

## **SPAIN**

- The third largest wine-producing country in the world.
- Bulk are ordinary, some fine ones, and of course . . . Sherry
- New laws in 1970 – modern methods helped raise standards.
- Production and labeling governed by INDO (Instituto Nacional de Denominacione de Origen)
- Wines labeled DO are of guaranteed standard – but not as stringent as AOC.
- There are 28 wine regions.

### **RIOJA**

- Northern Spain, bordering Ebro river.
- Very popular (still made by traditional methods).
- Best are reds but whites also are good.
- Reds often aged for more than 10 years. Whites are had young.
- Grapes/wines are sold to shippers who produce blended brands.
- Some notable brands: Imperial, Ygay, Marques de Riscal

### **LA MANCHA**

- Central Spain, south-east of Madrid.
- Huge concentration of wines.
- The town of Valdepeñas gives its name to many wines.
- Chiefly strong reds.

### **CATALONIA**

- North-east, near Barcelona.
- Red, white and rosé.

### **Penedés**

- North-east coastline, between Barcelona and Tarragona.
- Best known for sparkling wines but stills also produced.

### **Andalucia**

- South-west coast – most famous wine-region of Spain.
- Other than the delimited Sherry district, two famous districts are Montilla and Malaga.
- **Other regions**
- Valencia, Las Campañas, Basque, Extremaduro, Aragon, La Nava, Ceberos, Etc.

### **SHERRY**

- Sherry is a complex blend of wines, fortified by the addition of spirits.
- Appeared in England in the early 16th century – immediately popular.
- Fortification for easy travelling.
- The English called it sack - from Spanish sacar (to export).
- Main town: Jerez de la Frontera
- Jerez → Sherris → Sherry
- Andalucia – from Portuguese frontier in the west to Mediterranean in the east.

- Sherry district between Guadalquivir and Guadalete rivers.
- Jerez de la Frontera is the Sherry capital.
- Other towns are: Sanlucar de Barrameda, Cadiz and Puerto da Santa Maria.

### **Soil**

- Albariza (lime, chalk, magnesium & clay)
- Barros (clay)
- Arenas (sandy)

### **Grapes Used**

- Palominos (white) – classic and finest for Sherry – 90% are Palomino vines.
- Others: Mantuo Castellano, Mantuo de Pilla, Cañocazo
- Pedro Ximenez – very sweet, used mainly for blending.

## **MANUFACTURING OF SHERRY**

### **Unusual and unique process.**

Fully ripened grapes brought to pressing house



Placed on round, woven esparto grass mats (for 12 to 14 hours)



Juice concentrated = high sugar content



Brought to pressing hall with **lagars**



Men tread with hobnailed shoes.



Gypsum is sprinkled → cream of tartar in grapes breaks down to tartaric acid = higher acidity.



Actual pressing with a screwpost (grape pulp piled evenly, covered with broad esparto ribbon and the post is turned)



Juice gushes forth filtered through the grass ribbon



Received in the waiting **butt**



Butts of **mosto** sent by trucks to **bodegas** in the Sherry towns.



Fermentation is violent in the first week.



Slows down and takes up to 3 months = a completely dry wine.



Racked into new casks

(even at this stage the vintner does not know what type of wine is going to develop)



A white and soft **flor** appears on the wine in some of the casks  
(gives distinctive character to dry Sherries).



Two basic categories:

- **Fino** (fine) – thick and heavy flor
- **Oloroso** (rich fragrant) – little or no flor

The wine is incorporated into a **solera** system for maturing and blending with old wines → the new wine acquires the characteristics of the older wines.



Never drawn out more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> from the solera → continually blending wines  
→ continuity of style for centuries.



Sometimes wines from more than one soleras are blended to create a brand.



Put into fresh casks and fortified with brandy:

- Fino – 15%
- Oloroso – 18%



Further blending, if desired:

- Darker: **vino de color**
- Sweeter: **vino dulce, dulce apagado**



Clarified with egg white/white Spanish earth.



Bottling

## **TYPES OF SHERRY**

### **The Fino Group**

- **Manzanilla:** a very dry, very pale, light-bodied fino that has been developed in the bodegas of Sanlucar de Barrameda, where the salty air of the Atlantic ocean contributes to the fragrance of the wine.
- **Fino:** a very dry, very pale, medium-bodied fino from Jerez.
- **Amontillado:** dry, pale to light gold, fuller-bodied.

### **The Oloroso Group**

- **Oloroso:** usually sweet, deep golden, full-bodied and nutty.
- **Cream:** sweet, deep golden, full-bodied and nutty.
- **Brown:** very sweet, dark brown, full-bodied and nutty.

## **SOME FAMOUS SHIPPERS**

Gonzalez Byass, La Riva, Williams & Humbert, Pedro Domecq, Harvey's

## **USES OF SHERRY**

- A fine drink on its own (before/after dinner).
- Accompaniment with some foods.
- Popular cooking alcohol.

## SPANISH SPARKLING WINES

### Vino Espumoso

- Lately quite popular.
- Some are good, especially from Penedes.
- Most are sweet.

### SOME SPANISH LABEL TERMS

- **Tinto:** Red
- **Blanco:** White
- **Rosado:** Rosé
- **Cepa:** grape variety
- **Reserva:** matured quality
- **Vino de mesa/pasto:** table wine
- **4° Ano / 4 Anos:** bottled at 4 years old.
- **Consejo Regulador:** organising and controlling co-operative body