

Viva España

The wine world is constantly in flux, but change in Spain over the last few decades looks more like revolution than evolution. In recognition of world market forces, the country has really sharpened up in act in an extraordinary fashion. A few spearheading pioneers led the way with volume producers leaving much in their wake. Spain is a fascinating country, a huge landmass of great geographical and topographical diversity, able to produce a myriad of different styles from classical and indigenous varieties. Our current listings reflect something of this diversity.

Rioja

Rioja has been something of a rollercoaster during the Spanish wine revolution, but has always retained a British following despite it's changing styles. A few decades ago Rioja was often produced in a certain fashion, fermented rapidly and left for years in American Oak. When all went well with a good selection, this resulted in easy, smooth, vanilla-scented wines. In a region however which is prey to the combined threats of torrid heats, frost and rain, the impeccable quality necessary for much laid-back wine making cannot be guaranteed. Wine making techniques have been revised so that wines now tend to be bottled easier and are often aged in French Oak.

The main grapes are:

White: White Grenache, Viura, Malvasia

Red: Tempranillo, Grenache, Graciano

Ribera del Duero

Driving from Rioja to Ribera del Duero across the plain of old castile, there is a vastness of land. At an altitude of over 700 metres above sea-level, the vineyards can enjoy soaring temperatures by day, yet very cold nights.

The main grape here is Tempranillo also called "Tinto Del Pais"

Valdepenãs and Jumilla

These two regions with so many up and coming areas, used to be regarded as one of Spain's many workhorse regions, producing wines in bulk. They have so much to offer and in looking at their viticulture and vinification are doing just that.

Rumeda

The most highly renowned white wines from Castilla-León, the soil here is gravel and clay making fresh aromatic style wines made from Verdejo and Vira grapes.

The other notable regions are: Priorat, Bierzo, Rias Baixas, Jerez & La Mancha

My Wine Selection

Rioja Graciano Tinto 2004 - £6.25

Sales@hallgarten.co.uk

Flor De Pingus, Ribera del Duero 2002 - £35.00

forburys@btconnect.com

Viña Gravonia, Crianza Blanco 1996 - £12.50

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Cheers,

Xavier Le-bellego
Forbury's Restaurant