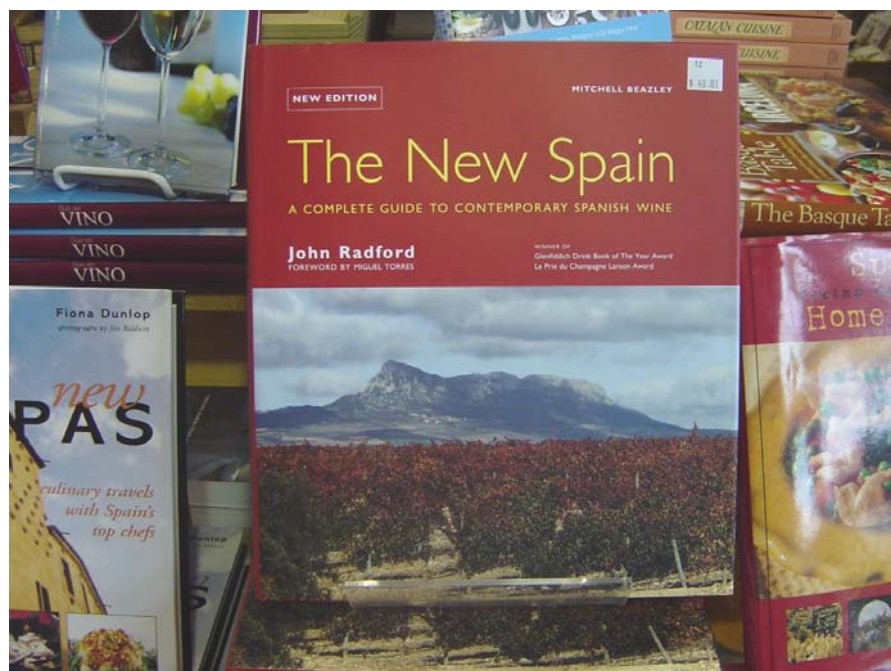




The Spanish Table

Berkeley Wine Newsletter- May 2005

The New Spain Part 2



In April we began a tour of Spain's wine producing regions, inspired by John Radford's book *The New Spain*. This month we continue our focus on the D.O. (Denominación de Origen) regions of Spain.

D.O. Rioja

Rioja is the best-known D.O. in Spain, and with good reason. Rioja wines have historically been the standard bearers of Spain's wine industry.

Often overlooked are the *rosado* wines of this region. These high quality *rosé* wines are perfect accompaniments to spring and summer menus.

Muga Rosado 2004 –

Bodegas Muga, the famed *Rioja* winery makes this dry *rosado* from 60% *Garnacha*, 30% *Viura* and 10% *Tempranillo*. The salmon-pink color, tart acidity and dried strawberry fruit character are a perfect combination for accompanying warm weather and summer meals. \$10.99

Ijalba Aloque Rosado '03 –

Consistently a customer favorite, *Aloque* is made from half *Tempranillo* and half *Garnacha*. This crisp, dry *rosado* is well crafted and exhibits bright acidity and delicate red berry fruit character. \$9.99

Vinos de la Tierra

The *Vinos de la Tierra* designation is less strictly regulated than a *Denominación de Origen*, and permits a greater range of grapes varieties, growing conditions, vineyard location and production techniques than in the D.O. regions.

Dehesa del Carrizal winery creates a variety of *Vinos de la Tierra de Castilla* from grape varieties more common in France or California's Napa valley than in central Spain.

Dehesa del Carrizal MV '02 –

MV stands for multi-varietal, which in this case is a blend of 55% *Cabernet Sauvignon*, 25 % *Syrah* and 20 % *Merlot*. Oak, dark fruit and medium-weight

tannins are all present in this structured, robust red wine. \$23.99

Dehesa del Carrizal Syrah '01 –

This 100% *Syrah* wine is full-bodied and potent, with toasty oak, rich ripe fruit character, and a long tannic finish. \$24.99

Dehesa del Carrizal Colección Privada '00 –

The flagship wine from *Dehesa del Carrizal* is made from 40% *Cabernet Sauvignon*, 35% *Syrah* and 25% *Merlot*. This garnet hued blend combines supple oak, ripe berry fruit character and moderate tannins in a refined manner. The result is a wine of distinction that speaks in a clear but soft voice. \$54.99

Dehesa del Carrizal

Cabernet Sauvignon '97 –

Dehesa del Carrizal's all *Cabernet Sauvignon* wine is taut and restrained, yet elegant. The dry tannins, and plum-like fruit character are concentrated, yet curiously muted at the same time. \$19.99

Corpus del Muni '01 –

This *Vinos de la Tierra de Castilla* designated wine, fashioned from 100% *Tempranillo*, is dark ruby colored and exhibits a dry, tannic aspect at first, resolving into a well balanced wine with tart cherry fruit character and bright acidity. \$18.99

Mauro Tinto '02 –

The new vintage of this celebrated wine from the *Vinos de la Tierra de Castilla y León* (a different region than the preceding wines) is composed of 90% *Tempranillo* and 10% *Syrah*. *Mauro '02* is obscure violet colored, with scents of oak and spice. The fruit character is deep and resonant of cassis and black cherries. The wine evolves beautifully as it opens in the glass. \$40.99

D.O. Ribera del Duero

The *Ribera del Duero* region was described in The April newsletter, but we continue to receive many stunning wines from this region. Here are some new arrivals:

The wines of *Pago de los Capellanes* are excellent examples of the *Ribera del Duero* style. These well-crafted elegant wines are receiving much deserved acclaim, and are available in several styles and price points.

Pago de los Capellanes Joven '03 –

Made from 80% *Tempranillo*, 10% *Cabernet Sauvignon* and 10% *Merlot*, this *joven* (young) wine spends just 3 months in oak before bottling. The result is a wine with bright berry-like fruit character and lively floral aromas. \$14.99

Pago de los Capellanes Crianza '00 –

The *crianza* version of *Pago de los Capellanes* is a blend of 90% *Tinto Fino* and 10% *Cabernet Sauvignon*. The wine spends a year in the barrel and another year in the bottle before release. Well-integrated tannins combine with ripe fruit and a smoky oak background note for a classic expression of regional style. \$22.99

Pago de los Capellanes Reserva '00 –

This blend of 90% *Tempranillo* and 10% *Cabernet Sauvignon* sees sixteen months of barrel age and twenty months of bottle age before release. The result is a smooth and sophisticated wine of great complexity and finesse. \$39.99

Pago de Carraovejas Crianza '02 –

The latest vintage of *Pago de Carraovejas Crianza* has arrived in the marketplace, and it is quickly becoming

the favorite wine of many Spanish Table customers. All estate fruit is used in the production of *Pago de Carraovejas* wines. *Pago de Carraovejas Crianza* is a blend of 75% *Tempranillo* and 25% *Cabernet Sauvignon*. The wine is rich and opulent, with subtle hints of spice and cedar, well-integrated oak and supple tannin. \$28.99

Valduero Reserva '98 –

The new vintage of *Valduero Reserva* has arrived. This earthy, traditional *Ribera del Duero* wine has a smoky tone, reinforced by dry fruit character and substantial tannins. \$25.99

Aalto PS '01 –

This is one of the most celebrated of *D.O. Ribera del Duero* wines, from the most renowned winemaker in the region. Mariano Garcia, of *Vega Sicilia* fame, is responsible for this rich, highly extracted wine. Robert Parker's Wine Advocate recently awarded Aalto PS a nearly perfect 98 point score, calling it "seamless" and "out of this world." \$96.00 (very limited quantity)

D.O. Bierzo

The popularity of *D.O. Bierzo* wines continues to increase with each passing month. Here are a few recent additions that were not covered in last month's newsletter.

Pago de Valdoneje '02 –

As always, *Bierzo* wines are made with the *Mencia* grape. *Pago de Valdoneje* is a lighter bodied expression of *Bierzo*, while still retaining the loamy, leafy aroma and delicate fruit character of the region. \$11.99

Pittacum '02 –

This is a richer expression of regional style. The earthy background flavor is accentuated by ripe rich fruit character. The sensory image that comes to mind is the smell of a newly tilled patch of strawberries after a thunderstorm. \$16.99

Dominio de Tares '03 –

This wine is the younger sibling of *Bembibre* (described in the April newsletter), and the same winemaking skill is evident in this more modestly priced offering. The wine has a ripe yet restrained fruit character, backed up by aromas of fresh turned earth. \$14.99

D.O. Rias Baixas

Albariño is the predominant grape variety in *D.O. Rias Baixas*. *Galicia*, in Northwestern Spain, is cooler, moister and greener than much of the rest of the country. Young white wines are the drink of choice here to accompany the seafood based cuisine that is also rightfully famous in this region (the return of warmer weather here in the Bay Area also signals the beginning of *Albariño* season).

Pedro de Soutomaior '03 –

The *Soutomaior* region within *D.O. Rias Baixas* is where some of the best *Albariño* grapes are grown. *Pedro de Soutomaior* is a full-bodied wine with tropical fruit aromas blanketing mineral flavors and lively acidity. \$19.99

Santiago Ruiz '03 –

This traditional style *Albariño* is reminiscent of a trip to the seashore. Scents of crushed seashells, and breezy light fruit character blend effortlessly in this sunshine colored wine. \$17.99

Fillaboa '03 –

Abundant floral aroma is the initial impression upon opening this wine. Bright citrusy acidity and lush texture follow on the palate. The clean, refreshing finish is an incentive to refill the glass again and again. Fortunately this wine has a modest 12% alcohol by volume. \$17.99

Cava

Spanish sparkling wine, made in the *método tradicional* (traditional method) of French *Champagne* is the most popular sparkling wine in the world. Cava is not a D.O. (*denominación de origen*) in the traditional sense of the term, because the vineyards and the wineries are not limited to a specific geographical location. The growing regions for *Cava* grapes are widely dispersed, though most of the vineyards are in *Catalunya* in Northeastern Spain.

Parxet Cuvee 21 –

Using the traditional blend of *Macabeo*, *Parellada*, and *Xarel-lo* grapes, this *Cava* is dry and citrusy, with lively bubbles and a price that encourages spontaneous celebration \$10.99

Parxet Cuvee Dessert –

This unusual *Cava* is fashioned from the *Pinot Noir* grape. Salmon-pink with amber reflections, Parxet Cuvee Dessert is (as the name implies) a sweeter style of *Cava*, suitable for serving with (or for) dessert. Lively bubbles and fresh berry fruit character make this a memorable sparkling wine. \$17.99

Segura Viudas Aria –

This *Cava* has persistent bubbles, green apple fruit character, and just a hint of the yeasty aroma that the higher priced *Segura Viudas Heredad Brut* is famous for. \$10.99

D.O. Navarra

On the east side of the Ebro River, across from the better-known D.O. Rioja, D.O. Navarra is home to a diverse range of wines. This month we feature two of the more traditional styles from the region that are appropriate for warmer weather.

El Chapparal de Vega Sindoa '02 –

This red wine is made up of 100% old vine *Garnacha* (the most widely planted grape in *D.O. Navarra*). Accessible and uncomplicated when first opened, the strawberry fruit character diminishes with exposure to air and a peppery back note develops with time. \$11.99

Vega Sindoa Rosado '03 –

Back in the day (like in the 11th century), *rosado* wines were the mainstay of the *Navarra* region. Records indicate that pilgrims passing through *Navarra* on their way to *Santiago de Compostela*

enjoyed the local pink wine enough to recount the experience in their travel journals. The tradition is kept alive today by such stand out wines as *Vega Sindoa Rosado*. This pink wine is dry and tangy, with nuances of berry fruit and tangerine. Take a bottle along for a picnic on a sunny day (or on your next pilgrimage) to experience the wine under ideal circumstances. \$8.99



Photo by Andy Booth