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IN VINO VERITAS

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**Tastevin
Group**



TASTEVIN GROUP WINE TOUR
NORTHERN SPAIN

OCTOBER 18 - 26, 2008

"Beber este vino es como hablar con Dios." This Spanish expression ("tasting this wine is like talking with God") is a reflection of the incredible revolution that has happened with Spanish wines.

If you think you are familiar with the wines of Spain, take another look! There has been a tremendous explosion in the last 15 years and I will introduce you to some of the top "exploders!" Fabulous wines have come recently from the two districts which will be our focus: Ribero del Duero & Rioja. Ancient towns like Burgos and Laguardia will fascinate you with their centuries-old ambience.

With an estimated 5500 wineries, Spain vies with Italy & France as one of the top producers of wine. Everyone knows Sherry, but few Americans are familiar with the wines that are competing with some of the best in the world and getting that recognition. Now is the time to learn about them before their prices match the best in the world. (Vega Sicilia is getting there at almost \$400./bottle.) With so much wine, how can an interested taster know where to focus? The best way is to immerse yourself in Spanish wine culture while enjoying the *gastronomy, art (Bilbao & the Guggenheim Museum, the Prado Museum) & history* (and even some time for shopping.) Spain hasn't yet reached its enormous potential for wine tourism, so we will be in the forefront of explorers (and welcomed as such!) You will discover why the *Tempranillo* grape (a.k.a. *Cencibel, Tinto Fino, Tinto del Pais*) has been embraced by winemakers in northern Spain (frequently with a touch of *Cabernet Sauvignon*.) Ranging from centuries old and traditional to ultra modern high-tech, the wineries will give you insight into why Spain is bursting onto the top level in the world of wine.

We will include wineries that are emerging as the top quality producers and explore all aspects of the grapes used, how the wine is made and the different wine styles. Join us on this trip through the history and art of Spain, castles, monasteries, museums, gastronomy and wine.

If you want to assure your place before the trip fills up (as my trips have the past few years), reserve soon. We can also put you in touch with an excellent agent in Spain if you want to extend your trip and visit other sites like Toledo, Castille, Segovia, Granada or Barcelona..

TASTEVIN GROUP WINE TOUR

October 18-26, 2008

NORTHERN SPAIN

Proposed Itinerary

Saturday, October 18 - Depart for Spain from Philadelphia on USAir direct non-stop flight to Madrid's Barajas Airport or depart from the gateway of your choice to Madrid. We will rendezvous at Barajas airport on Sunday morning.

Sunday, October 19 - Arrive at Madrid Barajas Airport approximately 9:00 a.m. We will rendezvous with our fellow *Tasteviners* at 10 a.m. to board our deluxe motor coach for the drive to *Santo Domingo de la Calzada* in the *Rioja* region. This will be the longest drive of the trip (4-5 hours), so we will make several stops on the autoroute for refreshments (on your own.) *La Rioja* is carpeted with vineyards under the peaks of the *Sierra de Cantabria* and *Sierra de la Demanda* mountains. *Santo Domingo* was founded in the 11th century and parts of its 14th century ramparts still surround the town. Our destination will be the *Parador de Santo Domingo Bernardo de Fresneda*, a 16th century convent converted into a lovely hotel. You will have the afternoon free to rest or stroll the historic town center around the *Plaza del Santo* with its 16th century houses. We will have our welcome dinner here this evening. **PARADOR DE SANTO DOMINGO BERNARDO DE FRESNEDA**

Monday, October 20 – This morning, we will begin our immersion into the wines of *Rioja* with a visit to the oldest winery in *Haro*, founded 130 years ago, ***Lopez de Heredia***, which makes wine in the same way and with some of the same equipment that was used 100 years ago. Although the tasting room is modern, the surrealistic caves full of penicillium will give us a glimpse into the past. White wines are fermented on the skins & racking is done using candles. The winery has its own small cooperage where we will see the tremendous manual labor that goes into making a barrel. Our next visit will be a total contrast – strikingly modern and high-tech, ***Baigorri*** is built on 7 levels into a terraced hillside to take advantage of gravity flow to move their wines. The winery is owned by a pharmacist, so you know the wines will be "good medicine." We will have lunch in the winery's restaurant with sweeping views of vineyards and mountains. ***Bodegas Ysios*** was conceived as an element completely integrated in the surrounding landscape and, at the same time, as an autonomous site-specific sculpture. The building is as dramatically impressive as the two red wines made there. Finally, we will pay a short visit to the charming, ancient village of Laguardia. Evening free. Dinner at our Parador is included (drinks extra.)

PARADOR DE SANTO DOMINGO BERNARDO DE FRESNEDA

Tuesday, October 21 – Today we will visit one of the most acclaimed museums in the world, the ***Guggenheim*** in *Bilbao*, where we will have a guided tour of Frank Gehry's masterpiece. Built in 1997, the design continues the curvaceous, free-form sculptural style that has become a Gehry signature. Greeted by Jeff Koons' gigantic flower poodle at the entrance, you will be dazzled by the museum's scale. Lunch in a local restaurant. This afternoon, on our way back to *Rioja*, we will stop for a short visit to the 15th century ***Castillo de Cuzcurrita***, a small winery making some very highly rated wines from very old vines within the castle walls.. Evening free. Dinner at our Parador is included (drinks extra.)

PARADOR DE SANTO DOMINGO BERNARDO DE FRESNEDA

Wednesday, October 22 – Checking out of our Parador, we will depart for a visit to the most impressive wine museum I have ever seen, the ***Dinastia Vivanco Museum of Wine Culture***. The breadth and significance of the collection, and the beautiful style of the whole project is a joy for the wine lover. There are terrific interactive displays that really bring winemaking, wine aromas and flavors, barrel and cork-making to life. A big screen animation of the fermentation process, seen at molecular level from within the tanks, pipes and barrels, is brilliantly done, and the collection of 4500 corkscrews is one of the largest in the world. Then we will depart for *Ribera del Duero*, stopping along the way in *Burgos* for lunch and a guided tour of the magnificent ***Catedral***, the third largest in Spain and a showcase of European Gothic sculpture. Begun in the 13th century, completed in the 15th, the cathedral is a UNESCO World Heritage monument. Continuing to our next home, our own castle on top of a rock outcropping, a newly renovated 7th century fortress that was once a royal residence and is now a modern "medieval" hotel. Dinner tonight in "our" castle.

RESIDENCIA REAL CASTILLO DE CURIEL

Thursday, October 23 - The extraordinary estate of ***Abadía Retuerta*** is situated just outside the border of the *Ribera del Duero* region in Spain's north central province of *Castilla y León*. The monastery and vineyards of *Abadía de Santa María de Retuerta* were established in 1146 by Count Sancho Garcia, who gave them to the French monastic order of Saint Norbert. The monastery was one of a network designed to accomplish the Christian reconquest of Iberia, pushing the Moors southward out of Asturias, León, Castilla and finally across the strait of Gibraltar. We will tour this estate and taste their excellent wines. ***Viña Pedrosa*** has been in the forefront of wineries leading the *Ribera del Duero* region to world-class status. The *Perez Pascuas* family will welcome us to their cellars to introduce and match their excellent wines with lunch in a new tasting room overlooking their vineyards. After lunch, we will see why *Alejandro Fernandez* says "*mis vinos son mis hijos, son todos buenos pero diferentes*" ("my wines are my children, all are good but each is different.") His 3 children are ***Tinto Pesquera, Condado de Haza & Dehesa la Granja***. We will discover how different "*terroirs*" affect the *tempranillo* grape. Tonight, your evening is free to have dinner at our castle or to arrange to have their shuttle take you to the town of *Peñafiel* for some traditional eats. (We can make recommendations.)

RESIDENCIA REAL CASTILLO DE CURIEL

Friday, October 24 – This morning we will depart our castle to begin our journey to Madrid, stopping first at ***Bodegas Arzuaga Navarro*** ("Arthuara Navarro"). The fairly young, modern winery "is a tribute in stone, solid & rustic, reflecting a monastic spirit in its arches and towers" (in their words). We will visit the impressive barrel room of this 3500 acre estate for a barrel tasting and have lunch in their excellent restaurant. Then onward to Madrid and our regal hotel, commissioned by King Alfonso XIII in 1912 to give Madrid "a royal palace for visitors." (It is just 2 blocks from the *Prado Museum*.) Tonight, you can choose from among the many fine restaurants in Madrid, including two in our hotel, OR elect to go on an optional guided tapas bar tour.

HOTEL PALACE

Saturday, October 25 – This morning, we have arranged for a guided city tour. You will be free to have lunch on your own with time for museums, shopping or sightseeing. Tonight, a special "Farewell" dinner to our immersion in the fabulous wines of northern Spain.

HOTEL PALACE

Sunday, October 26 – We bid *Adiós* to the delights of Spain as we return to *Barajas* airport for our departures.

NOTE: Vintage Spain is collaborating in the tour organization but the tour is sold by Herbert Engelbert for the Tastevin Group. but we don not handle reservations or payments. So please contact Herbert Engelbert to book the tour at herbeng@earthlink, PHONE: 610-455-3907 - FAX: 610-455-3908. We can also contact him in your behalf, if you prefer.

TOUR TERMS & CONDITIONS

SPAIN, October 18-26, 2008

(May 2008)

NOTE: This is a tour hosted by Herbert Engelbert for the Tastevin Group. Vintage Spain is collaborating with the tour organization and is responsible of all land services in Spain, but we don not handle reservations or payments. So please contact Herbert Engelbert to book the tour at herbeng@earthlink, PHONE: 610-353-4879 - FAX: 610-353-4927. We can also contact him in your behalf, if you prefer.

TOUR PRICE: \$4790./per person double occupancy (coach class) from Philadelphia International Airport to Madrid. Land only: \$4090./per person double occupancy. Single supplement: \$730. (Note the meals that are included below.)

Room upgrades to suites or superior rooms are offered, as available, at a supplement of \$1305. per double room for the length of the trip. These upgrades are *very limited* in number and should be booked as early as possible. Upgrades are available in Ribera del Duero and Madrid *only*. If an upgrade is not available at each hotel, your price will be adjusted.

THE TOUR WILL INCLUDE:

- Roundtrip airfare in Tourist Class from Philadelphia if desired (Land Only options available).
Note: there is now an airline baggage charge of \$25 for a second bag on USAir (50 lb. limit on each bag.)
- Seven nights accommodations in luxury hotels..
- Breakfasts each morning.
- 5 lunches and 5 dinners as noted in the itinerary.
- All winetastings, tours with guides and visits.
- Transportation by private first-class motorcoach and other transport as noted in the itinerary.
- Baggage handling for two pieces of luggage per person (note: 50 lb. per piece weight limit.)
- Tips for porters at hotels and for the bus driver(s).

NOT INCLUDED: Tips to chambermaids.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

DEPOSIT: \$1000./person with reservation.

CANCELLATION: If received prior to July 11, 2008, full refund. Cancellations received after July 11 will be subject to penalties (dependant upon airline and hotel policies) and a service charge, as follows:
If received between July 11 and August 8, \$200/pp. If received between August 8 and August 29, 50% cancellation fee. After August 29, no refunds can be made.

INSURANCE: To protect you against unexpected circumstances which may cause you to interrupt or cancel your trip, optional trip insurance is available that will refund deposits and payments. Covered are accidents, illness, death & terrorism (but not a state of war, whether declared or undeclared,) or default by any of the tour operators, airlines or suppliers.

MINIMUM PARTICIPATION: Prices are based on a minimum of 25 persons. Herbert Engelbert reserves the right to cancel the trip if minimums are not reached by July 11, 2008 unless participants agree to price adjustments. If Herbert Engelbert cancels the trip, full refunds will be made.

RATES & CURRENCIES: Rates will be based on tariffs currently in effect and exchange rates projected to the trip date and are subject to change.

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TIME OUT FOR FINE WINE

on the "Avenue to the Arts"

WRTI/FM 90.1 (Philadelphia)

(in the Delaware Valley area)

TIME OUT FOR FINE WINE is a 60 second radio program currently aired once daily Monday through Friday on Philadelphia's "Avenue to the Arts" NPR station, WRTI/90.1 FM, at approximately 3 p.m. The program elicits strong consumer support for its "proud sponsors of WRTI." Local theater and cultural groups, philanthropic organizations, wineries, wine importers, wine distributors, restaurants, major credit card companies, computer companies, automobile distributors, the Philadelphia Orchestra and Pennsylvania Ballet have been supporters, reaching approximately 400,000 listeners throughout Pennsylvania and parts of New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware.

The content of the program, ***TIME OUT FOR FINE WINE***, is broad based, yet concise, to appeal to the novice as well as the connoisseur: basic information about wines, grape varieties, names, vintages, reading and understanding wine labels, how to taste wine, historical and cultural information, wine travel, wine and health, good wine values, wine and food affinities, cooking with wine, buying and storing wine, wine book reviews, occasional forays into that "wine made from grains," beer, and interviews with some of the world's leading winemakers and wine and food personalities.

Listener response has been outstanding, with the program generating many inquiries and comments. Interest in wine tends to be upscale and relates to people who enjoy the good life of fine dining and travel, but want to have fun in the process. The program lends itself to local promotional, social and philanthropic endeavors.

Wine importers, distributors, restauranteurs, agents and publicists are encouraged to contact me to arrange interviews with winemakers, proprietors, or representatives.

Sponsorship or out-license arrangements for the program are available.