

Hello Spanish Table wine friends!

"Spain is a great example of small artisans breaking away from the co-op mentality," or so said Robert Parker in last week's Wednesday N.Y. Times article, *Decanting Robert Parker*. In a lengthy divulgence on the personal tragedies surrounding the most loved & hated wine icon, Eric Asimov explores the possibility that Parker is not to blame for his incredible influence on the state of international winemaking, but just a mere human who started out doing what he loved & got very famous doing it.

Steve & I batted this idea around on Saturday afternoon, but the more we talked about it, well--we couldn't let Parker off the hook that easy--but the guy does deserve a break once in a while. I'm all for improvements in quality & innovation, but sometimes a few words with a couple of numbers attached can cause price tags triple! So while Jumilla wines just keep getting better & better because of the notice they've received, it's rather shocking to know that there's one on the market for \$125 now. Let's hope Spain keeps its cooperative efforts alongside the likes of Bordeaux alum's Alvaro Palacios & Telmo Rodriguez. That way there's something for all of us...

Best,
Catherine

LITTLE BRAZIL SHRIMP TURNOVERS (*Empadinhas de camarao*) from Latin American Cooking Across the U.S.A. by

Himilce Novas & Rosemary Silva

Empanadas are one of my favorite dishes to bring to parties. They're a little time consuming, but worth the effort, & usually the first item to go! Since we now carry hearts of palm as part of our South American section, I thought this looked like a great recipe to try out. I liked it even more because the empanadas are baked rather than fried, making them a healthier version...

Makes about 16 empadinhas

For the Filling:

2 Tbs olive oil

1 medium onion, peeled & finely minced

2 medium cloves garlic, peeled & finely minced

2 medium ripe tomatoes, coarsely chopped

½ tsp salt, or to taste

1/8 tsp freshly ground white pepper

¾ cup canned hearts of palm, drained & coarsely chopped

½ lb medium shrimp, peeled, deveined, cut in thirds, & rinsed

1/4 cup canned unsweetend coconut milk

2 Tbs finely minced fresh parsley (cilantro is a nice alternative)

For the Dough:

2 1/3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

½ tsp turmeric

1/4 tsp salt

6 Tbs (¾ stick) unsalted butter, chilled

1 Tbs vegetable shortening

1 large egg

1 large egg yolk, beaten with 3 Tbs cold water

For the Glaze:

1 egg yolk

1 Tbs water

Prepare the filling: Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Saute the minced onions & garlic until golden, about 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, salt, & white pepper, & cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes. Next add the hearts of palm, shrimp, & coconut milk, & cook, stirring constantly, for an additional 5 minutes, or until the shrimp turn bright pink. Stir in the parsley or cilantro, & then remove the skillet from the heat & allow the filling to cool completely.

Meanwhile, make the dough: Mix together thoroughly the flour, turmeric, & salt in a large bowl. Cut the chilled butter into ½ inch pieces with a sharp knife. Add the pieces of butter & the vegetable shortening to the flour. Blend the ingredients with your fingertips until the mixture resembles a coarse meal. Next mix in the whole egg & the egg yolk beaten with cold water, & knead into a stiff dough. Add more water, a teaspoon at a time, if necessary. Cover the dough with a dampened towel & set it aside to rest for at least 20 minutes.

While the dough rests, make the glaze. Blend the egg yolk & 1 tablespoon water in a small bowl.

To assemble the *empadinhas*, roll the dough out on a lightly floured work surface to a thickness of 1/8 inch. Cut the dough into 4-inch circles with a cookie cutter or mark the dough with a 4-inch plate or bowl & cut out the imprints with a sharp knife. Roll out the scraps & cut more circles until all of the dough is used. Spoon a heaping tablespoon of filling into the middle of each pastry circle, leaving a 1/4 inch edge. Coat the edges of a filled circle with the egg glaze, & then carefully fold one side of the circle over the filling so the so that the edges meet, forming a half-moon. Seal the half-moon by pressing the edges lightly with your fingertips, & then press the edges with the tines of a fork. Repeat until all the *empadinhas* are folded & sealed. (You will probably have a little filling left over.

Arrange the *empadinhas* on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Brush them with the egg glaze, then bake them on the top rack of a preheated 375 degree oven for 20 minutes, or until they are golden brown. Remove the *empadinhas* from the oven & place them immediately on wire racks to cool. Serve the *empadinhas* warm.

NEW & NOTABLE

Altos de la Hoya 2004, Jumilla \$9.99

Look out for wines from Jumilla, a region in southern Spain that has some of the oldest ungrafted vines in the world. The older the vine gets, the deeper the roots stretch, soaking up minerals & earthy textures. Altos de la Hoya is dark & inky with plenty of coffee & baking spice aromatics, as well as sun-drenched appeal. A voluptuous bottling with a Moorish touch of cinnamon in a robust & unmistakable Jumilla style.

"A final tank sample of the 2004 Altos de la Hoya Monastrell Ungrafted Old Vines (8% Grenache is

included in the blend) exhibits a dense ruby/purple color along with surprising elegance, sweet blackberry, smoky fruit, plenty of depth, ripe tannin, and admirable definition as well as finesse for a wine of this price range and region. It is a fabulous value that should be enjoyed over the next 2-3 years." - **(88-90 points), Robert Parker**

Terroso 2001, Douro \$11.99

I always love it when customers turn *me* onto great wines. Such is the case with this new vintage of Terroso which is showing beautifully right now. Distinctively Douro with cocoa, white pepper, berries & earth on the nose with a little smoldering smoke... Deliciously creamy with vanilla & unfiltered concentration, front of the teeth tannins & power on the back-end. You can tell Joao Romeira of **Quinta do Infantado** is behind this project. Terroso is terrific!

Bohigas Cava Rosado, \$13.99

After falling in love with Spain, local Cory Winn of Vashon Island decided to start her own import company & handpicked this wine. A customer favorite for its affordable elegance, Bohigas goes to show that you don't have to spend a fortune to drink pink. Flavors of strawberry gelato delight, with loads of fun frothy bubbles filling your glass. A light tang & dry fruit keeps things sassy. Here's to the quickest way to put a little romance in your dinner... Pop!

Don Olegario Albarino 2004, Rias Baixas \$19.99

The Albarino grape is a true gift from nature. The wines of Northwest Spain express such elegance & sophistication, but their full-bodied nature makes them the perfect whites for red wine lovers. Don Olegario is a tiny estate in the prestigious Cambados region of Galicia, handcrafted by the Olegario family since the 1950's. It sings of pomelo & herbal seagrass elements with lively crushed shell minerality. Tropical banana with lots of lift & the salty finish of the surf... If you've got some halibut, crab, shrimp or *percebes* (barnacles!) in your future, this is the bottle for you!

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