINERY Mata i Coloma

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	48	92	10	BGR

Complex combination of citric & ripe fruits. Sweet jammy entrance & palate. Smooth mouthfeel. Fresh with a bit of sassiness on the lingering finish.

WINE PLEASURES

ROSADOS



AWARD



CAVA
Marta Passió Reserva

WINERY Canals Canals

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	18	96	9,95	BR

Elegant light pink colour. Citrus aromas & notes of strawberries & water melon.. White fruit flavours (grapefruit) first & fresh red fruit (strawberry) appear to form a very appealing & savoury palate. Moreish!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Rosé Pinot Noir - Brut

WINERY Canals & Munné

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	20	96	14	BR

Loads of fresh red fruit on the nose. Intense fruit on the palate. Balanced. Fresh finish. Epic!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Tresor Rosé

WINERY Pere Ventura

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
NV	15	95	3,99	B

Wild strawberries on the nose. Explosion of fruit on the palate. Crisp short finish. Pleasant mouthfeel. Resplendent!

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Rosat Trepát

WINERY Agustí Torelló Mata

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	24	95	12	BR

Fresh summer raspberries open jubilantly on a crisp entrance . Notes of strawberries on the palate. Persistent bubbles. Crisp structure. Pleasant medium finish.

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Col·lecció Brut Pinot Noir 2012

WINERY Vallformosa Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	15	93	9,99	B

Robustly structured, with raspberry & rose aromas & vivid, red berry flavours. Fruity finish.

WINE PLEASURES



AWARD



CAVA
Vega Medien Brut Rose

WINERY Unión Vinícola Del Este S.L.

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2012	13	93	5,5	B

Raspberry & water melon notes. Fruity palate. Fresh carbonic finish.

WINE PLEASURES

ROSADOS



CAVA
Reserva Rosé Microcosmos Brut Nature

WINERY Llopart Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	24	92	18,85	BR

Wild strawberries on the nose blended with pastry notes. Thick, jam and toast taste. Lingering creamy finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Papet del Mas Rosé

WINERY Papet del Mas

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2011	15	92	12	BR

Rose petal with a touch of sweetness on the nose finishing with a dash of red cherry

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT NATURE GRAN RESERVA



CAVA
Gramona III Lustros 2006

WINERY Gramona

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2006	96	95	25	BNGR

Yellow gold. Smoke, brioche, toffee and roasted nuts on the nose. A rich array of yeast, nut, & herbal flavors with a creamy mouthfeel, toasted notes, good acidity. Rich long finish.

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT NATURE GRAN RESERVA



CAVA
Duran Gran Reserva Brut Nature

WINERY Canals Canals

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	42	95	12,95	BNGR

Ripe white fruits, tropical fruits, & fresh citrus notes combined with dry fruits & bakery aromas. Creamy texture. Smooth mouthfeel. Great acidity.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Brut Nature Gran Reserva

WINERY Agustí Torelló Mata

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	36	95	14	BNGR

Complex with pear, quince & flowers on the nose. Creamy mouthfeel of light caramel balanced with fresh apple acidity. Long persistent finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Pere Mata L'Ensamblatge Gran Reserva 2007 Brut Nature

WINERY Mata i Coloma

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2007	60	95	12	BNGR

Bakery, dried fruits & apricot jam notes. Creamy entrance. Marked acidity. Frothy mouthfeel. Ripe fruits on the palate. Persistent finish.

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT NATURE GRAN RESERVA



CAVA
Pere Mata Reserva Familia Gran Reserva 2008 Brut Nature

WINERY Mata i Coloma

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	48	95	12,5	BNGR

Ripe fruit, honey & pastry notes. Creamy entrance & burst of citrus fruit on the palate. Fine bubbles paint the mouth with underlying nutty flavours. Lasting finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Gran Reserva Masia Segle XV Brut Nature

WINERY Rovellats

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2006	96	94	22,63	BNGR

Baked apples, touch of yeasty marzipan & jammy on the nose. Palate: Leesy & slightly earthy depth of flavour. Expressive!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Gran Reserva Original 1887 Brut Nature

WINERY LLoport Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2008	60	94	33,5	BNGR

Dry fruit notes, toasts,& creamy bakery aromas entwining with white fruits & citrus Buttery texture. Rounded acidity. Pleasant & persistent finish. Elegant!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
XC

WINERY Adernats Vinícola de Nulles

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	30	94	32	BNGR

Pineapple & buttery notes. Subtle acidity. Creamy entrance. Smooth mouthfeel. Harmony of citrus fruits & balsamic flavours. Lingerering smooth finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Cossetania Gran Reserva Brut Nature Vintage 2007

WINERY Castell D'Or

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2007	72	93	18	BNGR

Ripe fruit, dried herbs & floral scents. Fresh, fruity, flavourful & great acidity. Complex!

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Reserva de la Familia Brut Nature

WINERY Juvé & Camps, S.A.

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	48	93	16	BNGR

Notes of toast, brioche & fresh dough. Creamy texture. Fine bubble. Long finish. Evocative!

WINE PLEASURES

BRUT NATURE GRAN RESERVA



CAVA
Gran Reserva Barrica

WINERY Agustí Torelló Mata

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	36	93	20	BNGR

Dense combination of primary & secondary aromas. Creamy mouthfeel. Fresh fruit & balsamic over toast & vanilla on the palate. Long glyceric finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Cava Gran Fuchs de Vidal

WINERY Bodegas Capità Vidal

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	36	93	17,5	BNGR

Pale, tanzanite yellow with notes of straw, stone fruit and an underlying minerality. Effervescence of the bubbles fill your mouth in a shower of delicate apples, pears and a hint of lemon peels.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Cava Artemayor

WINERY Dominio de la Vega

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
NV	36	93	23	BNGR

Buttery nose with light pineapple, peach, and pastry. Velvety mouthfeel. Peach, caramelized lemon confit & wood on the palate.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Estruch Brut Nature Gran Reserva ECO 2009

WINERY Celler Vell, S.A. - Cava

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	42	93	13,8	BNGR

Ripe fruit, butterscotch, herbal & pastry notes. Fruity entrance & palate. Fine acidity & bubble. Pleasant finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Mas Codina Cava Brut Nature Gran Reserva

WINERY Mas Codina

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2009	40	92	11	BNGR

Ripe white fruit (pear, apple), toasted and mineral hints. Fresh but well balanced acidity. Lasting finish.

WINE PLEASURES



CAVA
Noa de Bohigas

WINERY Fermí Bohigas, S.A.

HARVEST	AGEING (MTHS)	SCORE	SRP (EUROS)	CATEGORY
2010	30	92	16,6	BNGR

Dried raisins, apple cider and a bright citrus-flower acidity. Vibrant mouthfeel. Flavours of vanilla, pastry which develop into a rich and open cherry/apple tart. Delectable & refined!

WINE PLEASURES

HOW TO ORDER ANY OR ALL OF THE 50 GREAT CAVAS?

Many of the cavas included in this year book are produced in very small wineries, with a very low production, and that it is often not easy to find them in some countries.

The 2014 edition of 50 Great Cava aims to bring these 50 great products closer to its readers thanks to a synergy with Decantalo.com, a specialised wine online wine store based in Barcelona, Spain. Decantalo.com was born in September 2010 as a partnership between two professional groups from the sectors of wine and digital projects development, united by a common passion: wine. Since then, Decantalo.com has become a byword for Spanish wine and cava stores in Europe. We serve thousands of satisfied customers from more than 50 countries and punctually deliver more than 125.000 bottles per year.

All the great cavas mentioned in this edition are available through Decantalo.com
Shipping is available for customers residing in all EU countries.

Hope you enjoy these 50 gems as much as we do!





WINERIES



ADERNATS

Vinícola de Nulles functionality matches up to its beauty

1920 marks the first year of harvest that filled Vinícola de Nulles' cellars. Today, the winery exports approximately 200,000 bottles of cava and 100,000 bottles of wine worldwide under the brand name of Adernats.

Lovers of art and architecture are sure to marvel this winery designed by Catalan architect Cèsar Martinell i Brunet. Brunet, a disciple of the legendary Antoni Gaudí, made a name for himself by designing seven wine cellars scattered throughout Catalonia. Myriad resemblances exist among these septuplets, romantically referred to as the 'wine cathedrals.' Brunet derived inspiration from *Modernisme* and *Noucentisme*, the latter a Catalan cultural movement born in the early 20th century. With their modern contours and facades built of exposed brick, the 'wine cathedrals' emanate a rustic quality with high sophistication.

Vinícola de Nulles's functionality matches up to its beauty. High windows allow sunlight to stream in, thus filling the building with friendly warmth while also decreasing dependency on electricity. The colossal wine tanks occupying most of the building were designed to maintain constant temperatures vital to cava quality. Moreover, the brick ar-

ches upon which the wine tanks were built help promote airflow to dissipate carbon dioxide buildup in Vinícola's cavas.

"Cava is alive," mused Francesc Boronat, Sales Manager at Vinícola de Nulles. "It must be treated with respect." Boronat heralds Vinícola's architecture, which truly maximizes the quality of their product. Given the winery's specialized design, it isn't surprising that Vinícola is present in the 50 Great Cavas.

While not all of the seven 'wine cathedrals' are open to the public, Vinícola de Nulles keeps its doors open. Tours are conducted in the town's landmark building by day, and under the cover of night, the building transforms into a site for festivities. While the term 'fine dining' might conjure the image of stiff and pompous dinners, *ViNitCultura Nulles* couldn't be more different. Guests can look forward to live entertainment by Catalan folk musicians, fun games, and locally inspired cuisine, not forgetting cava grown and produced on Vinícola del Nulles' land.

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AGUSTÍ TORELLÓ

To say Mr. Agustí Torelló Mata established a prestigious winerie would be an understatement...

...he has in fact lived and breathed wine for a lifetime. The family business and commercial brand started in 1993 but this is only a scratch on the surface of the 40 years of experience the founder already had in the industry. While he was the son of a musician and a tailor, his enthusiasm for Cava only grew through his young working experience, forced by the economic hardship of the civil war to leave school at 13 years old; Agustí started working with his uncle in a cava house. What he saw at first as some magical laboratory of no significance would eventually spark an interest and become his career and his passion.

After moving to Valencia to study wine technology and travelling the world learning from each wine region he visited, the business was first born in 1954 as a wine laboratory analyzing and innovating in wine development for external wine companies. Over the years he became somewhat of a pioneer in the development of Cava fighting for the movement for recognition in the wine world. Agustí Torelló Mata now a winerie in its own right stays a small family company benefiting from the very latest modern technology as well as traditional methods in cases where the quality could be compromised.

Proudly producing a “Penedés Cava” they are using 100% local grapes as they believe it is the only way to express the characteristics of the region from which such rich and varied conditions produce the best traditional cava grapes. One of only 6% of cellars making their own base wine, they ensure these old vines are producing the highest quality of grapes and closely control the entire process.

Full of character the bodega is a wine tourist’s delight, the cellars and the visitor centre are a great representation of a modern Cava. A trip down to the cellars walks guests down the spiral stairs with beautiful roat iron hand rails and glass doors. A true difference is their desire to make the cellars less of a dark or dirty environment but instead a fresh enjoyable atmosphere, kept immaculately neat and even having artworks on the pillars.

Only producing Brut Nature and Brut, looking not to distort a classic dry taste, they also wish for their consumers to enjoy their cava as soon as possible after disgorgement. They best do this by completing the final stages of the cava process dependant on the orders they receive. Making a variety of specialty Cavas, Agustí Torelló is certainly a winerie with an edge.

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BOHIGAS

The family owned winerie on the outskirts of Ódena (Igualada) has been thriving since the 13th Century, now known as Mas Macia its name has changed several times over the years while being passed from generation to generation of nephews and sons. However the value and appreciation of its heritage has not withered in the slightest which is evident by the continual use of the old cellars and the preservation of the original country house. The property spans over 200 hectares with the use of 35

hectares of vineyard, the family enjoys the advantages of having these vines grown close by means a quick delivery to the cellars. It was in the early 1930's the history of cava first began at this winerie, originally it was produced and sold only in the local region but its success grew from there and as it has since been passed through the family and subject to the innovation of the winemakers along the way. It is now the key to their success, producing over 600,000 bottles a year with 90% of these being exported.

The underground cellar built in 1547 still to this day functions as the place for these Cavas to undergo the fermentation period required to produce the high quality Reservas and Gran Reservas

The impressive hand built cellar with its interconnecting tunnels holding 60,000 bottles each is incredible to walk through, appreciating the work that must have been put into such a system un-phased by the years apart from some spider webs hanging from the corners and the damp puddles in the path.

A treat for visiting tourists is the interactive activity set up where they can not only see how a Cava was produced by the ancestors of this family but they can create their own, cork, label and all to take home a souvenir. Another truly unique experience is the insight into typical Catalan life from another time, the house in its very design tells a story of the lifestyle lived. The centre of the house a large

open space where animals would be herded through, the first floor has the bedrooms to the side where it could be kept the warmest and the third floor used for grinding cereals. Beyond this the house is filled with pieces of intrigue from the dowry cases of the girls in the family to the enormous dinner set with each piece individually hand crafted.

Beyond just another visit on the wine trail, Mas Macia presents the perfect setting for a holistic Catalan experience, whether it's a tasting of their Cava stood around a wine barrel in the front garden or for those visiting in the summer they can be treated to a show of traditional dances of Catalonia.

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CANALS CANALS

The Canals Canals family connection to the cultivation of vineyards and the production of wine dates back to the beginning, when Miquel Canals Ollé first founded the winerie in 1903. The family house and wine cellars remain located in Castellvi de Rosanes, a small village in the wine growing region of Penedes.

Originally, the land was used to harvest the grapes and later it was prepared and transformed into the wine sold at the family home. In 1975, Ollé and his son, Ramon Canals Llaverol, pooled their resources and decided to produce their first bottles of cava. This began the lasting dedication to the production of cavas with a fine taste and complexity.

The third generation of the Canals family introduced

the first bottles of the Duran Gran Reserva project in 2007, in homage to their maternal grandmother, Mercé Duran. This new project was prompted from an interest to keep up to par with the best sparkling wines in the world. Canals Canals is the first cellar to produce exclusively cava Gran Reserva.

These cavas feature high quality grapes harvested in the Penedes region, grown and ripened on the hills of the inland Mediterranean region of Catalonia. The cavas include blends of the traditional grape varieties such as Xarello, Macabeo, and Parellada with new contributions of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in the white cava and Trepas and Pinot Noir in the Rosé. They are matured for more than 30 months in the bottle in order to reach the complexity, finesse and elegance in the bottles.

In addition to the winerie and cellars,

The Canals Canals family owns the only private cava museum which shows a collection of more than 2,500 exhibits from vineyards, wines and cavas.

The collections are grouped together in three, theme-based exhibition rooms: the antique glass room, the viticulture room, and the oenology room. Tours of the museum and winerie are offered by appointment and tastings can also be arranged.

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CANALS | MUNNÉ

Great winemakers in the fifth generation, Canals & Munné have surely withstood the test of time. Merging tradition with modernity, the winerie is proud of its outstanding Cavas and wines - with gold medals from all around the world as proof.

The main building of the Canals & Munné is the modern “New Cava”, just outside the town of Sant Sadurni. The grapes are cultivated in another location, higher up in Font Rubi, Alt Penedes and are transported down to the winerie, where the production can begin. The whole process lasts up to five years. Some of the Cavas are filled in special cone-shaped bottles to assure better fermentation, which also works as an attractive design element.

Canals & Munné has developed its first organic Cava “Dionysus”

as well as its first white bio wine and they hope to create more 100% natural products in the future. Canals & Munné is still keeping its “Old Cava” located inside the town. - after almost a hundred years of producing wine, the atmospheric old cellar has been turned into a do it yourself barbecue restaurant, a tasting facility and an ideal destination for all wine and Cava lovers.

Currently offering limited production of eight excellent Cava varieties, Canals & Munné enjoys an indisputable reputation of being the producer of some of the 50 Great Cavas in the region.

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CAPITÀ VIDAL

The small winerie was founded by one of the best known Spanish sailors - Enrique Vidal, hence the name Capità (Captain) Vidal. After decades of producing quality wine, captain, now in his seventies, has retired to dedicate his days to sailing again, and family member, Helena runs the business today.

Capità Vidal treats its products with genuine care and attention: the grapes are hand-picked and all the Cava bottles are still hand-riddled

Capità Vidal treats its products with genuine care and attention: the grapes are hand-picked and all the Cava bottles are still hand-riddled. There are six wines on the market, but the main focus (and best-seller) of Capità Vidal are their Cavas, known by the name of Fuchs de Vidal. Lately there has been a growth in exports, and Fuchs de Vidal is becoming more and more popular abroad, especially in Belgium, Netherlands and Japan, however, the majority of the production stays in Spain. The clients of the winerie tend to remain loyal through the years. One of them, Julio Salinas, a retired Barcelona FC player and a Cava lover, even suggested the creation of his own label and Capità Vidal brought into the market a limited edition of Cava with a picture of the famous footballer on each bottle.

The winerie itself, enclosed/surrounded by vineyards, is located in Alt Penedes about 200 meters above the sea level. Inside, the two passions of Enrique Vidal - wine and sea - are exposed to the visitor through pictures, portraits and small design elements. Producing around 150,000 bottles a year produced and only six full time employees, Capità Vidal is all about quality over quantity, opting for a superior product at the cost of reduced and limited production.

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CASTELL D'OR

Castell D'Or brings together 9 different wine producers within Catalonia to establish a highly efficient cooperative

This is a hub for vine-growers, technicians and oenologists to work and develop wines and cava alike for these numerous quality brands. Because of the relationships between each of the cooperatives they can enjoy the combined advantages of the most modern facilities and technologies through the entire process from vineyard to the cellars.

Stemming from the very first cooperative in Spain, the history lays in the early 1920s when the combined cellar was established. As the wealthy families discovered this process was far cheaper than producing wine in their own homes there soon followed the development of a "rich cooperative" with both later coming together, obliged by the government to work collectively under one administration. Initially spread out over different cellars, changes in the way of life over the years and the decline in farmers led to a concentration of production in the breathtaking Catedral del Vi (Wine Cathedral).

Now declared a national monument the Gaudi inspired building by Domenech i Montaner is one of three dis-

tinctive Castell D'Or cellars which can be found in Esplugas de Francolí, Barberà de la Conca or Vila-Rodona, all incredible displays of modernism and art works in their own right.

Enjoying the optimal conditions for the grape variety Trepat which historically has only grown well in the region surrounding Barberà de la Conca, along with all of the traditional cava varieties, the grapes are all pressed in the momentous cellar from which each brand will then personalise their products to be commercialised and distributed worldwide.

A visit to cellar in the beautiful Spanish town of Barberà de la Conca provides some of the most beautiful views over the varying mountainside and vineyards. In fact it's very meaning describes the superior position - eyes on top of the region. Tourists are welcomed for tastings in the visitor centre full of local products and to learn about the historic ways in which the cellars were used before modern mechanics.

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CELLER VELL

Established in 1954 Celler Vell was originally found in the centre of the village but as the business grew in the 80s the site became too small and it was moved to its current prime location in Sant Sadurní d'Anoia. Perched on top of a hill the cellar looks over 2 hectares of vineyards also enjoying a superior view over the town filled with charismatic old Spanish buildings. The boutique family owned winerie and the cavas they produce have long been a product of their philosophy, this is to embrace the traditional Cava grapes of the Penedés region but add a personal touch often with the use of Pinot Noir or Chardonnay varieties.

Celler Vell offers a unique opportunity for customers

Celler Vell offers a unique opportunity for customers, one of the first wineries to do so, this is that they will produce bottles of their quality Cava and add personalized labels. A very popular initiative, private events or weddings enjoy the exclusivity of their very own cava brand, quite a keepsake. This is also nice for restaurants who like to offer a holistic in house experience for their guests.

One specialty Cava proudly produced by Celler Vell is the Cuvee Les Solanes this is a different cava due to the first

fermentation in an oak barrel, a subtle taste that leads to a gourmet drink of distinction. They are also set to have another fine cava on the market in a few months boasting a long aging using the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir varieties.

A recent addition to the winerie is a tasting area for their visitors to enjoy a glass of cava and take full advantage of the countryside views, as with their cava, this is a personalized experience with the owner, Josep more than happy to share his knowledge and passion of his family business.



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CUSCÓ I BERGA

Breathtaking panoramic views of the vineyards await the visitor

The Cuscó i Esteve family have been producing cava and wines since as long ago as the end of the nineteenth century. In 1985 Josep Cuscó Berga together with his sons gave the winery new clothes and created a modern winery without losing the family tradition.

Located in the small village of Les Gunyoles d'Avinyonet, in Spain's Penedès wine region, the Cuscó I Berga winery is well worth a visit. Driving up to the village you will see the Saint Salvador Church de les Gunyoles on the skyline. Built in the 10th Century and home to the Templars in 1160, this church is well worth a stop off before visiting the winery.

Once at the winery the first thing to head for is the small wine museum housed in the top (ground) floor. Breathtaking panoramic views of the vineyards await. The vineyards are actually growing on a terroir not really typically associated with the Penedès. - we are in the natural park of the Garraf Massif (Catalan: *Massís del Garraf*,) which is a mountain range running from the Mediterranean.

This rugged limestone terroir is ideal for keeping healthy vines and for organic viticulture. Cuscó I Berga have a Cava which is produced from certified organic grapes!

A trip into the underground cellar will reveal that the winery is built mostly using the side of a rock outcrop. You can see natural limestone rock as part of the construction and this gives the cava a constant temperature and humidity for ageing on the lees.

As well as tasting the cava make sure you ask them for a taste of a unique still wine they produce made with 100% Muscat D'Alexandrie.



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DOMINIO DE LA VEGA

Dominio De La Vega is located in the wine region of Utiel-Requena, a circular plateau of land where the Rio Meagro forms several fluvial terraces levelling out a plain (in Spanish La Vega). Between 600 and 900 metres above sea level, although far away from the Mediterranean Sea, the area still retains a Mediterranean climate with short hot summers and long cold winters.

Originally known as “Casa del Conde”, Dominio de la Vega was born in the 12th century. Even before then the area has historically been devoted to winemaking: according to 1995's archaeological findings, residues of grape pips dating back to 5-6th Centuries B.C. have been found in the ruins of a dwelling site. Grape growing was such a popular activity that in the 13th century,

King Alfonso X (Alfonso the Wise) bestowed the guardians of the vineyards in Requena with the title of Binadero.

Their task was to make sure that no one was harvesting foreign grapes.

Today, together with the local varietals of Bobal, Tempranillo, Macabeo, Garnacha, international vines are also planted (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir). Besides still wines, it is interesting to mention the wide choice of Cavas that the De la Vega boasts: both young Cavas (Semiseco, Brut, Brut Nature white and rose) and three Cava Reservas. A specialty of De La Vega is also the rare Dulce Vino de hielo (Sweet Ice wine) featuring the grapes of Macabeo, Chardon-

nay and Sauvignon Blanc. Moreover, a very interesting project of the winery is the limited collection Cava Arte Mayor, a blend of Macabeo and Chardonnay, of which there is only 5000 bottles available and whose posters are inspired by the paintings of artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec, Dali, Van Gogh and Klimt.

The winery has also been supporting many causes: the long term partnership with the Asociación Asperger Valencia (Asperger's syndrome Association of Valencia) is only one of a large series of charities the winery regularly sponsors.

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GRAMONA

In the heart of Sant Sadurni d'Anoia the Gramona winerie can be found. Since 1875 Gramona have been making wines. The cellar is a spectacular example of historical architecture which sits on three levels of stone and wood; this a cool, humid and long dark labyrinth paved with bottles making it the perfect environment for ageing cava. The highest level of the cellar hosts the wine heritage of the family; it is a crypt showcasing a collection of bottles dating back as far as the 1950s. Next to the crypt there is an old room called the Enoteca which showcases the best bottles which have been aging since the end of 1990s. Here, ancient instruments of winemaking are exhibited to tickle the curiosity of the visitors, and to pay homage to the traditional idea of Cava and its Classic Method.

Gramona is special as it is one of the few Cava producers where the crianza en rima (the ageing) is done by hand. Gramona's cava appears in the glass bright and gold in colour. This is the mark of the long aging process which all of the bottles are subjected to. The family owns 50% of its vineyards (150 hectares); the other 50% is leased and rented to loyal cultivators who are long-term business partners of la casa and receive the same training and financial support as with Gramona's land. III Lustros is the flagship cava and it is a blend of Xarel-lo and Macabeu (30%). The varieties of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay have been added for blending since 1910.

Masters of the Larga Crianza, Gramona age cava from four to ten years

This philosophy ensures the high quality of the wines which are crafted as a piece of art. The multi-awarded 2002 Celler Batlle Gran Reserva Brut is only one example. Recently, the III Lustros 2004 was reviewed on the headlines of the Wall Street Journal and classified as one the best Sparkling Wines in the World competing with the best Champagnes. Argent Rosado is a further example of an exclusive product with a total output of only 6000 bottles a year. Gramona is indeed a traditional casa of artisanal cavistas whose family business shines across the Penedes valley.

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JUVÉ Y CAMPS

Going back more than two hundred years to 1796, Joan Juvé Mir, a bold and enterprising vine grower with ideas way ahead of his time, laid the foundations of what would become the family firm of Juvé y Camps.

His son, Antoni Juvé Escaiola, took over the reigns at the time of the phylloxera plague having to replant and restore vineyards to ensure continued wine production in the Penedès region.

Antoni's work and example encouraged his son, Joan Juvé Baqués and his wife Teresa Camps Farré to produce the first sparkling wine under the "Juvé" brand in 1921.

Their two sons, Josep and Joan, joined the management of the firm at the beginning of the 1940's. They gave a new momentum to the companies development, in particular by building a new winery on the outskirts of Sant Sadurní D'Anoia.

Some years later, under the direction of Josep and Joan Juvé, a thorough restructuring of the company was un-

dertaken with the enlarging of the underground cellars for the production and maturing of the "Cavas" as well as the bringing in of some important technical advances. Juvé y Camps development, from father to son, over three generations, has culminated in the construction of a fine new winery for the production and ageing of still wines, in the middle of the Espiells property created by the family architect, Josep Juvé Raventós.

Today Juvé y Camps focus their attention on producing Gran Reserve Cavas, producing 40% of the total production of Gran Reservas in the whole of the DO Cava. Minimum ageing for their Gran Reserve Cavas starts at 36 months.

Winery visit are possible but you should organise in advance.



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LLOPART

According to an old document in Latin,

An ancestor of the Llopart family, Bernandus Leopardi, was granted some vineyards in 1385 and the family has been in the wine business ever since.

The Llopart Cava brand is also the oldest in the region, this year celebrating its 125 anniversary. Through these years the label of the Cava brand has changed little - first a lithograph, now an illustration depicting the panoramic view of the winerie and its surroundings. The view is even more impressive in real life: 90ha of vineyards planted on ascending/descending terraces, situated up to 350 meters above sea level, 300 ha of forests and the beautiful silhouette of Montserrat in the distance. A great number of fossils have been found in the soil, some of which are exhibited in the winerie, and a white wine has been named Clos Dels Fossils to emphasize the exceptional land it comes from.

Only the first juice extracted from the grapes (first 1550L of every 3000 kg of grapes), known as "the tear must" and the flower must is used to make Llopart Cavas. Definitely a winerie of tradition, Llopart also pay much attention to details: the bottles are riddled manually and all the grapes are picked by hand.

The old cellar under the family house is still open to visitors, as well as the stylish exposition at the winerie, both displaying the history of centuries of winemaking. Lamps made out of Cava bottles and even a small fountain with water splashing out of a Cava bottle are just some of the elements that shows the kind of passion and respect Llopart treats their sparkling wine with.

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MAS CODINA

Three Generations of Grape Growers

Mas Codina's 40 hectares of land are an heirloom dating back to 1681. The Garriga family has been growing grapes for three consecutive generations.

In 1985, Antoni Garriga, current owner of Mas Codina, initiated wine production. While many cava-producers acquire grapes or base wine from outside sources, the Garrigas start their winemaking process from scratch. All grapes are harvested and lovingly handpicked from their own vineyards.

The family's passion for their practice is embodied by the land, which throbs with life. Located in Puigdàlber in the Penedès wine region, Mas Codina enjoys a microclimate suitable for viticulture. The land yields four varieties of grapes - Macabeo, Xarel·lo, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir - thanks to an annual rainfall of 550 litres per square metre and nutritious soil samples such as Clayey-Calcareous and Clayey-Sandy. This year, the family's close relationship with Mother Nature will manifest in the form of organic wines. Toni Garriga is thankful the era of technology, which provides winemakers with access to a wider range of products and makes it infinitely easier to kick off new endeavors. Steel tanks also make for cleaner production methods as opposed to using cement and wooden barrels.

A visit to Mas Codina reveals the juxtaposition of history and modernity. A century-old wine press is propped up against a wall in the Garriga's garden, which overlooks the mysterious Montserrat mountains. Inside the winery, the stillness of history is punctured by the locomotion of speedy conveyer belts.

Mas Codina takes pride in the maturity of their cavas. While the minimum ageing period of a cava is 9 months, their youngest cava is at least 24-months old. Time instills complex and creamy undertones in their sparkling wines. A sip of the Brut Nature Gran Reserva 2009 unveils the meaning behind the saying "good things take time." It contains grapes grown from vines aged 20-50 years old and ferments in the cellar for approximately 50 months - a lengthy period by cava standards. Each mouthful offers a taste of history.



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MASCARÓ

While you are unlikely to stumble across a winerie in the centre of a town, this is precisely where you will find Mascaró in Vilafranca del Penedés

Coming from a family of wine merchants, Narciso Mascaró utilized his skills in wine making and distillery to establish the winerie in 1946. The house and property was purchased from the Cistercian monks of Santes Creus and while it spans over 170 hectares only 38 hectares of this is used as vineyards, the remainder filled by the expansive forest.

The history of Mascaró is evident as you walk through its old cellars and dimly lit tunnels covered ground to ceiling with bottles of cava amidst the aging process. A subtle remembrance of the times of war and the reign of Franco suffered through during this winerie's lifetime can be noticed by the cheap electricity. In the original cellar two cables strung across the room with hanging bulbs are used as the only source of light.

The son of Mascaró, Antonio expanded the winerie in the 90's to build a larger warehouse and incorporate modern machinery. Today under the direction of Montserrat Mascaró, still infused with tradition the small family brand produces 100,000 bottles of wine per year. A sign of the quality of the cava produced at Mascaró is their recent success in the highly regulated Northern European

market after winning the contract from the Government of Norway, a tender which was put out to 161 wine producers.

Their unique cava differs in its production for several reasons, firstly the use of a French pressing machine which completes the process without stemming the grapes. This gives greater taste to the wine and protects against early fermentation and the effects of foreign yeasts. Also, Mascaró vineyards are 400 m above sea level, higher than most of the region. This means they can grow some of the most sensitive grapes called Parellada. With the high content of these delicate grapes used in the Cava the winemakers pride themselves on the distinctive floral aromas they contribute.

The distinctive label of Mascaró incorporates the historic meanings of the name, which is the character usually made from wood, molded at the bow of old ships or the face made of stone found on the façade of a house. The family commissioned an artist from Italy to develop this particular design and after studying in Barcelona he developed the mythical face featuring both the intelligence of man and the power of the lion.

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MATA I COLOMA

A small producer in a region with numerous Cava producers, it is the man and his passion that stand out at Mata I Coloma found on the outskirts of Sant Sadurni D' Anoià.

The first label of this winemaker is a word created by his grandfather, Les Cupades his unique adaptation of the Catalan word meaning “to blend”

Starting with a love of cava, the founder studied Enology and began his wine career working for a big cellar making base wines for external companies. With a desire to make his own blends he and his father invested in the company which began with its first harvest in 2000. Over its time in the industry the company exports have risen from 20% early on to now 50% being exported internationally, producing between 40,000 and 60,000 bottles per year depending on the harvest. Exporting countries include Japan, Germany, Denmark and Belgium.

The belief of the winemaking process here is the Beginning of the Cava, this means pure blends of the traditional varieties of Macabeo, Xarel-lo and Parellada - the way it was made from the earliest days. Always hoping to innovate in order to constantly improve and produce the highest quality of cava, there is constantly a new blend coming from this warehouse, a test for the future and a

vision for creating new ‘secrets’ to Cava perfection. All of the wines are organic products and will be certified as such from the 2013 harvest.

For this winerie producing cava comes with a responsibility, the drink so often enjoyed as a celebration, toasting to successes and happiness. For this reason it is seen as “king of the Wines” something that people consume, the bubbles of this special drink make it far more than just a wine but a special moment to be savored. Each batch of cava is unique, separate bottles produced with each season in mind you will find a summer cava and a winter cava varying in taste greatly.



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PARÉS BALTA

A strong commitment to the natural environment encouraged the family to raise and care for their own flock of sheep which fertilize the vineyards.



Parés Baltà, owned by the Cusiné family, has been passed down from father to son since 1790. There are currently three active generations of this family: the grandmother, Rosa Cusiné; her son, Joan Cusiné Cusiné; and his sons, Joan and Josep Cusiné Carol. A traditional winery with young and fresh ideas making smooth, well balanced wines and cavas, created with grapes grown on their five estates. These five estates boast a mosaic of soils and microclimates, with vineyards ranging from 170m to 750m above sea level, giving each wine a unique personality.

The Cusiné family are 100% dedicated to caring for the vines and creating their wines with passion and thoughts, which is seen in their environmentally considerate approaches. So much so that their wines and cavas are certified as organic. A strong commitment to the natural environment encouraged the family to raise and care for their own flock of sheep which fertilize the vineyards. And more recently bees are being used to ensure that the tiny flowers

are pollinated and to transmit the influence of the Mediterranean climate onto the grapes.

The winery can be found at the Parés Baltà *masia* (Penedès), dating back to 1790 and built at various stages with a range of different building materials such as adobe and stone. When restoring the old masia, the original structure was maintained and then the most up-to-date technology was installed, including various tasting rooms. The *cava* (cellar), in the shape of a cross with an arched roof made of solid brick, was built at the beginning of the 20th century by hand and is 10 metres underground. At this depth a temperature somewhere between 14°C and 15°C is constantly maintained.

Parés Baltà is very active in wine tourism. Winery visits and tastings are available daily. While it is advisable to make a reservation, on the spur of the moment show ups are catered for wherever possible.



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WWW.PARESBALTA.COM

PAPET DEL MAS

Josep Suriol, the founder of the brand Papet del Mas is a freelance producer of sorts

Sourcing the base wine to make Cava from assorted vineyards he manages the whole Cava production process to ensure the quality of the brand. Currently producing 4 different Cavas under the Papet Del Mas name, a Brut, Brut Nature and Brut Reserva as well as of course the remarkable Cava Rosado which was the winner of 50 Great Cavas 2012 and has since gone on from this honor to receive international orders from the likes of Japan.



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PERE VENTURA

Established in 1992 Pere Ventura is a young winerie for the Penedès wine region however it does not lack in culture or respect for the heritage of cava. In fact the history for this family dates back to 1872 when Pere Ventura's great grandfather Manuel Montserrat Font supervised the production of the first bottle of cava.

The winerie and its visitor centre located in the heart of the Penedès have been built with an unrivaled sophistication, a true statement of their commitment to high quality Cava production. Surrounded by over 60 hectares of vineyards from which the traditional varieties are grown in the best soil and carefully handpicked, the area makes for a beautiful sight.

While they have invested largely in high tech machinery to compliment the process their Cava is developed in the traditional method, aged for in the charming cellars on site. Managed manually during the fermentation process Pere Ventura also produces Magnum bottles and a specialty cava in a uniquely shaped bottle, the La Pubilla is a complex cava with long aging is a tribute to the female only child in the line of inheritance.

With a depth of up to 23 metres the cellars at Pere Ventura naturally keeping the perfect temperature, are an attraction within themselves.

The dimly lit tunnels resemble art works as the stacked bottles are draped with webs and moss

Not numbered but rather named after an exporting country each section has an individual character. Not to be missed is the library of Cavas which is collected in the "Chapel" homage to the founders faith the room framed by church shaped holes holding the first bottles of each harvest is used for special tastings or meetings and is a very impressive sight.

The tasting room is an environment to be greatly enjoyed by visitors, the eye catching design of the curved wooden ceiling and the display of each of their collections around the room is something to be really appreciated whilst trying a classy cava and delicious finger foods.

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ROVELLATS

Josep Vallès Rovira, the founder of Rovellats, started making cava in the 1920's, back then still called “champagne”, to serve in his own restaurant in Barcelona. Soon enough his sparkling wine became famous in the whole region and still remains today. The original advertisement posters, featuring beautiful pin-ups, holding up their glasses and other reminders of the past glory can be found in the Rovellats museum collection. The scenic Art Nouveau gardens, surrounding the winerie, also date back to the beginning of the last century. The winerie itself, however, has been there ages before Rovellats started making wines and some of the architecture has been preserved from as long ago as the 10th century.

The aura of the past is all around in Rovellats, whether you find yourself admiring the Virgin of Montserrat replica in the first chapel ever built in Sant Martí Sarroca, discovering the antique devices Rovellats used to produce their first cava or wandering through the old farmhouse, to which the winerie owes its name.

But it's not only history that makes Rovellats unique: their cellar is shaped in a form of six pointed star, the only one of this kind in the world.

With eight cavas and three vintage wines (representing all three colors), this is another winerie focusing on producing great quality cava, a tradition carried on by the third generation of Rovellats winemakers. Half of the vines are 30-60 years old, all the grapes are hand-picked and all the cavas are aged for at least two years and anything up to six.



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WWW.CAVASROVELLATS.COM

UNIÓN VINÍCOLA DEL ESTE

*...wine making in the region
has been going on for more
than 2,000 years*

New Kids on the block Unión Vinícola del Este (UVESTE) started making Cava back in 2007 in Valencia's Utiel-Requena wine region. They have quickly become the region's biggest producer making around 60% of the total cava production. While their cavas are new on the market, wine making in the region has been going on for more than 2,000 years. Indeed, archaeological finds show viticulture dates back to at least the 7th Century BC!

With vineyards at an altitude of between 700 and 900 metres above sea level, day time temperatures vary greatly. This tends to make for more aromatic grapes. Cavas at UVESTe are aged for a min of 12 months and up to 40 months working mainly with the grape varieties Chardonnay and Macabeo.

Requena is some 70 kms inland from the coastal capital of the region, Valencia. It is situated on a circular plateau which is some 45 kms in diameter where Mediterranean and Continental climates meet - cold winters and hot summers with little rainfall. Vines are kept healthy thanks to the "Levante" wind which usually gets blowing late afternoon and into the evenings.

cava@uveste.es

WWW.UVESTE.ES



VALLFORMOSA

Owned and managed by the Domenech family the Vallformosa winerie is now in its 5th generation of wine growers. While the business has evolved since its founding in 1865 it is still very much linked to its family origins, and with 3 of the 4 youngest children embracing the passion for the wine business it stands to be carried on well into the future.

A real feature to the winerie is the museum on site which displays old tools once used in the vineyards, this is the first stop for wine tourists and gives an insight into the history of these wines. In its earliest years Vallformosa produced only in bulk, it was only after the civil war they began making wine by the bottle. Seeking to preserve the

company's origins they do still produce some of this wine however it is only 5-10% of the business.

Vallformosa have found a way to reduce wastage by selling off the sediment and stem residue from the wine grapes to be used in the production of whiskeys and other alcohols. With 12 million wines produced annually this also means a lot of bottles used, with this in mind the winerie use environmentally friendly glass for their production.

Predominately producing young cava, around 80% of their wines are exported internationally, Belgium being their key market at present. However they do have offices all over the world as they export to nearly 40 countries.

The picturesque surroundings of the winerie set a beautiful scene for its visitors to enjoy and make it an ideal venue for weddings and corporate events alike

While the space has been developed to host such things with conference facilities in the new building one of the most beautiful settings is what they call the "Dome Room". Given its name because of the charming old round ceiling, the room looks through a glass wall to the barrels of wine in the cellar and is complimented by the original 1970s lights combining an authentic old Spanish feel with a modern sophistication.

Taking advantage of its appealing facilities, Vallformosa host an annual solidarity dinner, currently in its 4th year the event "Vallformosa Fight against Cancer" works in collaboration with the Catalan Oncology Institute Foundation. Expanding on the success of these dinners they have now also developed special edition caps for their new ranges of cava to raise awareness for the cause.

vallformosa@vallformosa.es

WWW.VALLFORMOSA.ES

VIA DE LA PLATA

Bodegas Via de La Plata owes its name to an ancient Roman road (translated as the “Silver Route”)

Still used by modern freeways which pass by the winerie. The principal cava producers in Extremadura, Bodegas Via de La Plata was also the first one to elaborate the first bottle of cava in the Extremeña area. The region lacks tradition of artisanal cava making, therefore the winerie, founded in 1985, might have been seen to be an unlikely place for the creation of a great cava, however, during the years it has gained appreciation not only in Extremadura, but also in the whole country and even beyond the borders, lately becoming popular in China. Bodegas Via de La Plata use more or less the traditional coupage for four out of their seven cavas, but the rest are made from Chardonnay grapes (Brut Nature, Brut Nature Reserva & Brut).

Apart from the visit to the winerie, wine tourists are also offered a tour of Tierra de Barros wine route (representing the typical wines of the region), group visits to the Wine Museum or even wine tasting classes. For those at home an online store on the webpage, displaying all the products (and selling them in boxes of six) can come in handy. Honesty, respect of the environment and a reasonable price is the promise that comes with each bottle of wine from Bodegas Vía de la Plata.



cava@bodegasviadelaplata.com

WWW.BODEGASVIADELAPLATA.ES

50 Great Cava Tour

The 50 Great Cava Tour is a unique grape escape excursion allowing wine lovers to visit some of the 50 Great Cavas producers in Spain. All of the visits are highly personalised and owner and/or winemaker led. Bubble fans will really get a feel for what makes each Bodega so special. More importantly, though, through the visits you will come to understand Cava on a much grander scale...what makes it such a distinct region in terms of people, quality, innovation, and character.

More info on the 50 Great Cava tour [here>>](#)
or email info@winepleasures.com

If you are planning your own itinerary in Cava country then you may find it more convenient to stay over a night or two in the region but be warned you will need to hire a car or driver as almost all of the 50 Great Cava producers are not accessible by public transport.

*Suggested
Accommodations for
the Cava enthusiast
touring the Penedès
area as follows:*



Sol I Vi

The establishment's name is Catalan for "Sunshine and Wine" - two things you'll be enjoying plenty of during your stay in El Penedès.

Strategically located in the heart of wine country, rooms here overlook picturesque landscapes in varying shades of green. Rates are more than affordable and run from 50€ for a single room to the bargain price of 100€ for a wedding suite.

Sol I Vi houses its own restaurant, a warm dining room, and a cellar carrying an impressive range of local, international wines and of course many of the 50 Great Cavas

It is one of the most family-friendly accommodations in the region with a playground and a swimming pool onsite to keep the little ones amused while mom and dad kick back and sip a glass or two of one the 50 Great Cavas.

Even if you don't decide to stay at Sol i Vi you should include it in your itinerary for either an exceptional lunch or dinner.

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Masia Olivera

Whisk yourself away from life's headaches and make peaceful memories at this farmhouse-style residence.

Accommodation at Masia Olivera offers more privacy than most as guests generally reside in separate buildings. The most unique room is El Celler de l'Olivera, which was converted from a wine cellar to cozy lodgings. From ivy-covered cottages to multi-floored Mediterranean-inspired homes, these living quarters easily accommodate parties of 4 to 8. The smallest cottage was fashioned especially for honeymooners.

One plus point about staying at Masia Olivera is the freedom to prepare your own meals. Most lodgings come fully equipped with private kitchens and barbeque facilities.

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Address:
Masia Olivera: Can Julià - Carretera C-243
Km 4, 08739 Subirats (Barcelona)
(GPS 41.401274, 1.754789)
Opposite Sol i Vi Hotel & Restaurant



Casa Fonda Neus

Spanning four generations, the Neus family has been extending their kind hospitality to guests since 1929.

Lovers of food and cava will find their stay at the food-centric hotel extremely gratifying as the owners take pride in introducing their clients to traditional Catalan food and specialized cava pairings. Dine-in at the elegant restaurant or have your meal outdoors; Casa Fonda Neus will cater to your picnic in style if you order take-away. The to-go menu offers dishes such as Cannelloni, Monkfish in Marinara sauce, and Roasted Chicken with Prunes. The hotel's legendary breakfast buffets are guaranteed to start your day off right.

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Can Carol Rural Hostel

Don't let the "rural" in this hotel's title fool you; Can Carol Rural Hostel is strategically located a mere 45 mins away from Barcelona El-Prat airport and close by myriad cultural attractions such as the Paper Mill Museum, the Castles of Anoia route, and several archaeological sites. The 14th century Catalan villa is located below the Paleolithic caves of Abric Romaní in La Font de la Reina, a historical neighborhood en route Barcelona and Madrid.

Accommodation runs between 55 -150€ and includes breakfast on the premises. The modern and comfortable rooms come equipped with Satellite TV and Internet connection among others.

Get a feel for the place by reading Sarah Walton's post [Hostel Can Carol](#)

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Tricky to find so GPS would be useful.



PEOPLE BEHIND 50 GREAT CAVAS

Over the last 4 years many people have been involved with judging and writing for the 50 Great Cava publication and we thought it was about time they get the recognition they all deserve so in no particular order, meet the people past and present behind 50 Great Cavas.



Casey Ewers

WSET Advanced Qualified, Casey has spent many years in the wine industry from working in the vineyard in New Zealand to selling fine wine in Dubai to now blogging in Western Australia via her wine blog, Travelling Corkscrew. Casey loves bubbles and after spending 6 weeks in the beautiful Spanish Penedès in 2011, she seriously fell head over heels for Cava. Amongst her favourites is the delicious range of aged Cavas from Gramona in Sant Sadurni d'Anoia and she loves visiting Can Paixano Cava Bar whenever she is in Barcelona.



Linda Kissam

A professional travel, food, and wine writer based out of Southern California. Through her monthly radio guest spots, food & wine pairing articles, recipe & destination pairings, wine reviews, and story placements in seven publications, she reaches over 7 million readers/listeners nationally with each article.



Benjamin Spencer

Founder of and lead instructor for The Taormina Wine School. Ben is a winemaker, sommelier, journalist, and a communications specialist.



Sarah Walton

Sarah Walton has studied Wine Marketing at Roseworthy college in Australia, and worked as a Sommelier amongst many other jobs within the wine industry. She currently writes thehedonista.com, a food, wine and travel blog based in the Middle East.

*Ashika Mathews*

Opening a wine school in central London called 'London Love Wine' but most pertinently running Cava Master-classes for the new Copa de Cava wine bar in London every - also hosting the Codorniu Fizzness school monthly She has been a wine maker, wine writer (worked for Jancis Robinson) and a wine buyer.

*Juan Manuel Gonzalvo*

Nacido en Zaragoza en 1972. Licenciado en Química Analítica con grado en Enología. Entre 1996 y 2002 trabajó en Somontano, Cariñena y Calatayud como enólogo. Desde entonces ha compaginado labores técnicas, comerciales y de divulgación en el sector del vino. Actualmente trabaja como consultor de bodegas en Alicante, Calatayud, Castellón, Manchuela, Penedès... asesorando en finales de fermentación, coupages, selección de barricas, control de calidad... Conoce a la perfección multitud de vinos españoles y tiene una dilatada experiencia en la cata, valoración y publicación en distintas redes sociales. Desde 2012 trabaja como personal-shopper para Uvinum, web de referencia en la venta de vinos on-line.

Annette White

*Annette White*

Is a passionate restaurateur, dedicated writer and new experience collector who is traveling the world in search of the best experiences in travel, food and adventure. Most days she can be found either writing in the corner of the local coffee shop, creating new recipes at her Michelin recommended restaurant or traveling to adventurous locations looking to create a new memory that can be shared on her award winning blog, Bucket List Journey."

*Ruth Troyano*

Ruth Troyano Puig grew up in the perfect location (Reus) to cultivate her devotion to wine. She has an impressive curriculum vitae, having worked as a news editor, radio station presenter, press secretary, and even as a head of department for the Catalan government. She returned to university, attaining a master's degree in wine tourism while simultaneously beginning to write her online blog Vi-Moments-Persones, which centres on three of life's great pleasures: wine, moments, and people.

*Tom Plant*

I was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, the son of an hotelier. My dad was in management at both the St. Francis and Sir Francis Drake Hotels. I inherited my passion for food, wine and photography from my dad. A Mass Communications major at Chico State, I embarked on a broadcast career that lasted nearly two decades, as a disc jockey, news and sports reporter and voice actor on radio and TV commercials. I moved to Baja California where I lived for two years and started selling real estate. It was then I discovered the amazing Valle de Guadalupe wine region. In May 2009 I launched the website WINEormous on a wing and a prayer. I decided rather than do wine reviews, I'd tell the stories of wine country, not just in Temecula, but globally. A year later I started doing Temecula winery tours. I'm a member of the International Food Wine and Travel Writers Association and spend six to eight weeks of the year on the road.

*Colin Harkness*

Through the various positions Colin has undertaken within the industry since his initial involvement, he has gained respect as the ultimate authority on all things wine-related. Most recently in 2010, he began receiving requests to judge wine competitions, the first of which was the prestigious Cata-Concurso DO Rías Baixas Albariño, followed by the Certamen de Vinos Yecla, the Decanter Magazine Spanish Panel, and even the world famous International Wines and Spirits Competition, which he has attended annually.

*Marc Teres*

After obtaining a degree in Hotel Management, Marc began working within the wine world in the restaurant industry in various management positions. During that time, he continued to hone his skills within the world of hospitality, food, and wine by completing Master Tourism & Leisure Management Programme, as well as a sommelier certification. Following his completing of these programs, Marc received the coveted position as a Sommelier at The Ritz Hotel in London. It is in this new country that he was introduced to the wines of the world and experienced different styles, varieties, and regions that deeply inspired him. Furthermore, Marc took a great leap in his educational achievements by receiving an advanced certificate (Level 3) from the Wine & Spirit Education Trust while living in the UK. Marc is currently, manager and sommelier at the Michelin Star awarded Restaurant, Dos Cielos, in Barcelona.

*Anthony Swift*

Is the General Manager and founder of Wine Pleasures; he is a writer on wine, food and travel for online publications, a resident in Spain's Cava - Penedès wine region for 15 years and is the mastermind behind the 50 Great Cavas and 50 Great Sparkling Wines of the World projects. He is also a speaker on many aspects of wine tourism and is the brains behind the annual International Wine Tourism Conference & Workshop which, each year is hosted in a different country. His educational background and experience has prepared him well for the wine world having studied degrees in Geography & Biology (B.A) combined, Applied Linguistics (B. Philosophy) and Marketing (M.A) at three different British universities. His favorite social drink is, of course, is a fine glass of sparkling wine preferably without any added licor de expedición.

Wine Pleasures

WWW.WINEPLEASURES.COM

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