



JULIAN JEFFS' 2015 GUIDE TO

SHERRY

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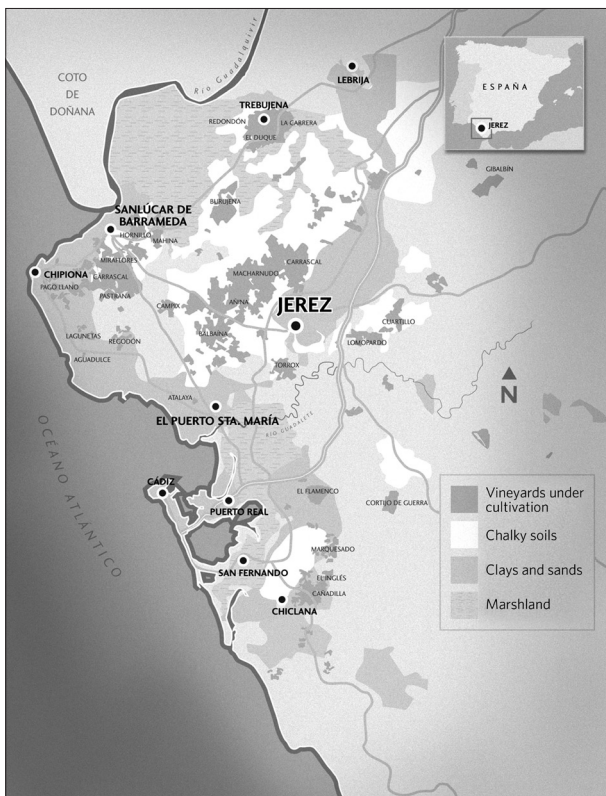
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1

THE SHERRY COUNTRY

Jerez de la Frontera is a town in Andalusia about fourteen kilometres inland from the sea. It is on the old main road from Cadiz to Seville and used to be cursed by travellers as it was a major obstacle. Few of them stopped there, which was a blessing. They drove through busy streets with clean modern shops and saw none of the Moorish remains or romantic ruins that people like to think are typically Spanish. There was nothing to make them suspect that wine was grown there except a surfeit of sherry and brandy advertisements. They could see no vineyards from the main road – only the salt flats near the sea and the fields of wheat and pasture further inland, vivid green after the spring rains and slowly baking to a golden ochre in the heat of the summer. The lack of vineyards surprised them and some asked

suspiciously where sherry was grown.

Things are different now. The route of the old road to Cadiz has been changed; there is a bypass round the town and a new motorway to Seville. Unlike the old roads, the new one passes in full sight of the vineyards, though to see the finest the traveller must turn off into the side roads that lead to Rota, Trebujena or Sanlúcar de Barrameda.

Beyond Trebujena, the road stops and the country turns wild. Rare birds and animals, extinct in every other part of Europe, thrive there, and there are no towns or villages. On the right bank of the River Guadalquivir is the land of the Marismas and the Coto Doñana. It is carefully preserved and used to be difficult to get into but nowadays there are more visitors. Game birds abound and ornithologists who go there are well rewarded: they may see an Indian sand lark, masked shrike, golden oriole or Spanish imperial eagle. A hundred and ninety-three species of birds have been counted on the Coto Doñana, and it is equally rich in animals and plants. At the beginning of February the storks fly in from South Africa and settle in the towns, nesting in high places such as church towers and the tops of disused chimneys. Here they breed and rear their young until they fly away at the end of June. To have a storks' nest on the premises is thought a sign of luck.

Tourists, apart from wine lovers, used seldom to seek out the sherry country. The rolling downlands where the vines grow are delightful but not dramatically beautiful. If the towns have no world-class architecture, they are full of good things: old churches, Moorish castles, some palatial houses of real beauty, the more modest, mellowed houses of ancient families, and above all the fine bodega buildings. When travellers stop in Jerez they can fall hopelessly in love with it and cannot draw themselves away. It is a city of light and joy. I speak from experience; I first went there in 1956 for five days and stayed eight months. It became more enchanting every day. I used to wander for hours through streets of whitewashed houses and through the narrow alleyways of the old Moorish town, catching short, tantalizing glimpses of patios and looking at the huge geraniums weaving in and out of the tracery of wrought-iron balconies. From beside the Alcázar (which was not open in those days) I saw the sun setting radiantly on the tiled summit of the tower of San Miguel. Then at night, away from the bright lights of the Calle Larga, Jerez grew mysterious in the darkness, and isolated lamps threw irregular pools of light, making long shadows as the noise of the town became hushed.

Jerez (pronounced 'Hereth') is the principal of three sherry towns. The others are both on the coast:

El Puerto de Santa María, fourteen kilometres to the south-west, at the mouth of the Guadalete, and Sanlúcar de Barrameda, twenty-one kilometres to the north-west at the mouth of the Guadalquivir. Between them, they make all the sherry that is sold throughout the world. Although they are only a few miles apart, even such a small distance is enough to cause some change in the climate and atmosphere, and any change, however slight, will be reflected in the wine – for wine is a living thing; it is never static but always changing; it will take its own course. Sherry is often capricious and develops quite unexpectedly, though modern enology has brought its caprices under control.

For those who love sunshine but can put up with an occasional torrential rainstorm, Jerez is an admirable place to live. In summer the temperature occasionally rises for a few days to the uncomfortable height of 38°C/100°F in the shade but the maximum day temperature in winter is never much below 15°C/59°F; the average maximum is 23°C/73°F. It occasionally freezes at night in winter, but in the height of summer the minimum temperature may be as high as 19°C/66°F; the night-time mean is 11°C/52°F. On the whole, the days are hot and sunny, while the nights are cool. It rains during seventy-five days each year, and when it is not raining, there is generally sunshine; overcast days are mercifully rare. The total rainfall is

about 650 mm and the mean humidity is surprisingly high: 66 per cent. The coastal towns, thanks to the influence of the sea, are more equable and even better to live in, especially in summer, when the Jerezanos flock down to the coast.

There is not very much difference between the wines of Jerez and El Puerto, though the latter is particularly noted for light fino sheries. The wines of Sanlúcar, however, are entirely different: all the manzanilla is made there. It has a distinctive, very fresh flavour that cannot be reproduced in either of the other towns.

2

ORIGINS

Jerez is a very ancient town whose origin is veiled in mystery. Probably it was founded as a colony by the Phoenicians, who lived by manufacture and trade, and were attracted to Andalusia by rumours of fertility and by the mineral riches of Tartessus. At one time or another this fabulous city has been identified with all the major towns of southern Andalusia, though some think its site has sunk beneath the sea and others that it was on the coast, west of Sanlúcar and south of the Coto Doñana or near Huelva, while there is a modern theory that it never existed as a city at all, but was the name given to a whole area stretching round the coast from the Algarve and up the River Guadalquivir as far as Seville. All one can say with certainty is that it was somewhere near the sherry area. The Phoenicians are said to have founded

Cadiz in 1100 BC (although archaeological remains only go back to the ninth century BC) and then moved inland to the town of Xera. There is a legend that they deserted Cadiz because of the Levante – the harsh, hot east wind that can blow for days on end and supposedly sends people mad; those who know the Levante find the story easy to believe. No one knows exactly where Xera was, but many historians identify it with Jerez. Theopompus, the pupil of Isocrates, writing in the fourth century BC, refers to ‘the town of Xera near the Columns of Hercules’, and that could apply to Jerez, but the identity is very doubtful. The prefix Xer- or Cer- is probably derived from the ancient Iberian word meaning a camp or fort on a river, and Xera could as easily be Vejer, or the deserted town of Cera, some nine miles from Jerez. Others have suggested that Jerez was founded by Greeks or Carthaginians.

If the origin of Jerez is doubtful, that of wine is even more obscure: no one knows who invented it. The Bible gives the honour to Noah: ‘And God blessed Noah ... And Noah began to be a husband-man, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was ... drunken.’ (Genesis 9:1, 20–21). Charles Tovey had another theory. Jam-Sheed, the founder of Persepolis, was immoderately fond of grapes and preserved them in great jars for eating out of season. Some of them got crushed, and the fermented juice tasted so unlike grape

juice that he wrote ‘poison’ on the jar and set it aside to be thrown away. One of his favourite handmaidens was tired of life and drank the poison to do away with herself. The effect was not quite what she expected, and when she came round she drank some more, and so on, until there was none left. Then she confessed her crime. Thus was wine discovered, and it became known in Persia as *Teher-e-Kooshon*, ‘the delightful poison’.



This Phoenician lagar in El Puerto de Santa María dates from the third or fourth century BC.

Grape wine is by no means the most senior potation: mead probably came first, and then beer. The earliest fermented fruit juice recorded in history was date wine, and it was very popular. Xenophon described it as ‘a pleasant drink causing headache’. The vine, however, was cultivated and grape wine was prepared

as early as the prehistoric Djemdet-Nast period in Mesopotamia, and it was brought into Egypt before 3000 BC. These North African wines found little favour: Martial preferred vinegar, and Strabo claimed that Libyan wine tasted well when mixed with sea water. The Greeks, on the other hand, practised viticulture as an art, and the earliest detailed essays on the subject are by Theophrastus of Eresos (c. 372–286 BC), a pupil of Aristotle. An earlier treatise by Democritus of Abdera is unfortunately lost. Accounts of wine growing were also given by a number of Latin authors, notably Cato (234–149 BC), Varro (116–27 BC) and Columella (fl. 60 BC), who was born in Cadiz, though his treatise is based on grape growing in Italy.

The wild vine, in its various species, was widely distributed throughout the temperate regions of the world, and fossil remains have been found as far north as Iceland. It was first methodically cultivated in eastern Europe, in the regions of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. There is no reason to believe it was indigenous to Spain; nor do we know who brought it there. Tradition has it that it was brought by the Phoenicians or by Greek settlers in the sixth or fifth century BC but recent research on pollens has indicated that vines were cultivated by indigenous people before they came. The Phoenicians and Greeks, however,

could well have brought their own wine grapes with them, and there has even been a theory that the name of Jerez is Greek in origin. One of the greatest wines of history was malmsey, the Byzantine dessert wine produced in the Peloponnese and exported from Monemvasia – the same wine in which the unfortunate Duke of Clarence was drowned. One of the centres of viticulture in those days was the Persian city of Shiraz, which was a possible source of any vines imported by the Greeks. What could be more reasonable than to name their new town after that city? And so, perhaps, Jerez was named by the same process as New York and New Orleans, not to mention Toledo, Ohio. Such a suggestion would have been scorned by Richard Ford. He condemned authors who ‘to show their learning’ derived the word sherry from Greek, and added ‘to have done so from the Persian Shiraz would scarcely have been more far-fetched’. One can only speculate, but modern scholars are sure there is no connection.

Phoenician rule was so disturbed by the hostility both of the natives and of the Greek settlers that they had to call to their allies the Carthaginians for help. Hamilcar came to the rescue, followed by Hasdrubal and Hannibal, but the plan miscarried: not content merely to give aid, the Carthaginians expelled the Phoenicians and took the colony as conquerors, only to lose it again to the power of Rome during the

second Punic War. But even for Rome the conquest was not easy. Although the civilized Phoenicians and Carthaginians gave way easily, the native tribes offered terrible resistance and guerrilla warfare continued for two hundred years.

Livy recorded, in his twenty-eighth book, that the population of Rome was alarmed by a series of most terrifying omens:

In a state where the greatest anxiety prevailed ... accounts of many prodigies were received; that Mater Matuta at Satricum had been struck by lightning. The people of Satricum were no less terrified by two snakes gliding into the temple of Jupiter by the very doors. A report was brought from Antium, that bloody ears of corn had been seen by the reapers. At Caere a pig with two heads had been littered, and a lamb weaned which was both male and female. Intelligence was brought that two suns had been seen at Alba, and that light had suddenly appeared during the night at Fregellae. An ox was reported to have spoken in the Roman territory. A copious perspiration was said to have exuded from the altar of Neptune, in the Flaminian circus; and the temples of Ceres, Safety, and Quirinius were said to have been struck by lightning ... the extinction of the fire in the temple of Vesta struck more terror upon the minds of men than all the prodigies which were reported from

abroad, or seen at home; and the vestal, who had the guarding of it for that night, was scourged by the command of Publicius Licinius the pontiff.

When eventually the Romans captured Spain they found many vineyards, but the favourite drink of the Iberians was a kind of mead.

Jerez has been identified with the Roman city of Ceritium, itself perhaps a romanization of Xera, and there are many Roman remains in the district, especially at Sanlúcar. During Roman domination, viticulture advanced very rapidly and the area soon became renowned for its wine: in the archaeological museum at Jerez there is a fragment of Roman mosaic with a vine-leaf motif on the border, and Andalusian coins of the period were decorated with bunches of grapes. The wine was cheap, and it is not surprising that it became a favourite with the invader; it was exported from Puerto Real to Rome in great earthenware amphorae, of which there are many still intact. Some archaeologists believe the Arabic walls of Jerez were built on Roman foundations. Sections of these walls still exist and one of them passes straight through a row of private houses. Parts of them are incorporated into the Beam bodegas.

In AD 92 the emperor Domitian ordered vineyards in Gaul and Spain to be cut down. It was generally

thought he did so because the wines from the Roman provinces were becoming so good that the Italian growers could not face the competition, though some now suggest it was a measure to encourage the growing of wheat for food. However, the order could not be enforced and it was officially withdrawn by Probus in AD 282. By that time, the policy of *panem et circenses* had become so much a part of Roman life that large quantities of wine had to be imported from abroad to prevent a rebellion of the plebeians.

Martial, like many other great Romans, was born in Spain during the first century AD. One of his more respectable epigrams is said to be about sherry, and has often been quoted:

*Caeretana Nepos ponat, Setia putabis
Non ponit turbae, cum tribas illa bibit*

(‘Let Nepos serve you with sherry; you will think it wine of Satia but he does not serve it to everyone – he drinks it only with a trio of friends.’ Book XIII, 124).

Whether this is in fact about sherry is doubtful: it could equally refer to the wine of Caere in Etruria.

Roman supremacy ended with the invasion of the Vandals, a Teutonic tribe which was probably innocent of all the sacrilege suggested by its name. The

Silingian Vandals occupied southern Spain in AD 409 and were soon virtually exterminated, but their fellow tribesmen the Asdingian Vandals marched down from the north and took possession of their country. They only stayed a few years – the whole nation set sail for Africa in AD 428 – but there has long been a popular belief that they called their new territory Vandalusia, a name that was later converted into Andalusia. But this is unlikely. R. P. Flores has suggested that it came from the Arabic *andalus*, meaning ‘end of light’ – a word used when referring to the Occident. The name al-Andalus appeared for the first time on a coin some five centuries after the Moorish conquest, and recent scholarship suggests it was an Arabization of the Visigothic *landa-blauts* (land-lot), the conquered land being allocated by lot. Their descendants, the Berbers, were to return with a vengeance some hundred years later.

This was a period of perpetual wars and great turbulence. In AD 414 the Visigoths arrived. This tribe was the ally of Imperial Rome, and Visigothic power long survived the Roman in Iberia. They embraced the Christian faith at the end of the sixth century, and a hundred years later, during the reign of Recceswinth, the law prohibiting a Visigoth from marrying a native was repealed. The rule of the Visigothic aristocracy then ended and the two nations

to some extent intermingled, creating the Romance Spanish language. Andalusia continued as a Visigothic kingdom rather than a Roman province or part of a Spanish nation as we know it today, and documents of the period refer to Jerez as Scheres or Seritium.

In AD 711 the Visigoths were overthrown by the Moors, with their allies the Berbers, at the famous battle of Guadalete which was fought not far from Jerez; current thinking is that it was by the river near Arcos de la Frontera. The battle was on a fantastic scale and raged for a week between Roderick, the last king of the Visigoths, and Tarik Ben Zeyad, leading the Moors. It must have been a scene of the most abominable destruction and havoc. That the latter army was superior in quality is undoubted; that it was also superior in numbers, as sometimes suggested, is open to question, as the Visigothic civilization had become so decadent that it was no longer a formidable enemy.

With their comparatively small force the Moors swept over the Peninsula. Within the space of two or three years they had reached the Pyrenees, conquering every Christian army they encountered. At Cordova there was some fighting, but the other great cities of the Visigoths yielded without a blow. Even their capital Toledo fell without resistance, betrayed, it is said, by the persecuted Jews, who could be sure of more generous treatment from the 'infidels'. The

Christians only had time to gather up a box of relics: a tooth of Santiago, an arm of Eugenius, a sandal of Peter. Their worldly treasures were all left behind, and the invaders were vastly more satisfied with the gold than they would have been with the relics. The Moors indeed were enlightened conquerors, initially allowing the Christians to follow their own ways and even to celebrate mass in their churches – a liberalism of thought which was most emphatically lacking in the Christians when their turn came to rule. With the victory of the Moors, a period began in Andalusia that gave rise to one of the most astonishing civilizations in the whole history of Europe. From that time onwards, there is no need for conjecture: everything is well known and well documented. Moorish blood still flows through the veins of the people, and shadows of the past linger in their customs, music, art, and the habits of their minds. To trace the influence would be an enormous task; it is everywhere and indelible. Artistically, the era was unique; one has only to visit the mosque at Cordova or the Alhambra at Granada to see its beauty and artistry. There has never been anything like it before or since, and the preservation of such perfect remains is a wonderful tribute to Spain; had they been in England, they would have perished long ago. It is fascinating to try and reconstruct from old maps and records a view of Jerez as it was

in those days, but such attempts must always end in sorrow. Granada remains more or less intact and we must be content with that. Nor can we complain too bitterly; the Moorish craftsmen applied themselves to Christian architecture and we have the great Giralda tower and the Alcazar at Seville to remember them by.

During the Moorish domination, Jerez grew and became a wealthy walled city, the capital of the Taifa party and throne of the Almahaden. It was then called Seris, a name that was later corrupted to Jerez by the Spanish and to Sherry by the English. In fact no other city in Spain has been given so many names: the only people who did not try to rename it were the Jews.¹ The ancient name of El Puerto de Santa María was Puerto de Menesteo, and it was the site of an old temple dedicated to the goddess Juno. When Alfonso the Sage wrested the town from the Moors in 1264, he dedicated it to the Virgin Mary.

1. Names listed by Parada y Barreto include: Asido, Asindium, Asidonia, Asidona, Asido Cesariana, Asta Regia, Asta Regia Cesariana, Ancis, Astasia, Carteya, Caesariana, Caesaris Castra, Cera, Ceret, Ceritium, Ciduena, Civita Regia, Esuris, Fera, Gerez, Gerencis Civita, Hasta Regia, Itucci, Jerez de la Frontera, Munda, Munda Cesariana, Medina Xerez, Reales de Cesar, Saduna, Siduena, Sidonia, Sera, Serencis Civita, Seraciencis Civita, Sadormin, Tarteso, Turdeto, Tucci, Xerez, Xera, Xeracia, Xiraz, Xericio, Xereto, Xeris, Xerez Sidonia, Xerez Saduna, Xerez de la Frontera, Wandalia. Some of these, of course, are mere variants, and others are hotly disputed, while some probably relate to nearby towns rather than to Jerez itself, but the list is included for the sake of completeness.

The prosperity of Jerez followed naturally from its position, dominating fertile lands. In the twelfth century, El Idrisi or, to give him his full name, Abu Abdallah Ibn Mohammed Ibn Mohammed Ibn Abdallah Ibn Idrisi, the Geographer Royal to King Roger II of Sicily, published his *Mappa Mundi* – there is a copy in the Bodleian Library – which clearly shows the position of Seris between Kadis (Cadiz) and Isbilía (Seville). Another ancient geographer, Ibn Abd al-Mun'im al Himyari, wrote in his *Ar-rawd al Mitar*: ‘Xerez is a strong town of moderate size encircled by walls; the country around it is pleasant to the eye, consisting of vineyards, olive orchards and fig trees.’

The interesting thing is the mention of vineyards, as wine was strictly prohibited to Muslims. But what nation can remain teetotal in the midst of some of the most productive vineyards in the world? The Moors certainly could not; and although the sale of wine was contrary to the law, it was subject to an excise tax. From time to time, though, there were ordinances prohibiting Muslims to buy it, but they used it medicinally. Al-Motamid, the Poet king, and last Moorish king of Seville, liked it so much that he publicly mocked those who only drank water. And who can blame him? He was by no means alone; no one has written eulogies of wine greater than those of the Moorish poets:

*How often the cup has clothed the wings of darkness
with a mantle of shining light! From the wine
came forth the sun. The orient was the hand of the
gracious cupbearer, and my loved one's lips were the
occident. Between her white fingers the chalice of
golden wine was a yellow narcissus asleep in a silver
cup.*

From the Diwan of Prince Abu Abd al-Malik
Marwan (963–1009).

The old Medina outside the walls had narrow streets, some of which are still there. The present style of the city, with its squares and open places, did not come until after the reconquest. Apart from the Arabs there was a substantial Jewish population, the third largest after Seville and Toledo.

Even the most pious Muslims had no qualms about preparing wine for the Christian and Jewish ‘infidels’. Grapes were also grown for fruit, and viticulture was by no means neglected – a fact amply demonstrated by the excellent article in Ebn-el-Awam’s massive work on agriculture. One of the wines well known at that time was the sweet *nabibi* made from raisins.

It was not a peaceful time; the Moors were under frequent pressure from the Catholic princes (when they were not too busy fighting one another to bother

about the heathen), and Jerez was laid waste during the expedition of Alfonso VII against Cádiz in 1133, but it rose again and continued under Moorish rule until it was finally reconquered by the Christians in 1264 – or thereabouts; the precise date is uncertain. There was a ding-dong battle between the Christians and the Moors that lasted from Covadonga in 718 to the final reconquest of Granada by the Catholic kings on 6 January 1492, with honours claimed repeatedly by both sides, often with very little reason. One of the major battles was fought outside Jerez in 1231, an occasion on which a miracle was said to have taken place: the Moors saw St James on a gigantic white horse, with a white banner, waving a sword and leading a legion of knights. It is difficult to say exactly when Jerez became Christian. It is recorded that at various times (the years 1242, 1251 and 1255 being mentioned in old chronicles) the rulers of Jerez paid tribute to the King of Castile and became his vassals without fighting, but that the Christians rose against the Moors and were expelled from the town in 1261. The first of these dates at any rate does not appear to be right: when Seville fell in 1248, many of the Muslim refugees fled to Jerez. In Jerez it is generally accepted that the Christians under Alfonso X took the town by surprise on 9 October 1264, the feast of St Dionysius the Areopagite (of unfortunate literary memory). They forced an entry,

decked the walls with the sign of the cross, and made Jerez the principal Christian stronghold of the frontier between the two warring kingdoms. It was never to fall again.

Five years later, King Alfonso granted arms to Jerez: 'Waves of the sea in blue and white because they never rest from making blows on the firm rocks, as you have waged continuous war on the enemy these surrounded by the lions and castles of our Royal Arms as the symbols of fortitude.' The city remained prosperous under Christian rule and spread outside the walls. The king was known as Alfonso the Sage because he was celebrated throughout the land for his learning, and one of the wisest things he ever did was to encourage the cultivation of the vine and wine-making in his newly conquered territories. To some extent, at least, we owe to him the existing supremacy of sherry. He divided the lands between his supporters, and the story is told of how one of them, a confidential adviser called Diego Pérez de Vargas, was working in his vineyard, pruning the vines, when he noticed a figure walking behind him, picking up the branches. It was the king, content to be a labourer. He said '*porque a tal podador, tal sarmentador*': for such a pruner, such a gatherer.

The continuous wars did not cease with the reconquest. For many years Jerez remained at the frontier of the Moorish kingdom, at the limit of the

dominions of the Crown of Castile, and in 1285, very soon after the reconquest, it had to withstand a lengthy siege by the army of Jusuf, with his twenty thousand cavalrymen. It was one of the most glorious episodes in the history of Jerez. Unfortunately, Jusuf, like most soldiers, had no eye for the exquisite and saw fit to pitch his camp in the middle of the vineyards. All the battles and encounters were fought over the vines, which were utterly laid waste. Well might Old Kaspar have mumbled, 'twas a famous Victory'; but what a price to pay! Incidentally, it would appear that the vineyards in those days were principally to the east of the town, rather than in the directions most highly favoured today.

In Chaucer's 'Pardoner's Tale' there is an interesting reference to the wine of Lepe (lines 62–71):

*Now keep ye from the white and from the red,
And namely from the white wine of Lepe,
That is to sell in Fish Street or in Chepe.
This wine of Spain creepeth subtilly
In other wines, growing faste by,
Of which there ryseth such fumositee,
That when a man hath drunken draughtes three,
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe,
He is in Spain, right at the town of Lepe,
Not at the Rochelle, nor at Bordeaux town.*

'Fumositee' is a beautiful word. Chaucer (1340?–1400) was the son of a vintner and was famously accurate in everything he mentioned, so it appears that wines from southern Spain were already fortified when he wrote his *Tales*, and this is borne out by the knowledge that the Moors distilled alcohol and used it for medicinal purposes. Elizabethan 'sack' was certainly fortified, and it may well have been added to feebler wines to give them body and strength.

Lepe is a village between Ayamonte and Huelva, a few miles from the coast, and white wines from that district have been imported into Jerez for blending with sherry just within living memory. Now dignified by their own *Denominación de Origen* they are rather light but of a similar style. When Ford wrote his *Handbook to Spain* during the nineteenth century, he visited Lepe and found that 'much bad wine is made, which is sent to San Lúcar, and converted for the English market into fine sherry...' In fact the wine is not at all bad, was probably sent to Jerez and Puerto de Santa María in greater quantities than to Sanlúcar, and could be used only for blending with mediocre sherry, but at least he was right in principle. Now, alas, no wine is grown in Lepe itself, the land having been passed over to the more profitable trade of growing strawberries. But Chaucer was writing of a wine very similar to sherry, if not of sherry itself.

In 1380 King Juan I granted the privilege of adding to the town's name '*de la Frontera*' (which it shares with the other nearby frontier towns of Arcos, Castellar, Chiclana, Cortes, Jimena, Moron and Vejer) in honour of the part played by its people in the continuous struggle for power, and Enrique IV (1451–74) gave it the well-earned title *Muy Noble y Muy Leal Ciudad*. But during the fourteenth century there was little mention of the vine; one can read only of typhus, plague and war. Even after the reconquest of Granada and the complete supremacy of Castile, the threat and terror of the raiders continued. As late as 1580, a dispatch from Roger Bodenham in Sanlúcar reads: 'The Moriscos have risen again and done great harm ... Sheris is in some doubt of them because they are many.' (The Moriscos were Muslims, mostly labourers, who found it convenient to be baptized but who never became loyal; they were finally expelled between 1609 and 1614.) But throughout its history Spain has been a land of political upheaval and unrest, living always at the edge of some terror: the Vandals; the Moors; the Holy Inquisition; English pirates; the Dutch; the Peninsular War and, more recently, the ruin and devastation of the Civil War, in which the sherry country mercifully escaped very lightly. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, times were bad: the population had been reduced by plagues, and the lands were devastated by

serious floods in 1402. On 5 April 1402 Enrique III issued a proclamation forbidding any man to destroy vines or olive trees. The penalty was a heavy fine, the money to be spent on repairing the city walls. But as the century progressed, there came a great resurgence of the vine, which soon spread from the inferior soil near the town to the present vineyard area. The books of *Actas Capitulares* of Jerez began to be kept in the first decade of the fifteenth century, and from then onwards there are repeated references to the export trade. In 1435 exports were forbidden owing to bad harvests and the high price of wine, but only in two years did the vintage fail completely: in 1479, when there was heavy rain in May followed by continuous Levantes and excessive heat, and in 1483, when the vines were damaged by hail. Meanwhile in 1473 there was a devastating visitation of the plague. That trade with England and France was being conducted is further supported by a document of 1483 which states that Breton and English ships had ceased from calling owing to a war with Vizcaya.

These local events were taking place in the context of great changes which affected the whole of the Mediterranean region and which ultimately benefited Spain. The most important was the fall of Constantinople, taken by the Turks under Mahomet II in 1453. This ended the eastern Roman empire. From 1461 to 1477 there was war between the Turks

and the all-powerful Venice; the Venetians lost many of their eastern possessions and their trade was further hurt by the discovery of America in 1492. Before its decline Venice had been the pivot of Mediterranean trade, which included the sweet wines exported to England. Spain was more than willing to fill the vacuum, and set to work at once.

In 1491 the local council declared that wines and other produce shipped abroad should be exempted from tax. The proclamation is important for two reasons: first, because it applied both to local and to foreign merchants, proving that these were living and trading in Jerez at the time, and second because it referred to the wines as *vinos de romania*, or rumney. Rumney, like malmsey, is a name that conjures up a glorious past. Originally it came from southern Greece, and the merchants of Jerez had no more right to ship a rumney than have the growers of South Africa to ship a sherry. Their intention was to take over the old Venetian trade. Rumney was not drunk locally, which suggests that it was too rich for the hot Andalusian climate and confirms that it was intended to replace the sweet wines of the eastern Mediterranean. Nine years earlier, the governor of the new town of Regia de Santa María (now called Chipiona) had issued a proclamation that these export wines were to be made carefully, using good vines like those used for sherry,

so that they would maintain their reputation. The wine was evidently held in great esteem and fetched a very high price by the standards of those days. Red wines were made as well as white, and continued to be made to a limited extent until well into the nineteenth century, but they were not at that time very good and disappeared, though red wine is beginning to be revived in the twenty-first.

In 1492 the Jews were expelled from Spain. It was one of the most controversial and far-reaching episodes in the whole history of Europe, and one which historians are still wrangling over, but it did not greatly affect Jerez where thirty aranzadas of sherry vineyards were confiscated from Jews and given to the Royal Convent of Santo Domingo. In Spain, as elsewhere, the religious houses were among the pioneers of viticulture. The great monastery of the Cartuja, or Charterhouse, was founded outside Jerez in 1475, and in 1658 it was reported as having flourishing vineyards that gave excellent wine. The street called Bodegas formerly led to the wine stores of the old monastery of Veracruz.

Before long, droves of foreigners came to fill the vacuum left by the expulsion of the Jews. They were, for the most part, Genoese, Bretons and English. Some acted as money changers, while the Genoese took over the tanneries and formed their own trade

guild. The English were mostly merchants, and many of them were interested in wine. In the earliest days, the merchants trading in Jerez exported their goods from the quays of El Portal, on the River Guadalete, a mile or two from the town. This river port continued in use until the coming of the railway four hundred years later, and the goods were taken down to the sea on barges. There is still a street called Barqueros, where some of the barge masters had their offices, but the arrangement was never completely satisfactory: the quays were always falling into disrepair, and the river silted up. The archives at Jerez contain many early references to wine being shipped abroad. In 1485 there is a record of wine shipped from El Puerto de Santa María to ‘Plemma, which is in the kingdom of England’ – presumably Plymouth. By that date the vintage was already subject to strict control, and the greatest crime of all was to water down the wine. The size of a butt, for instance, following complaints from Flanders, was fixed at thirty arrobas – precisely as it is today – and the butts had to be branded by the cooper and by the council. The coopers were among the earliest of the recognized guilds, and in 1482 it was stipulated that wine casks must be made of good wood that was not tainted with any kind of fish, nor with oil. Any cask made of wood that could damage the wine was to be burnt and a fine imposed.

At the end of the fifteenth century there came to Andalusia the greatest excitement of all: nine months after the conquest of Granada, Columbus discovered America. All his efforts, his intrigues with the Church and the monarchy, his triumphs and disappointments, the elaborate preparations for his voyages, the voyages themselves, all were centred on Andalusia. From Andalusia he gathered his forces, and many of his men came from the sherry towns. He set forth from Sanlúcar de Barrameda on his third journey, to discover the island of Trinidad in 1498, and Sanlúcar was soon established as a major port for the new American trade; it was the port from which Pizarro set sail twenty-five years later on his way to conquer Peru. Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, who discovered Florida, was the son of a Jerez wine grower.

The ships were well provisioned, and good supplies of wine were essential. One of the captains from Jerez, Fernando de Trejo, was moved to write in 1498, 'Toast the wine of the most noble and loyal Jerez, for it is a joy to the spirits, light to the eyes – a gift of God.' Large quantities were bought from Jerez, and when Magellan set out to circumnavigate the world in 1519 he spent more on sherry than on armaments. It is safe to say that sherry was the first wine to enter what is now the USA. It has been drunk there ever since.

From the earliest days the Spanish American colonies were very good customers for wine. Between 1580 and 1593 Jerez exported 271,248 arrobas, some 52 per cent of the whole wine imports, with wines from around Seville coming next, while Sanlúcar, El Puerto de Santa María were well down the table, with only 6,607 arrobas.

The sherry trade with England was well established by the sixteenth century, but it originated much earlier, in the time of the Moorish domination. It may have begun during the reign of King Edward III, whose maritime policy encouraged such trade, and there is a record of Spanish wine being imported in 1340. Wine in those days was very properly regarded as a necessity, and the search for it provided one of the greatest incentives towards the development of the mercantile marine, which, in turn, ultimately led to Britain's once immense sea power. One of the earliest trades with southern Spain, however, was in salt, prepared from the sea marshes near Cadiz, and it has been suggested that the local wines were first imported as a make-weight by merchants dealing in the salt and fruit trades.

3

INTO THE GLASS

Like all wines, sherry's *raison d'être* is to give pleasure. And like all great wines it gives pleasure in complex ways appealing to all the senses. As soon as it is poured into a glass it shows its colour and clarity. A lot can be learned simply by looking at it. Then comes its appeal to the nose. The bouquet of a good sherry strikes the nose while it is being poured into the glass, sometimes even from the next room. The nose is a major organ of tasting, receiving the first sensations. For this to happen the wine needs room for the volatile compounds to collect and concentrate above its surface, contained in the space defined by the glass, which should therefore taper in towards the top and be big enough for the wine only to occupy about a third of it. The little thimbles sold as 'sherry glasses' with the wine filled to the brim

do not give it a chance. Apart from the bouquet ascending to the nose, the colour and viscosity can be appreciated. These features reveal the character of the wine and lay the foundations for the pleasure it can give in the mouth. There is a difference between aroma and bouquet. The aroma is the smell of a young wine, while the bouquet develops with age as the wine matures, giving a complexity that can be immense, subtle and complex.



The sherries available provide an enormous choice and anyone should be able to find many that please; but people are often very unenterprising. Many wine lovers begin by being interested in one or other of the great table wines; they are perplexed by the many styles of sherry and sometimes never seek out ones that really

satisfy them. It is essential to try all the styles. The final choice depends on the time of day, the weather, and the other wines that are taken with the meal. Above all, it depends on what one happens to like. It is not easy to advise anyone. There is only one hard and fast rule: judge for yourself and drink what you enjoy.

Sherry has recently been out of favour with young people who too often dismiss it as something their grandparents drink, though when they are shown how really good it is they are surprised. It is beyond doubt one of the great wines of the world, and on this level it is easily the cheapest. But the pendulum of taste always swings and soon it will surely be recognized for what it is; in fact, and as noted earlier, this may be starting to happen. When it does it will be up to the shippers to make sure they do not lower their standards. If they do history will repeat itself.

No one has the right to tell others what they should drink, but that has never prevented people asking. The only possible answer is that people who drink sherry regularly generally agree about the styles that suit certain occasions, and it is as well to try following their example first. Then by all means be original; your own taste is all that matters. To be dogmatic is a form of ignorance, and often a manifestation of wine snobbery. Other people's views may act as a guide, but they are only opinions and should be treated as such.

For those who enjoy a glass of wine and a biscuit in the morning, any style of sherry is suitable, though the majority prefer a dry wine when the weather is hot and a sweeter one when it is cold. It is here that the fuller-bodied wines – *amontillado*, *palo cortado* and *dry oloroso* – come into their own. In the sherry country there is a saying that one should have a glass of *oloroso* mid-morning to prepare the stomach for the serious drinking of *fino* before lunch.

Very dry sherry has an unaccountable snob appeal, but habitual wine drinkers do generally prefer such sherries as aperitifs; others, who wish to appear knowledgeable, ape them, and often sometimes drink very dry sherry at the most improbable times. My own preference is certainly for a bone dry aperitif save in the depth of winter, when the sugar in a slightly *abocado* sherry is very comforting. These can be bought quite readily; *dry olorosos* came on the market in the United Kingdom during the 1980s. On a hot summer's day before lunch a *manzanilla* or *fino* is usually the most pleasing style, but in cold weather an old *amontillado*, *palo cortado* or *dry oloroso* is often better – a wine that is still completely dry but has more body. In choosing an aperitif one must obviously bear in mind the table wine that follows. A very old *amontillado* would destroy the flavour of a *Moselle*; it would even overpower many *Burgundies*. Wine lovers like to arrange a progression of flavours,

leading up to a big white wine, like a Burgundy or Rhône, with a light manzanilla or fino sherry; but many white wines, like those from the Saar or Loire valleys, or the north of Spain, are light in themselves and have high acidities so that instead of a progression there is a rather unsatisfactory contrast. Here an *amontillado*, a *palo cortado* or a dry *oloroso* can be better; and sherries such as these with the soup provide just the right degree of contrast when champagne is served as an aperitif. Claret can follow a *fino*, young *amontillado* or delicate *palo cortado*; Burgundy can withstand a somewhat older *amontillado* or an *oloroso*; a Rhône wine, a big Spanish red, or a super Tuscan can safely follow an old sherry. Old *palo cortados* and *olorosos*, whether dry or sweet, are excellent with cheese, particularly blue and green cheeses, and goats' or ewes' milk cheeses such as *queso Manchego*.

A dessert sherry should generally be more or less sweet: in the British climate, a completely dry wine is seldom appropriate after a meal, though a dry *palo cortado* or *oloroso* can be delicious after lunch on a hot summer's day. A wine to be drunk at the end of a meal should have plenty of body, and although I have enjoyed an old *amontillado* after lunch, *palo cortado* or *oloroso* is generally more attractive. Earle Welby was undoubtedly right when he wrote that sherry is far better than port after champagne.

Pedro Ximénez had long been used in the sherry country as a blending wine but was seldom drunk by itself, though locally it was thought good for nursing mothers. Then, in the 1990s, shippers began to bottle and sell it. Perhaps they had a surplus, as wines like brown sherry were going out of favour. Pedro Ximénez is slightly viscous, sticky and very sweet, but these qualities give it an appeal of its own. It tastes delicious poured over a vanilla ice-cream and the rest of the bottle can then be drunk with the ice-cream, a food that is usually impossible to match with wine. And when Pedro Ximénez ages it develops real distinction; although still very sweet, its after-taste becomes almost dry, complex and very long.

The great Professor Saintsbury suggested a meal with a different sherry for each course, and it is surprising that more people have not tried it. Sherry is generally at its best with food. In Spain, it is taken with a *tapa*, and authentic tapas bars are beginning to appear elsewhere. The word means a lid, or cover, and is said to be derived from an old Spanish custom of putting a plate with a morsel of food on top of the glass. Bars in Spain compete with one another in providing good tapas, and the choice includes such things as cheese, prawns, fish, small steaks, tomatoes, olives, potato salad, chips, pâté, fried squid, fancy sausages (notably *chorizo*), egg including cold Spanish

omelette, meatballs, salt cod, ham and a multitude of specialities. Now we have tapas bars in Britain, most of which are excellent. Tapas should be served more often; they are delightful in themselves and show the wine off to its best advantage. They are also very easy to provide.

Saintsbury suggested a sherry dinner:

Manzanilla will carry you nearly through dinner, and others of the lighter class will go all through, though they may not be drinkable in quite such volume. I once even attempted a fully graded menu and wine-list with sherry only to fill the latter – a ‘sherry dinner’ to match the claret feasts often given by lovers of the Gascon wine. It was before I began to keep such documents, and so I am not quite certain of the details. But if I were reconstructing such an entertainment now, and had the wherewithal as I once had, I should arrange it somewhat thus: Manzanilla with oysters; Montilla with soup and fish; an Amontillado with entrees and roast; an Amoroso or some such wine with sweets; and for after dinner, the oldest and brownest of ‘old browns’.

It would be hard to suggest a better arrangement, but one could devise a hundred others equally good.

In those days Montilla was regarded as a style of sherry. Fino sherries are particularly good with food. My own favourite working lunch is a large glass of fino with a salad or with more easily portable food such as a slice of quiche or a well-filled sandwich. It even tastes good with an egg mayonnaise sandwich, something which defeats most wines.

While the second edition of this book was in the press I got married and proudly took my wife to a vintage feast in Jerez. Soon after midnight the two of us, walking with a sherry-shipping friend in the *feria*, began to feel the need for dinner. We were passing by a stand where they were spit-roasting chickens, basted with oil and flavoured with the most delicious herbs. I ordered a chicken and a bottle of fino. 'A whole bottle, for three?' Deborah asked, aghast. But she did not bat an eyelid when I ordered the second. It is, after all, very little stronger than many table wines and one drinks more with impunity when well exercised and in the Andalusian air.

This is no new idea but rather the return of an old custom, for in the nineteenth century lunch was often a simple help-yourself, off-the-sideboard affair, and there were always decanters of sherry and port. It has already been related how Anthony Trollope made the Warden take a pint of sherry with his mutton chop and potatoes.

Sherry is a white wine, and the general rules for serving white wines apply. A fino tastes better if it is chilled but not frozen and this is especially so in hot weather; wines of greater body need only be slightly cool, for instance at cellar temperature; and dessert sheries are best served on the cool side of room temperature, though cream sherry nowadays is sometimes served 'on the rocks' as a refreshing drink. On no account should any sherry be warmed.

Sherris-sack was first drunk from silver vessels – and they usually held a man's measure. Then, during the seventeenth century, Venetian glass was introduced into England, and it was generally drunk from flute glasses. A wide choice of wine glasses is available today; many of them are aesthetically very beautiful, but hardly any are suitable for drinking wine out of, and the so-called 'sherry glasses' are by far the worst of all. One of the best things about sherry is its deep, penetrating fragrance that prepares the palate for the flavour of the wine; the bouquet of a good sherry is so attractive that one can enjoy it without tasting the wine at all. If it is served in a public-house sherry glass all that is lost, and the beauty of a really good sherry is destroyed. Among the worst are those that narrow towards the middle: so-called Elgin glasses and schooners. The former are said to have been designed by an extraordinarily mean peer who wanted his guests

to think they were getting a good measure when they were not. Given sherry in either of these I ask the barman to tip it into a proper wine glass. Perhaps one day the message will get over. Sherry needs a big glass with plenty of room for the full fragrance to gather within it. Tulip-shaped wine glasses filled only half-way are very good, but the special tall tasting glasses, known as dock glasses and used in the wine trade, are better still. The ISO glass, now widely available, is a good example. These are from five to seven inches high and gently taper in towards the top; they should only be filled to the height of one inch or two. A smaller version which is very good is the *copita*. But good glasses not only show up the beauty of a wine, they also reveal its faults. There is a saying in Jerez: *solo hay dos clases de Jerez, el bueno y el mejor* – ‘there are only two kinds of sherry, the good and the better’. That is largely true, but there are a few sad exceptions, especially in the cut-throat competition of today, and most of these find their way to public bars, where small glasses may perhaps not always be out of place.

When Pepys visited Mr Thomas Povy in Lincoln's Inn Fields, he was taken to see the wine cellar: ‘where upon several shelves there stood bottles of all sorts of wine, new and old, with labels pasted upon each bottle, and that in order and plenty as I never saw books in a bookseller's shop’. To the modern eye, these bottles

would have looked strange and irregular in shape. Instead of corks, they were fitted with glass stoppers sealed over with wax. Although corks had been used as stoppers for amphorae in the first century BC, they did not come into general use until the end of the seventeenth century; until then wine was not aged in bottle, and many of the great wines we enjoy today could not have been matured.

What happens to sherry after it has been bottled depends very much on its style. A delicate, unsweetened fino begins to deteriorate immediately. There is an excellent fino sherry, widely sold in public houses, that is often abused for being below standard, or for not being as good as it used to be. The brewers used to buy it in bulk; then they stored it in warm warehouses for a year or two; then they sent it to the publican, who kept it for another year or two before he opened it in a bar as hot as a furnace; the bottle was left open for weeks and then the wine was served in the wrong glasses – and some perspicacious customer would complain that it was imperfect. The bottle may or may not then have been returned with a stiff letter to the long-suffering shipper. The wine did not stand a chance.

Although all these things still happen, matters are looking up. In progressive companies modern stock control limits the time spent in the warehouses.

Supermarkets have quick turnovers. At last we have something to praise accountants for.

A fino is never at its best after more than three months in bottle and this is especially so with wines sold *en rama*. Light amontillados also deteriorate and coarsen in bottle, but rather more slowly. Strange things can happen when dry sherries are kept for a long time. In my own cellar I laid down some fine palo cortado rather more than thirty years ago. For the first three or four years it improved; then it went through a bad patch that lasted for six or seven years. After that it came out on the other side, showing great age and elegance that improved annually until the wine had about twenty-five years' cellaring. Then it began to go off.

An unsweetened oloroso remains unharmed for several years. If the wine is sweetened, its behaviour is quite different. Light amontillados do not improve but they last far longer than finos and can safely be kept in bottle for two or three years. The development of a medium-quality amontillado in bottle over a long period of years is extremely speculative. Many years ago I inherited three bottles of an identical, slightly sweetened amontillado that had been in my grandfather's cellar for twenty years. One had absorbed all its sugar and had become a bone dry, very smooth wine of outstanding character, while the other

two were dreadful. A really first-class *amontillado*, *palo cortado* or *oloroso*, if it is initially sweetened, develops in bottle and steadily changes. It gradually consumes its sugar, and becomes remarkably smooth while the bouquet and flavour grow exceptionally. Such wines are said to have 'bottle age'. Given long enough in the bottle, a dessert *oloroso* can become absolutely dry, though this may well take fifty or sixty years. I have tasted a sherry that had been in bottle for over a hundred years, and it was truly remarkable. One of the finest dessert sheries I remember was a good *oloroso* my father bought before the war; it was still very sweet thirty years later, but had developed a remarkably mellow and complex flavour with a remarkable nose. Such wines develop with every year in bottle, and they have long been sought after by wine lovers. They should be kept at the very least ten years if the quality of bottle age is really to be appreciated. Then they are glorious.

Owing to their high cost, old bottled sheries are rarely listed by merchants, but I have tasted excellent examples from John Harvey & Sons, Christopher & Co. (of blessed memory) and Berry Bros. & Rudd, though none is listed now. I was once told by an absent-minded friend that one of these firms had some for sale, but he had forgotten the merchant's name, and the directions he gave me were terribly

vague. Needless to say, I went into the wrong shop, and when I asked for old bottled sherry I was told firmly that there was no such thing. I asked again, but more explicitly, and was told there was no such thing as vintage sherry. I could only reply that I had a bottle of the 1792 vintage in my own cellar (now drunk), but that I was not trying to buy vintage sherry: I wanted old bottled sherry. The fellow behind the counter then informed me that sherry was made on the solera system. He knew: he had been to Jerez. I gave him my then usual address there in case he should want to go there again, but left his shop in sheer despair. There are very few wine merchants as ignorant as that, but there should not be any. To find one within a stone's throw of Piccadilly was, I hope, an achievement. The shop, mercifully, has since closed. I found what I was looking for at Christopher's, just down the road.

The purchase by Francis Cunynghame of some of Charles Tovey's sherries in 1920 has already been mentioned: Old Bristol Sherry 1865 and Light Pale Bristol 1874. Writing in 1955, this is how he described them:

These dessert sherries of Old Bristol shipping having acquired long bottle age became a wine unsurpassed in bouquet and vinosity and absolutely unknown to-day. Anyone who has drunk it after fifty or sixty

years in bottle can never forget the flavour, and if it is a cliché to describe it as the nectar of the gods, it is the only expression that can adequately describe it. On drawing the cork and decanting the Sherry the most beautiful aroma spread round the room, and the wine crystal clear and of the most exquisite ethereal golden colour was enhanced when, in a thickly cut old decanter, it was placed on the mahogany of the dining-table.

He would not be disappointed by some of the aged sherries being shipped today.

Once the bottle has been opened, fino sherry oxidizes and gets coarse very quickly: the more delicate the wine, the more noticeable this is. Professor Saintsbury said he could notice the difference between lunchtime and dinner. A natural fino should be drunk within three days of opening the bottle, unless it is kept very cool, for instance in the door of a refrigerator, when it lasts twice as long; anyone who takes longer should buy half-bottles. Alternatively, as soon as a bottle of sherry is opened, half of it can be decanted into a clean half-bottle which, if immediately and tightly corked, preserves it almost as well as if the wine had not been opened at all, as there has been hardly any time in the air for it to become oxidized. Nowadays there are gadgets that help: one of these evacuates the

space above the wine, while another fills it with inert nitrogen and carbon dioxide; both reduce oxidation.

The same thing applies to the other styles of sherry provided they are completely dry. Oxidation completely spoils them and since few people could wish to drink these wines very cold, the easiest way of ameliorating it is not available. They should be drunk within a week. The more body or sweetness a wine has, the longer it lasts and, at the opposite end of the scale, a brown sherry can safely be left for a month even in a decanter. Decanters are far less airtight than corked bottles, and sherry tends to deteriorate more quickly if it has been decanted. This does not generally matter, as a good wine seldom gets the chance to last for more than a day or two, and decanters are very decorative, but they are only really useful when the wine has been in bottle for two or three years and has thrown a slight deposit.

Strong wines such as sherry attack their corks, which crumble and leak, utterly spoiling them. This can be avoided if the bottles are stored upright, and this is always done in bodega reference rooms, where the wine is generally stored for three or four years. If it is kept upright for longer, there is the danger that the cork may get too dry and cease from being airtight, though I have never known it happen to a bottle of sherry. It is the reason why table wine

bottles are binned horizontally, though. For sherry to be laid down, upright or horizontal, it should be corked with long corks of the first quality, like those used for vintage port. Nowadays metal screw-tops with thin plastic seals inside are rapidly taking over. This reduces the risk of oxidation and works very well, though when they were introduced in the 1980s the plastic was not entirely inert and I have known an *amontillado* become positively nasty after a couple of years. I would not expect this to happen now.

Sherry, like other wines, should be stored in a dark place, as light catalyzes oxidation. The traditional sherry bottle is made of very dark, almost black, glass and that helps. 'Market forces' however are calling for clear bottles. Wine in such a bottle should be kept in a dark place and certainly never exposed to direct sunlight.

There is a dictum of Robert Benchley that, 'Drinking makes such fools of people, and the people are such fools to begin with, it's compounding a felony.' A man who drinks fine wine because he enjoys it will never become a drunkard: wine stops being a pleasure long before it becomes a danger. Taken the right way, it is wholly good. During the Great Plague, only Dr Hedges, of all the London doctors, escaped contagion; he drank a few glasses of sherris-sack every day, and wrote in his memoirs: 'Such practice not only

protected me against contamination, but instilled in me the optimism which my patients so much needed.' There is a legend that many years ago there lived an archbishop of Seville who so far exceeded the decent complement of years laid down in Holy Writ as to reach the age of 125. He was a man of regular habits and drank a bottle of sherry with his dinner every day, save when he was feeling at all unwell; then he drank two bottles.

In Castile and the north of Spain sherry is given as a tonic to expectant mothers. When George C. Howell, of New York, examined the ages and habits of the sherry shippers in Jerez, he found that 10 per cent were light or very light drinkers, and the other 90 per cent were heavy drinkers; 10 per cent died before the age of seventy, and the other 90 per cent lived longer; 15 per cent lived to be ninety. If a sherry shipper dies aged less than seventy, his colleagues regard it as a case of infant mortality. Henry Swinburne recorded the curious fact that, 'The earth in the cemeteries of Xeres, has the quality of preserving corpses incorrupted for years and ages.' Some doubt has been cast upon the accuracy of this observation, but if indeed it was true, I am sure the quality of the earth had nothing to do with it: by the time a Jerezano dies, he is safely pickled by a lifetime of steady drinking.



When a Jerezano opens a bottle of sherry, he sometimes gives it a shake and throws a little on the floor before filling his glass. There is a good reason for this, as it gets rid of the wine that may have been corrupted by contact with the cork. But it is also a ritual – a sacrifice to the earth that gave the wine its being. Then he does the really important thing: he drinks the rest of the bottle. But he bears in mind the rule of St Gildas the Wise: ‘If any monk through drinking too freely gets thick of speech so that he cannot join in the psalmody, he is to be deprived of his supper.’

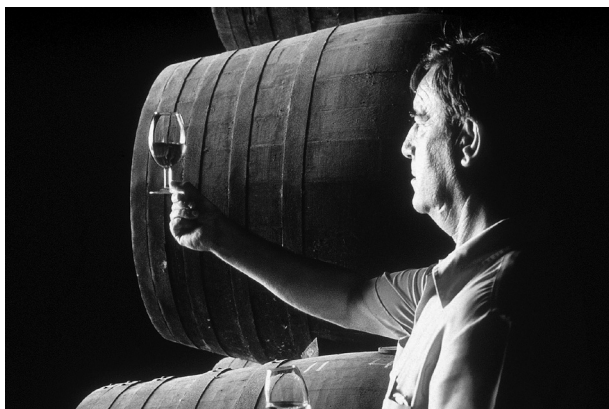
4

THE SHIPPERS TODAY

At the end of the twentieth century two apparently contradictory things were happening at the same time: established shippers were combining because they thought they had to be big to survive, and boutique bodegas were setting up to operate on a very small scale. This was possible because the rules were changed in 1996. Previously a bodega had to have a stock of at least 12,500 hectolitres to get a shipping licence; this figure was dramatically reduced to 500 hectolitres. Boutique bodegas became possible and rapidly entered the trade at the top end of the market. Many had been *almacenistas* previously and wanted to sell their wine direct. Others started from scratch.

It is fair to say that all the bodegas have stocks of very fine wine, some more than others. One or two of

the boutique bodegas, aiming at the very top end of the market, have no wines that are not very fine. The larger houses supply across the whole range, but that does not detract from the quality of their best.



Until the middle of the twentieth century the major British wine merchants proudly had their own brands. Most of these were blended for them by shippers, while others bought from a number of shippers and blended the wines themselves. Harveys had a very big operation to do this in Bristol. They were very large but many others did it on a small scale. With takeovers, however, the trade became concentrated in fewer hands and as the shippers could provide an enormous choice it became uneconomic. With the emergence of the EU it became impossible as sherries had to be bottled at source.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a number of merchants operated in Spain as *marquistas*, who had no bodegas but bought their wines from chosen shippers and sold them in the UK, dividing their time between the two countries. Recently a similar operation has been launched in Spain: Equipo Navazos, run by Jesús Barquín, a professor of criminology at the University of Granada, Eduardo Ojeda, an enologist in the José Estévez bodegas, and Álvaro Girón, a historian of science – all of them great sherry lovers. They buy single butts from carefully selected shippers. At first they were sold to their friends but are now also sold to the trade. The wines are unfiltered and of very high quality.

Sherry shippers are famously hospitable and all are happy to receive customers, or customers of customers. Merchants will generally provide introductions. The larger houses have visitor facilities and welcome casual visitors, who are shown round and given a tasting; there will normally be a modest charge. But you must only expect individual attention if you go with an introduction and make an appointment. With the smaller houses it is essential to make an appointment. The lists that follow give particulars of all the shipping bodegas on the register of the Consejo Regulador in 2014 with, for most of them, historical notes and the names of some of their more notable wines

– but it must be remembered that wines are added or taken off from time to time; sometimes wines are continued but their names are changed or the name is continued but the wine is changed, which can cause confusion. Some of their best wines are mentioned below including all their VORS and VOS wines, but the list of age-certified wines is revised annually and some bodegas have wines that could be so classified but are not – because the red tape involved in getting them approved and registered is not justified when the production is very small. The bodegas are listed in alphabetical order.

JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA

Aecovi-Jerez, S.C.A.

Urb. Pie de Rey, Bloque 3

Tel: 956 180 873 Fax: 956 180 301

Email: jamateos@aecovi-jerez.com

www.aecovi-jerez.com

A recently founded cooperative organization that has under its wing cooperatives in Jerez, Chipiona, Chiclana and Sanlúcar representing some six hundred small growers. It has a little vineyard of Pedro Ximénez grapes next to the bodega. It has established its own brands, Alexandro and Alfaraz.

Álvaro Domecq, S.L.

Alamos 23

Tel: 956 339 634 Fax: 956 340 402

Email: jmanelo@alvarodomecq.com

www.alvarodomecq.com

Formerly an almacenista dating from 1730 and trading as Pilar Aranda since 1800, this small bodega was acquired by Álvaro Domecq (a great bullfighter and a member of the Jerez dynasty) after his family's bodegas were bought up by Allied-Lyons, the beginning of a long and complicated saga. When he bought it in 1998, he was back in his family's traditional trade and said he was 'born again'. At present it operates on a small scale but with a range of very fine wines, which include a fino La Janda and two VORS wines: 1730 Amontillado and 1730 Oloroso. Perhaps one day it will be where the great Domecq bodegas were.

Beam Spain, S.L.

San Ildefonso, 3

Tel: 956 151 500 Fax: 956 349 966

Email: alfonsofranco@beamglobal.com

www.beamglobal.com

This is a descendant of the great Domecq bodegas whose history has already been given. In 1994 it was bought up by the English company Allied-Lyons who already owned Harveys. In its turn it absorbed a number of excellent shippers, notably Palomino & Vergara, Agustín Blazquez, de la Riva, Mackenzie,

and Florido Hermanos, names that have died out. It was then bought by the vast American company Beam Global which in turn was bought in 2014 by the Japanese Suntory. Several of its finest wines were sold off and will be mentioned later. The attraction to predators was its world famous Harveys Bristol Cream. It sells under the names Harvey and Terry and has some good wines, including Harveys Fino. No age certified wines are sold under the Terry label but its wines are good.

It has four VORS wines all sold under the Harvey brand: an Amontillado, a Medium, an Oloroso and a Palo Cortado.

Bodegas Dios Baco, S.L.

P. Impresarial C/Technologica, P.A. 14

Tel: 956 333 337 Fax: 956 333 337

Email: info@bodegasdiosbaco.com

www.bodegasdiosbaco.com

Claiming a history going back to 1765, this boutique bodega with some fine old wines was bought by José Paez Marilla in 1988 from the ruins of Rumasa, and is now run by his two daughters.

Bodegas Faustino González, S.L.

Beato Juan Grande, 7

Tel: 956 335 184 Fax: 956 344 417

Email: bodegasfaustinogonzalez@hotmail.com

www.bodegasfaustinogonzalez.com

Formerly an almacenista, now a boutique bodega with some fine quality wines.

Bodegas Rey Fernando de Castilla

Jardinillo, 7 & 11

Tel: 956 182 454 Fax: 956 182 222

Email: bodegas@fernandodecastilla.com

www.fernandodecastilla.com

A boutique bodega run enthusiastically by Jan Pettersen, formerly of Osborne, its wines sold under the name Fernando de Castilla. It entered the market with brandies in 1972 before acquiring some fine soleras and branching out into sherry. The best wines are found in its Antique range: Fino, Amontillado, Palo Cortado, Oloroso and Pedro Ximénez. The fino follows the old style with plenty of body. All in the Antique range are old and elegant. They have no certification of age but could get it if they wanted to.

Bodegas Tradición, S.L.

Plaza Cordobeses, 3

Tel: 956 168 628 Fax: 956 333 963

Email: lgiglesias@bodegastradicion.com

www.bodegastradicion.com

A fascinating creation! It was set up by three members of old Jerez families, namely Joaquín Rivero, Ignacio López de Carrezosa and Javier Domecq. In 1998 they bought a derelict bodega in the oldest part of the city and completely renovated it, filling it with very old

wines mostly bought from bodegas that had been absorbed or ceased trading, and creating their own top quality soleras. It is now owned by Joaquín Rivero. It also has casks of añada wine from 1970 onwards. Their wines are hand bottled and only lightly fined, and not filtered. They are all very good. The bodega also houses a collection of Spanish paintings from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and a set of ceramic tiles painted by the precocious Picasso when he was eight years old. It originally specialized in very old wines but has now introduced a fino.

Age-certified wines: VORS Amontillado, Medium, Oloroso, and Palo Cortado.

Bodegas Urium, S.A.

Muro, 28

Tel: 959 257 378 Fax: 959 257 378

www.urium.es/en

A family-owned and run boutique bodega making impeccable wines. The Classical range includes very good wines of all categories. The Mons Urium range includes VORS Amontillado, Palo Cortado, Oloroso and Pedro Ximénez, all of them excellent.

Bodegas Valdivia De Cadiz, S.L.

Zoilo Ruiz-Mateos Camacho S/N

Tel: 956 314 358 Fax: 956 169 657

www.bodegasvaldivia.com

This once ambitious bodega, included because it is still on the register, is unfortunately in receivership.

Bodegas Williams & Humbert, S.L.

Cart. N - IV km. 641.75

Tel: 956 353 400 Fax: 956 353 408

Email: williams@williams-humbert.com

www.williams-humbert.com

The early history of this great bodega has already been given. After various vicissitudes the Medina Group, which originated in Sanlúcar with the bodegas of Perez Megia, became half owners and took full control in 2005. It used to have beautiful old buildings in the middle of Jerez, with a notable garden (still happily mostly preserved as a municipal park), but moved in 1999 to the concrete premises just outside the city on the road to Sanlúcar that were originally built for Bodegas Internacionales. This is a very good building for maturing sherry in, as it is cool and has a good flow of air, but unhappily it shows that concrete weathers just as badly in the Spanish climate as it does in the British. Its most famous wines are Dry Sack and Canasta Cream but it produces a complete range of very good quality.

Age-certified wines: VOS: Dos Cortados and Don Guido (Pedro Ximénez). VORS Jalifa (Amontillado).

Bodegas Ximenez-Spinola S.A.

Porvenir, 20-1° A

Tel: 956 348 000 Fax: 956 232 332 266

Email: Imp@ximenezspinola.com

www.ximenezspinola.com

A small bodega specializing in Pedro Ximénez.

Complejo Bodeguero Bellavista, S.L.U.

Rda. Circunvalacion-Bellavista

Tel: 956 319 650 Fax: 956 319 824

Email: rafael.estevez@groupogarvey.com

The impressive premises occupied by this concern are conspicuous as one drives along the Jerez bypass. They were built by Zoilo Ruiz-Mateos in a completely modern style on a hillside so that the bodegas are largely underground but with a good circulation of air that provides excellent conditions for maturing wine. From the back there is a spectacular view over the vineyards. Apart from the wine, there is a fascinating museum of sherry labels. They house all that is left of the Ruiz-Mateos empire, which at the time of writing is in receivership and looking for a buyer, but they are still fully operative. The principal brand is Garvey, long since removed from its fine premises in the middle of Jerez, where some of the buildings have been pulled down while others have become a hotel and a supermarket, but the beautiful Sacristia has been reconstructed in the new premises. Garvey makes some excellent wines

and is also responsible for the wines of Sandeman, whose soleras they acquired, the company having been bought by Sogrape, a Portuguese company famous for its Mateus Rosé; but it was only interested in the port side of the business. Garvey's flagship wine is Fino San Patricio, an excellent fino that is now also being sold in an *en rama* version. They also have an old Tintilla de Rota.

Age-certified wines sold under the Garvey label: VOS and VORS Olorosos and Pedro Ximénez.

Age-certified wines sold under the Sandeman label: VOS Amontillado Royal Esmeralda (now completely dry), the medium-sweet Royal Corregidor, the Oloroso Dulce Royal Corregidor, and the Pedro Ximénez Royal Ambrosante.

Diéz Mérito S.A.

Ctra. Morabita, KM 2

Tel: 956 186 112 Fax: 956 303 500

Email: nicholas@diezmerito.com

www.diezmerito.com

Paternina is a new name in Jerez, but one of the most famous in Rioja, which was bought, together with Bodegas Franco-Españolas, from the state by Marcos Eguizábal Ramírez, an entrepreneur, when the old Rumasa empire was sold off. In Jerez he bought Diéz-Mérito (itself formed from an amalgamation of Diéz Hermanos and Mérito) and Bodegas Internacionales,

whose buildings he sold on to the Medina Group (see Williams & Humbert above). Other names acquired include Bertola and Pemartín, which are now used as the principal brands, making ranges of good wines. The headquarters building, out in the vineyards, is mainly a warehouse and despatch centre. Most of the wine is in an exquisite little eighteenth century bodega in the middle of the city. Diéz Hermanos (which dates from 1892 and which used to occupy a notable building that is still standing near the railway station) had many very fine wines but particularly Fino Imperial and an oloroso, Victoria Regina. Both retain their excellence. The former, once regarded as a very old fino, and retaining a distinct suggestion of its fino origin, is now classified as a VORS Amontillado. It comes from a five-scale solera that is run with loving care. The latter is a fine VORS Oloroso.

Emilio Hidalgo, S.A.

Calve, 29.

Tel: 956 341 078 Fax: 956 320 922

Email: emidalgo@teleline.es

www.hidalgo.com

A family-owned and run bodega of modest size dating from about 1875; its exact date of foundation is not known. In the centre of the city, it is now run by the fourth generation of the family, who make exceptionally good wines. La Panesa is a very good fino. Older wines

include Villapanés Oloroso and the VORS Amontillado Tresillo.

Emilio Lustau, S.A.

Arcos, 53

Tel: 956 341 697 Fax: 956 347 789

Email: lustau@lustau.es

www.lustau.es/en

This was originally a small family-owned bodega, founded in 1896 by José Ruiz-Berdejo, with historic premises on the city walls. He passed it on to his son-in-law Emilio Lustau Ortega. Until the 1970s it traded as an almacenista then became a shipper. Its reputation was made when the late Rafael Balao had the inspiration to market wines from the almacenistas that had formerly been sold to the big shippers. There are now fewer of these wines than there were as some of the almacenistas have converted themselves into shippers, but all those remaining are top quality. They are managing very well with fewer almacenistas, though, as these wines now form only a very small part of their business. Instead they have produced a bewildering range of fine wines each available in limited quantities, including single cask wines. In 1990 it became part of the Luis Caballero group from El Puerto de Santa María which brought it into the big league, and allowed it to move into the former Mackenzie and Misa bodegas which were beautifully remodelled. They formed excellent

soleras of old wines of every style and had a pleasant sideline in moscatels. The next step was when Beam Global lost interest in sherry (other than Harveys) and sold them some of its famous brands with the soleras that supplied them. These included Fino La Ina and Río Viejo oloroso. Their own fino is Fino Puerto in the lighter style of El Puerto, where it is made, and they have a good manzanilla Pápirusa. Their VORS wines are an Amontillado, a Palo Cortado, an Oloroso, and a Pedro Ximénez, without fancy names but simply sold as Lustau with the style and age qualification.

González Byass, S.A.

Manuel Ma. González, 12

Tel: 956 357 000 Fax: 956 357 043

Email: nacional@gonzalezbyass.es

www.gonzalezbyassuk.com

This is beyond doubt the greatest of all the bodegas and is still owned by the González-Gordon family which acquired the Byass family's share. Its impressive history has already been given. You can see exactly where it is, just by the cathedral, by looking for its enormous *torero* weathervane which is said to be the biggest in the world. It makes a complete range of sherry and brandy, and no one makes better. All the grapes used for sherry come from the best Superior vineyards of which it is the major owner and is the only winery to have Pedro Ximénez vines in that area. It incorporates the

old-established firms of Wisdom & Warter and Croft & Co. But although it has ancient roots it has always been in the forefront. It pioneered the scientific study of sherry enology to its own benefit and to that of all its rivals and does its pressing in the immaculate Las Copas installation. It has always kept its range of wines completely up to date, pioneering *en rama* finos and supplementing its Tio Pepe (the best known fino in the world, which it has never allowed to slip in quality) with older finos, Una Palma (an older Tio Pepe, aged six years and tasting like finos used to), Dos Palmas, Tres Palmas (by which time the flor has practically gone) and Cuatro Palmas, which by that age has passed into amontillado. It also has a remarkable range of age-certified wines. They are: twelve-year-old Leonor (a perfect mature palo cortado), VOS (Medium) Capelo Seleccion, VORS Amontillado del Duque, Matusalém (Oloroso Dulce), Apostoles (Medium Palo Cortado), and Noé (Pedro Ximénez).

It is also notable for its añada (vintage wines), is very strong in brandies, and has invested heavily in cava and table wines, making some of Spain's best.

Hrdos. de Nicolas Martín Martín, s.l.

Pedro Pemartín, 8

Tel: 630 010 089 Fax: 956 143 849

Email: nicomartin@infonegocio

They are principally growers.

José Estévez, S.A.

Ctra. N. IV, km. 640

Tel: 956 321 004 Fax: 956 340 829

Email: ivo@grupoestevez.com

www.grupoestevez.es

José Estévez made his fortune out of supplying sand for making bottles but he was a Jerezano devoted to sherry. The first bodega he bought, between 1982 and 1985, was the very reputable house of Real Tesoro, founded in 1897. He then bought the solera for the fine fino Tio Mateo (Palomino & Vergara) from the Allied Domecq group then, in 1999, the business of Valdespino, perhaps the oldest in Jerez (its history has already been given) with its fine vineyard Macharnudo Alto, which provides the grapes for Fino Inocente and Tio Diego amontillado. They ferment these two wines in oak casks. It also brought their superb soleras which were moved bodily into the new bodegas and are kept quite separate from its other brands. Most recently, in 1985, it bought the renowned Sanlucár bodega Hijos de Rainera Perez Marín with its famous manzanilla, La Guita. Guita has two distinct meanings: string and money. There is a legend that Domingo Perez Marín (Rainera was his daughter) who founded the bodega in 1852 was a very shrewd businessman from the north of Spain and if anyone tried to buy his wine he said, 'there is a string attached: cash down!' – and there is a string on the bottle. In the past it was a manzanilla pasada but

nowadays it is a *finá*. It helped to open up the big market in Seville, and the Sanlúcar growers owe it a lot. Some of the beautiful old Valdespino bodegas in the centre of the city are being preserved as a museum but all the wine is made in the impressive new Estévez bodega on the bypass which also houses an enthusiast's collection of antique furniture. In the bodega the humidity is computer controlled to give perfect conditions. José Estévez has died but the bodega remains family owned. Valdespino's *fino*, *Inocente*, and *manzanilla*, *Deliciosa*, are exemplary.

Age-certified wines: VOS Solera 1842 (Medium Oloroso) and Don Gonzalo (Oloroso); VORS Coliseo (Amontillado).

Juan González Sillero

Tel: 956 185 324 Fax: 956 187 526

Email: almocaden@bodegasalmocadan

Pilar Plá Pechovierto

Plaza de Silos, 5

Tel: 956 342 433 Fax: 956 342 433

Email: bodegamaestراسierra@gmail.com

Established as an *almacenista* in 1830, it was acquired shortly afterwards by José Antonio Sierra, a master cooper who was known as El Maestro Sierra, and his successors are still proud of the quality of their casks. Since 1992, it has been a shipper of very fine sherries

under the brand El Maestro Sierra. It has a beautiful traditional bodega building with a patio shaded by a very old vine and has the unique distinction of being run entirely by women, who run it very well indeed. They are unusual in making an amoroso. In 2002 they were awarded a diploma by the town council for having preserved a traditional bodega and it is a joy to see.

Age-certified wines: VORS – a range that includes Amontillado, Medium and Oloroso, all sold as El Maestro Sierra.

S.C.A. Cooperativa Ntra.Sra. de las Angustias

Ctra. Circunvalación, s/n

Tel: 956 301 209 Fax: 956 185 198

Email: angustias@covijerez.es

www.covijerez.es

Anyone driving along the bypass cannot help but see this big old cooperative on the edge of the vineyard area. About 90 per cent of its work is producing must from grapes grown by its members.

Sánchez Romate Hnos., S.A.

Lealas, 28

Tel: 956 182 212 Fax: 956 185 276

Email: gerencia@romate.com

www.romate.com

Founded by Juan Sánchez de la Torre in 1781, this bodega has a well-deserved reputation for fine wines. In the middle of the last century it sank from fame into

obscurity and in 1957 was sold to five friends, whose families still own it. It has risen again to prominence, bolstered up by its highly regarded brandies and a willingness to supply fine wines for sale under buyers' own labels. It has adopted a very modern style of packaging and has recently acquired part of the old Wisdom & Warter bodegas for expansion. It has two vineyards that supply 95 per cent of its musts. It has very good wines in every class, one of the best known being Amontillado NPU (non plus untra) and Regente, a mature palo cortado. There is a range of Special Reserves given fifteen years' ageing.

The following are age certified: VOS: Romate Pedro Ximénez and Sacristia Pedro Ximénez; VORS: Romate Amontillado, Romate Oloroso and Sacristia Oloroso.

Telmo Manuel Moreno Jiménez

Portas del Sol, 22 & 24

Tel. and fax: 956 342 534

Email: telmo@bodegasblancareyes.com

www.bodegasblancareyes.com

Zoilo Ruiz-Mateos, S.L.

Calle Pizzaro,12

Tel: 956 310 014 Fax: 956 310 014

Email: gael.barrowman@zoiloruizmateos.com

www.zoiloruizmateos.com

A relic of the once-great Ruiz-Mateos empire (see

Complejo Bodeguero Bellavista above), it acquired the great soleras of Sandeman. At present it is in administration, the wines being made by Garvey, and some are age classified: VOS Royal Esmeralda (a Sandeman Amontillado), Royal Corregidor (a Sandeman Oloroso Medium), and VORS Zoilo Ruiz-Mateos (Oloroso) and Pedro Ximénez.

EL PUERTO DE SANTA MARÍA

Bodegas Osborne, S.A.

Fernán Caballero, 3

Tel: 956 869 000 Fax: 956 869 029

Email: comunicaciones@osborne.es

www.osborne.es

This great bodega is still family controlled, the family owning 80 per cent of the equity. Its history has already been given and its famous black bull advertisement (now classified as a sculpture) is seen all over Spain. Its associated company Duff Gordon has been wound up and the name discontinued save for brandy in Canada. Its buildings are large and beautiful. It has recently, however, gone through a complete transformation, having decided to concentrate on brandy. It has sold off most of its vineyards and ceased pressing grapes. It has, though, retained its majestic old soleras of top quality wines and has added excellent soleras from Domecq and Bobadilla. The wines used to feed them come from its

remaining vineyards, but the vinification is now done by González Byass, who also make its fine Fino Quinta.

It has the following age-certified wines: VORS: 51 1° Amontillado, Capuchino (Medium Palo Cortado), Sibarita (Medium Oloroso, which formerly belonged to Domecq), and Venerable Pedro Ximénez.

González Obregon, C.B.

Zarza, 51

Tel: 956 856 329

Email: abregoncb@yahoo.es

Long established as an almacenista with good wines.

Juan C. Grant, S.L.

Bolos, 1 & 3

Tel & Fax: 956 870 406

Email: info@bodegasgrant.com

www.bodegasgrant.com

Another old-established family owned almacenista that has become a shipper, the family originating in Scotland. It has an historic connection with the old English bodega Oldham. It has good wines.

Juan Carlos Gutiérrez Colosía

Avda. Bajamar, 40

Tel: 956 852 852 Fax: 956 542 936

Email: info@gutierrez-colosia.com

www.gutierrez-colosia.com

Founded in 1838 and formerly an almacenista with

soleras of very fine wines, this can now be considered a family owned boutique bodega where things are still done by hand, the delightful little bodega being built in 1833 on the site of an old church destroyed by the Dutch. When demand fell and the big shippers stopped buying from almacenistas it had the bleak choice of closing down or becoming a shipper. Happily, in 1997, it chose the latter course. It has not gone in for VOS or VORS yet, but has wines that are certainly of that age and quality. All are sold under the name Gutiérrez Colosía.

Luis Caballero, S.A.

San Francisco, 24

Tel: 956 851 751 Fax: 956 859 204

Email: agb@caballero.es

www.caballero.es

This is another family owned bodega with a deservedly high reputation. Among its many other possessions, the family owns the castle of San Marcos which dates from 1260 and dominates the skyline of El Puerto. It absorbed the old bodega of Burdon (though this name has been discontinued) and, above all, Emilio Lustau, in Jerez, through which most of the exported wines are sold. It has beautiful bodega buildings in both towns and, in El Puerto, a delightful garden. In the local market it is most famous for its brandies and its very popular Ponce. Its fino soleras are in El Puerto and the

rest in Jerez. It is noted for its Puerto Fino (exported by Lustau) and Fino Pavón.

SANLÚCAR DE BARRAMEDA

Bodegas Infantes Orleans-Borbon, S.A.E.

Luís Eguilaz, 11

Tel: 956 849 002 Fax: 956 849 135

Email: mpguzman@ciatorrebrava.com

www.biob.es

Infante means prince and the Orleans-Borbon family could hardly be more royal. If you go to the address you will find a very attractive private house – and indeed the whole thing is very private – but there actually is a small bodega in the Duke of Montpensier's old stables in the Calle Baños, and also a modern building. The story began in the nineteenth century when the duke built a holiday home here on a massive scale: a pseudo-Moorish castle with fine gardens. It now houses municipal offices. He also planted vineyards on a similar scale, and when Henry Vizetelly went to Sanlúcar they had been rented to Mr Richard Davies, who was then a prominent sherry shipper in Jerez; the duke even imported a steam plough from Ransomes of Ipswich. The prince who founded the bodega in 1948 was a descendant. It does not have any age-certified wines, but those it does sell are notably mature.

Bodegas J. Ferris M., C.B.

Ctra. CA-602 Km, 16

Tel: 956 235 100 Fax: 956 235 358

Email: bodegas@bodegasferris.com

www.bodegasferris.com

This small family bodega was founded as recently as 1975 by an industrialist with a taste for wine. It is way outside the town on the way to El Puerto, in new buildings on top of a hill and surrounded by its vineyards. Among its unusual possessions are three casks of old Rota Tent.

Bodegas Barbadillo, S.L.

Luís Eguilaz, 11

Tel: 956 385 500 Fax: 956 385 501

Email: barbadillo@barbadillo.com

www.barbadillo.com

The history of this very important family owned bodega, which was founded by Benigno Barbadillo Hortigüela in 1821, has already been told. Its excellent wines did much to put manzanilla on the map, and it pioneered the local table wines by creating Castillo de San Diego in 1969, which has been a great success. Its beautiful bodegas are up in the high town near the castle and it has a visitor centre with an interesting little museum. Its most famous wine is Solear, a manzanilla pasada, and it also pioneered *en rama* wines. Another of its top wines is a palo cortado Obispo Gascon. Its wines are all of the top quality and it sells a particularly select range of very expensive wines under the name Reliquia.

It also has substantial interests in table wines.

It has the following age-certified wines: VORS: Barbadillo Amontillado, a Medium, a Palo Cortado, an Oloroso Seco, and an Oloroso Dulce.

Bodegas Barón, S.A.

Ctra. Sanlúcar-Chipiona Km. 1
 Tel: 956 360 796 Fax: 956 363 256
 Email: info@bodegasbaron.es
 www.bodegasbaron.es

The business was founded by Manuel Barón Fernández, who was married to a Romero – of the local wine-growing family – and who, in 1895, bought the old soleras of Anselmo Paz. It remained family owned for some generations until bought by a local businessman Manuel Rodríguez. Although quite small it has some fine buildings. It sells most of its wine in Spain.

Bodegas Hidalgo-La Gitana, S.A.

Banda de la Playa, 42
 Tel: 956 385 304 Fax: 956 365 844
 Email: bodegashidalgo@lagitana.es

Once upon a time this bodega stood on the shore, as its address suggests, but the river silted up and moved away from the town, so now it is quite a walk to get to the river bank. Nevertheless the bodegas catch the sea breezes, and the floor of one of them is actually below sea level. The Hidalgo family came from the north of Spain to Sanlúcar at the end of the eighteenth

century and bought a small bodega in 1792. It rose to great prominence under the management of Eduardo Hidalgo Verjano in the middle of the nineteenth century and is now run by the fifth generation in direct line from the founder. The wines are exceptionally good, the most famous being La Gitana manzanilla, which is also sold *en rama*, and Pastrana, a single-vineyard manzanilla pasada. La Gitana means the gypsy woman and is named after the gypsy proprietor of a tavern in Malaga who sold their wine. When the great-grandfather of the present director decided to bottle wine he named it after her and commissioned an appropriate label from a local artist. In those days it was a manzanilla pasada, which was then the most popular style before the taste for manzanilla fina came in the 1980s. It is moving towards more old wines of top quality, though these have never been lacking.

It has the following age-certified wines: VORS: Napoléon Amontillado, Wellington Palo Cortado, Faraon Oloroso and Triana Pedro Ximénez.

Bodegas Juan Piñero, S.L.

Miguel Perez Leal, Ed Los Infantes 3, 9C

Tel: 965 360 465 Fax: 956 384 104

Email: administracion@jpconstructora.com

Bodegas Teresa Rivero, S.A.

Puerto. 21

Tel: 956 361 491 Fax: 956 368 379

Email: joserodriguez@bodegasteresarivero.com

www.bodegasteresarivero.com

Carbajo Ruiz, S.L.

Ctra Trebujana KM 1

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Delgado Zuleta, S.A.

Ctra. Sanlúcar-Chipiona Km. 1.5

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This substantial bodega on the edge of the town was founded in 1744 by Francisco Gil de Ledisina, from the Basque Country, though an ancient document suggests the earlier date of 1719. It claims to be the oldest family owned bodega and got its present name at the end of the nineteenth century when an heiress, Dolores Nudi y Diaz de la Concha married a naval officer, José Delgado y Zuleta, who left the navy to run the business. In 1978 it merged with Benito Rodríguez Lacave. Before it began to build its great new bodegas in 1989, it had twenty-four small ones in the town and

still has an enchanting one under a house in the town centre, where the whole thing began. The new bodega was completed in 2004 and is state of the art. Its wines are very good. The leader is La Goya manzanilla which is aged for seven years. Goya XL is aged for twelve to fifteen years, when it is still growing flor. Its amontillado Quo Vadis is not age certified but certainly could be.

Francisco Yuste Brioso

Regina, 51

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Hrdos. De Argüeso, S.A.

Mar, 8

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Email: argueso@arguseo.es

www.arguseo.es

Certainly one of the leading shippers of manzanilla, the bodega was founded in 1822 by a young man who came to Sanlúcar when he was fifteen years old and started the bodega when he was eighteen. He had no descendants, but he did have two nephews and it has remained in the family ever since. Its most popular wine is Las Medallas which is aged four to five years. San León is older, aged eight to nine years. San León Reserva de Familia is older still, aged twelve years, but little is made. San León leads on to a fine amontillado, Vieja Crianza.

Manuel Sanchez Ayala, S.A.

Banda de la Playa, 67

Tel: 954 931 045 Fax: 954 931 085

Email: jose@cebasa.com

An old-established company that changed hands in 1986.

M^a Pilar Garcia de Velasco Y Perez

Pza. Madre de Dios s/n

Tel: 956 381 285 Fax: 956 383 824

Email: ignaciohidlago@bodegaslacigarrera.com

www.bodegaslacigarrera.com

An old bodega dating from 1758, it used to be called Bodegas La Cigarrera. After various vicissitudes of inheritance, it is at present run by the ninth generation in line from the founder. It operates on a small scale but with good wines sold under the trade mark La Cigarrera. It is halfway down from the high to the low town, where many pass, and displays a notice welcoming visitors.

Age-certified wine: VOS Amontillado La Cigarrera.

Pedro Romero, S.A.

Trasbolsa, 84

Tel: 956 364 300 fax: 956 364 142

Email: pedroromero@pedroromero.es

www.pedroromero.es

Founded by Vicente Romero Carranza in 1860, Pedro Romero operated for many years principally as an

almacenista and then became a shipper. In its heyday it had a fine list of age-certified wines but at the time of writing it is in liquidation and one can only hope for a saviour.

Portales Perez, S.L.

San Francisco, 23

Tel: 956 360 131

S.C.A. Del Campo Vitivinicola Sanlucaña

Carretera de Jerez KM 1.3

Tel: 956 361 874 Fax: 956 361 558

Email: juanmiguel@covisan.net

A small but highly reputable cooperative, formerly called Covisan. The name is a shortened version of La Co-operativa del Campo de Viticultores de Sanlúcar and was founded in 1968.

S.C.A. Virgen De La Caridad

Palmar de San Sebastian S/N

Tel: 956 381 990 Fax: 956 368 379

Email: admin@coovoca.com

A large local cooperative that used to be called CAYDSA, standing for Criadores, Almacenistas y Distributores de Jerez, S.A., which was founded in 1969 when it acquired, among other interests, the old bodegas of Esteban Bozzano.

APPENDIX – THE REGULATIONS

Like most others nowadays, the sherry trade is no longer a free for all. The requirements of the EU are laid down in Council Regulation (EEC) N° 4252/88 of 21 December 1988 ‘On the preparation and marketing of liqueur wines produced in the Community’ and other rules. These are incorporated in the ‘Reglamento de las denominaciones de Origin “Jerez – Xérès – Sherry” y “Manzanilla – Sanlúcar de Barrameda” y de su Consejo Regulador’ which has statutory force. What follows is simply a summary of the most important current provisions.

The EU regulations abolished the use of sucrose for sweetening and stipulated the use of concentrated grape must (including that obtained by the action of direct heat), rectified concentrated grape must, or must from raisined grapes grown in the sherry area,

save that those made from Pedro Ximénez grapes may be brought in from Montilla-Moriles which is in Andalusia, in the hills near Cordova, and which grows the best. They also laid down rules for the quality of alcohol used for fortification.

The permitted grape varieties are Palomino, Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel.

The wines must have a minimum age of two years.

The authorized vineyards must be within the municipalities of Jerez de la Frontera, El Puerto de Santa María, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Trebujena, Chipiona, Rota, Puerto Real and Chiclana de la Frontera, all within the province of Cadiz, and Lebrija in the province of Seville. This area is known as the Zona. Within it there is a subzone Jerez Superior, consisting of albariza vineyards with the right climatic qualities and soils in the municipalities of Jerez de la Frontera, El Puerto de Santa María, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Trebujena and those of Rota and Chipiona contiguous with those of Sanlúcar. At least 60 per cent of the wines must come from this area. The maximum density of planting is 4,100 vines per hectare, and the method of pruning must be vara y pulgar with a maximum of eight eyes on the vara for Palomino. Pedro Ximénez and Moscatel may be pruned by other authorized methods. There is, however, a provision for other methods to be used when these are considered

to be technical advances in viticulture. The maximum production is 80 hl/ha for the Zona Superior and 100 hl/ha for the rest, though these figures can be adjusted by request before the vintage if quality will not suffer. Any excess production cannot be used for sherry. Subject to a similar degree of flexibility, not more than 72.5 litres may be pressed from 100 kilos and any excess cannot be used for sherry. The authorities can stipulate for each bodega the minimum to be obtained from Jerez Superior but not less than 60 per cent. Musts for the production of sherry must have at least 10.5° Beaumé.

The wines fall within the general category *Vinos de Licor* and within two categories *Vinos Generosos* with sugar not more than 5 gms/litre and *Vinos Dulces Naturales* with more than 160. Requirements for the various styles (omitting characteristics of colour and taste, which have already been described) are:

Type of Wine	Alcohol (% vol.)	Sugar g/l
Fino	15-17	< 5
Amontillado	16-22	< 5
Oloroso	17-22	< 5
Palo Cortado	17-22	< 5
Dry	15-22	5-45
Pale Cream	15.5-22	45-115
Medium	15-22	5-115
Cream	15.5-22	115-140
Pedro Ximénez	15-22	> 212

Moscatel	15-22	> 160
Dulce	15-22	> 160

Wines of the styles *amontillado*, *oloroso* and *palo cortado*, which undergo oxidative ageing, can have up to 9 gms/litre when the total acidity expressed as tartaric acid is not less than 2gms/litre. Wines labelled 'medium dry' contain less than 45 gms/litre of sugar. With more they are labelled 'medium sweet'.

Vino Dulce Natural is made from very ripe or sunned grapes, with partial fermentation brought about by the addition of alcohol. When the grapes are Pedro Ximénez or Moscatel the wines are labelled varietally. They must be made from very ripe or sunned grapes at least 85 per cent of which must be of the named variety.

Manzanilla – Sanlúcar de Barrameda: between 15 and 19° grown beneath flor. Subgroups: Manzanilla Fina, Manzanilla Pasada and Manzanilla Olorosa.

The maximum amount of wine that can be made is 70 litres for each 100 kilos of grapes. The wines must be matured in oak casks with a maximum size of 1,000 litres (usually 500) but permission may be granted for the use of larger casks when these have been used historically. Not more than 40 per cent of the stocks of a given type of wine held by a bodega may be sold each year but these may be augmented by wines bought from other registered bodegas.

The yield of mature vineyards is limited to 14,285 kilos per hectare and if this is exceeded the whole of the grapes from the vineyard may be disqualified. For the production of sherry the limit is 11,428, equivalent to 80 hectolitres. There are lower limits for recently planted vineyards.

The wines must be matured for at least six months in the Zona de Crianza which lies within the municipalities of the three sherry towns.

The following indications of age are permitted:

- Wines de Vejez Calificada de más d 30 años or Vinum Optimum Rara Signatum (VORS), which must be wines of superior quality with an age of over 30 years.
- Wines de Vejez Calificada de mas de 20 años or Vinum Optimum Signatum (VOS), which must be wines of superior quality with an age of more than 20 years.
- Wines with an indication of age of 15 years.
- Wines with an indication of age of 12 years.
- Wines sold as añada are wines from a single vintage.

GLOSSARY

A LA PIQUERA: the must from recently pressed grapes, as when a bodega owner buys must straight from the press.

ABOCADO: slightly sweetened.

ABRA: the open space between stacked butts.

abv: alcohol by volume.

ACEOBACTERIAS: the bacteria that cause wine to turn into vinegar.

ACHICAR: literally, 'to lessen'. A verb used when the quality of wine in a solera is lessened by drawing off too much.

ACIDEZ TOTAL: the total acidity in a wine, usually expressed in terms of tartaric or sulphuric acid.

ÁCIDO: a wine showing conspicuous acidity.

ACORCHADO: corked. The unpleasant smell produced when wine is infected by a fungus to produce trichloroanisole (TCA).

- AFUERA:** wine made from grapes grown in albariza soil; areas of such soil.
- AGUAPIE:** the second pie pressing.
- AGUARDIENTE:** grape spirit obtained by distilling wine.
- ALAMBIQUE:** pot still.
- ALBARIZA:** the name of the best soil in which sherry grapes are grown. It is white in colour and contains at least 25 per cent calcium carbonate.
- ALBARO:** sandstone crushed to make the surface of the walkways in a bodega.
- ALBILLO CASTELLANO:** a vine variety no longer used.
- ALCOHOLIZAR:** the fortification by adding alcohol.
- ALMACENISTA:** a wholesaler or store keeper who makes wine and sells it on to shippers.
- ALMIBAR:** a solution of invert sugar formerly used for sweetening paler sherries.
- ALMIJAR:** the yard outside the vineyard building where grapes used to be dried in the sun.
- ALMIZCATE:** the space between two bodega buildings.
- A MARGO:** a bitter taste produced by polyphenols.
- AMONTILLADO:** a style of wine that is obtained when fino sherry is aged for a long time in the wood. It is so named because it resembles the wines grown in Montilla.
- AMOROSO:** a style of light, slightly sweetened oloroso sherry.

AMPELOGRAPHY: the comparative study of the vine.

AÑADA: wine made from grapes of a single year.

ANDAR: literally, walk. A term used when the wine in a solera is turned over too quickly, reducing its quality.

AÑINA: the fourth, in order of merit, of the four leading districts of albariza soil.

APALEADOR: stick or rod used for stirring wine during fining.

APESTOSO: must or wine with an unpleasant smell.

ARANZADA: the measure of area used in vineyards.

One aranzada equals 0.475 hectares or 1.1737 acres.

ARCO: the hoop of a barrel.

ARENA: the third in order of merit of the three types of soil in which sherry vines are grown.

ARROBA: either a measure of grapes by weight (about 11.5 kilos), or a measure of wine by volume, equivalent in the sherry area to 16.7 litres. The exact measure varies in different parts of Spain. A butt contains 30 arrobas.

ARROPE: syrup obtained by reducing must to one fifth of its original volume by heat.

ARRUMBADOR: bodega workman.

ASPILLA: a dipstick used for gauging casks.

BALBAINA: the third in order of merit of the four leading districts of albariza soil.

BARRIL DEL GASTO: a barrel of cheap wine kept for workers to drink in the bodega.

BARRO: the second in order of merit of the three types of soil in which sherry vines are grown.

BASTO: adjective applied to wine, meaning 'coarse'.

BIENTEVEO: a temporary look-out post erected in a vineyard at vintage time.

BLANDURAS: generally 'softness', but is also the word used for the dew that falls upon the vineyards.

BOCACHA: a wedge of oak used to support barrels.

BOCA DE BOJO: hole in a butt at its widest circumference.

BOCOY: an unusually shaped butt, usually oval, of varying size but generally containing about 40 arrobas.

BODEGA: a large overground warehouse in which sherry is stored; also applied (generally in the plural) to the whole establishment of a sherry shipper or almacenista.

BODEGUERO: bodega owner.

BOMBA: siphon used in moving wine.

BOSADOR: funnel inserted into the bung of a barrel in which must is fermenting to allow the must to expand during tumultuous fermentation.

BOTA BODEGUERA: a large butt with a capacity of 34 arrobas used for maturing wine in a bodega. Also an old butt which, through age, has lost its shape and whose contents are doubtful.

BOTA CHICA: a shipping butt containing 30 arrobas or about 500 litres.

BOTA DE EMBARQUE: shipping butt: another name for bota chica.

BOTA DE EXTRACCIÓN: another term for a bota chica.

BOTA DE RECIBO: standard-sized butt (31 arrobas or about 507 litres) used locally for measuring and receiving wine.

BOTA GORDA: bodega butt containing 36 to 40 arrobas (600 to 665 litres).

BOTA PUNTA: the bottom cask at the end of a row, slightly more exposed to the flow of air and often used for sampling but the wine in one tends to develop slightly differently from the rest.

BROWN: a dark, rich sherry.

BUEBAS: the solids that settle from the must after pressing. They are now often extracted by a centrifuge.

BUTT: see bota.

CABACEO: the formula for a blend of wine.

CABEZUELA: a second sedimentation of musts.

CALCETA: a cloth sleeve open at one end lowered into a butt when wine is added to dispense it slowly and evenly.

CALDO DE PRENSA: the must from the prensa.

CÁMERA (OBSCURA): a wooden structure with a candle or bulb inside for testing the brightness of wines. It has a small shelf in front to put the glass on.

- CAMPAÑA: literally campaign, but here the beginning of the vineyard year: 1 September.
- CAÑA: a wine glass used in Sanlúcar, where the wine is drawn from the butt using bamboo venencias.
- CANOA: a wedge-shaped funnel used for filling casks.
- CAÑOCAZO: a vine variety that has fallen into disuse.
- CANUTO: a short wooden pipe that is inserted in the bung-hole in the head of a cask when it is desired to draw wine.
- CAPATAZ: a bodega foreman.
- CARRASCAL: the second in order of merit of the four leading districts of albariza soil.
- CASCO: a cask.
- CASSE: a generic term for various forms of wine disease.
- CATADOR: a wine taster; bodega manager.
- CATAR: to taste.
- CATAVINO: a tall glass for tasting wine.
- CEPA: a vine.
- CLARIOS DE TURBIOS: clear wines obtained by filtering turbios through linen bags or, nowadays, filters.
- CLARO: a bright wine.
- CLAROS DE LIAS: a clear wine obtained from the lees of must.
- CLAVO: a jemmy used for getting corks out of casks.

COLOR, VINO DE: wine used for deepening the colour of blends.

COPITA: the traditional sherry glass; on a stem and tapering towards the top.

CORREDOR: a broker, who buys and sells wine.

COSECHERO: a wine grower.

CREAM SHERRY: a blend of wines mostly produced by oxidative ageing, amber or light in colour and sweetened to give a smooth taste.

CRIADERA: a series of butts from which wine is drawn periodically to refresh another criadera or a solera, replaced by an equal quantity of wine drawn from another criadera or a sobre tabla wine.

CRUJIA: the broad, central transverse aisle in a bodega building.

CUARTA (BOTA): quarter cask (a quarter of a butt).

CUARTILLO: a measure of wine by volume: $\frac{1}{32}$ arroba.

CUPO: the amount of wine a shipper is allowed to sell each year.

DEPÓSITO: a large tank traditionally of concrete but now usually of stainless steel used for storing, clarifying or blending wine in bulk.

DESBURBADO: the process where the must, between pressing and fermentation, is left so that the solid matter can settle.

DEFANGADO: literally 'demudding': see desburbado.

DESLÍO: separating the must from the lees.

- DESPALLIADO: the removal of stems from bunches of grapes.
- DRY SHERRY: a sherry with 5–45 gms/l of sugar.
- DULCE APAGADO: sweet wine made by adding alcohol to unfermented must. Formerly made outside the sherry area.
- DULCE PASA: a sweet wine made from Palomino left on the vine until they become raisined.
- DULCE, VINO: a very sweet wine made from very ripe or sunned grapes and partially fermented.
- EMBOTELLADO: the bottling department.
- ENCABAZAR: to fortify; increase the strength.
- ENOLOGY: modern spelling of oenology – the science of wine-making.
- ENTRE FINO: a fino that lacks distinction.
- ENVERO: colouring of the grape during ripening (in French *veraison*).
- ENYESADO: the traditional addition of yeso (gypsum) to the grapes when pressing.
- ESCALAS: the scales of a solera.
- ESCRITORIO: office.
- ESPALDERAS: the arrangement of wires used for supporting vines.
- ESPIRRAQUE: the third pie pressing used in small vineyards.
- FALSETE: a bung hole in the end of a butt near the bottom.
- FINO: pale sherry in which flor has bred freely.

FLOR: the film of yeast cells growing on the surface of the wine.

GARCETA: a closely woven sack used to slow down wine flowing into a cask.

GAZPACHO: an Andalusian soup made with tomatoes, garlic and vinegar.

GOLDEN: a term authorized for a sherry of that colour.

GUADAPOLVOS: a little wooden device that fits loosely into the bung holes at the tops of butts to keep dust out but let air in.

HECHO: literally 'made'; a term applied to fully mature wine.

HILO: oiliness; a disease of young wines.

HOGSHEAD: a cask holding 54 gallons.

HOLANDAS: distilled grape spirit of about 65° abv.

INJERTA: grafting.

JARRA: a jar used for carrying and transferring wine, formerly made of wood and then of enamel but nowadays of stainless steel. It holds about three-quarters of an arroba.

JARREAR: pouring wine from one jarra to another to increase oxidation.

JEREZ CORTADO: a name given to palo cortado in Sanlúcar de Barrameda.

LADRONCILLO: a metal pipe used in transferring wine from cask to cask.

LAGAR: a wooden wine press.

LEVANTE: the hot, seasonal easterly wind peculiar to southern Spain.

LÍAS: the lees that fall to the bottom of a cask of must or wine.

LIQUEUR WINE: an EU term for a wine falling between 15 and 22° which includes sherry.

LISTÁN: another name for the Palomino grape.

MACHARNUDO: the first in order of merit of the four leading districts of albariza soil.

MADRE: the 'mother' of wine that collects in the bottom of casks and which is left undisturbed when working a solera. It consists mostly of dead yeast cells.

MAJUELO: wine from grapes grown on young vines.

MANNITE: a disease of wine in which mannitol is formed.

MANTUO CASTELLANO: a grape variety once grown in the sherry vineyards.

MANZANILLA: the style of sherry made in Sanlúcar de Barrameda and aged under flor. The strength is from 15 to 17° and the sugar content less than 5 gms/l.

MANZANILLA PASADA: manzanilla aged long enough to have become slightly golden in colour with a mature flavour, on the way to amontillado.

MARC: the grape residues after the pressing.

MARCO REAL: a square pattern used in planting out vineyards.

MARCO RECTANGULAR: a rectangular patten used when planting out vineyards.

MARQUISTA: a merchant who exports wine under his own brands but has no bodegas.

MEDIA (BOTA): a hogshead (half a butt).

MEDIUM SHERRY: a blended wine with 5–115 gms/l of sugar.

MERMA: the sherry lost from a butt as the wine ages, typically 4–5 per cent a year.

MISTELA: see dulce apagado.

MITAD Y MITAD (MITEADO): a fifty–fifty mixture of alcohol and young sherry, used for fortifying.

MONTILLA-MORILES: a wine-growing district in the hills near Cordova.

MOSCATEL: a sweet wine made from at least 85 per cent Moscatel grapes, overripe or sunned. It is very sweet and has a raisin-like bouquet.

MOSTO: must; grape juice. It ceases being must and becomes wine as soon as fermentation is complete. In the Sherry Country, however, the term is used more loosely and is applied until the wine has been racked off the lees.

MOSTO DE YEMA: the best must from free-run juice or that given by a light pressing.

MYCODERMA ACETI: a ferment that turns wine into vinegar.

NUBE: cloudiness; a disease of wine produced by bacteria.

OCTAVO: an octave (an eighth of a butt).

OENOLOGY: an older spelling of enology.

OFIQUE: a method of refrigeration to prevent wine from going cloudy.

OIDIUM: a fungoid parasite of the vine.

OLOROSO: a wine made by oxidative vinification; varying from deep amber to dark mahogany in colour, and full bodied.

PAGO: a district, named vineyard.

PALE CREAM: a sherry produced by biological ageing but sweetened to contain 45–155 gms/l of sugar.

PALMA: high quality fino.

PALMA CORTADA: a rather stout fino tending towards amontillado.

PALO: literally a stick, but applied to an iron rod with a brush attached used in fining. An abbreviation for palo cortado.

PALO CORTADO: a rather full-bodied sherry of particularly good style that is aged in an oxidative phase after the flor has gone.

PALOMINO: the name of the classic sherry vine.

PASADO: a wine that has developed with age.

PATA DE GALLINA: literally, 'hen's foot'; a style of oloroso which is dry but tastes slightly sweet owing to the presence of natural glycerine.

PAXARETE: sweet wine used for flavouring whisky.

PEDRO XIMENEZ (PX): the name of a vine used especially for making sweet wine, and the wine made from it made from at least 85 per cent of the Pedro Ximénez grape. It has a raisin-like bouquet, is very sweet with at least 212 gms/l of sugar, and is slightly viscous in its mouth feel.

PERRUÑO: the name of a vine no longer planted.

PESO: an obsolete measure of value that used to be used in connection with wine. One peso was equal to 3.75 pesetas and there were 15 reales in a peso.

PESTE: a serious defect giving an unpleasant smell caused by infection with lactic bacteria. Wines having it are thrown away.

PHYLLOXERA: the 'vine louse'; a destructive insect parasite of the vine.

PICADO: pricked. A wine turning into vinegar.

PIE: the grape residues following pressing in a lagar, built up round the screw shaft in the middle and bound with an esparto grass band for further pressing.

PISADOR: a man treading grapes in a lagar.

PONIENTE: a cool, humid wind.

PRENSA: a hydraulic pressing of grape residues or nowadays the last, strongest pressing from a continuous press. It is usually distilled.

PRENSA NEUMÁTICA: the modern horizontal press operated by pneumatic pressure.

- PRENZA DE HUSILLO:** the modern mechanically operated horizontal press.
- PULPITO:** a form of mechanical wine press that looks rather like a pulpit.
- PX:** short for Pedro Ximénez.
- QUADRILLA:** a working team of four arrumbadores.
- RACIMO:** a bunch of grapes.
- RAMA:** wine bottled from the cask without further treatment.
- RAYA:** a term used in classifying young wine, also a coarse form of oloroso.
- RAYA OLOROSA:** a light raya.
- REAL:** an obsolete measure of money. See *Peso*.
- REBUSCOS:** small bunches rejected and left on the vine at the grape picking.
- REDONDO:** round, or well balanced.
- REFERENCIA:** a sample of a blend retained by a shipper for reference.
- REMONTADO:** oxidized or wine left too long in bottle.
- ROCIADOR:** a perforated pipe used for refreshing casks of wine.
- ROCIAR:** to refresh a cask of wine from another cask.
- ROCIO:** the process of running the scales of a solera.
- ROUENDO:** a cold north-east wind that blows in winter.
- RUEDO:** an aisle along the length of a bodega building.

SACAR: to draw wine from a cask.

SACRISTÍA: Sachristy. A small part of a bodega reserved for very old sherries and only drawn on special occasions. The name is now sometimes applied to VOS and VORS sherries.

SALIDERO: exit – a leaking butt.

SANCOCHO: s syrup obtained by reducing must to a third of its original volume by heat.

SECO: dry.

SIFON: siphon used for drawing wine from a cask.

SOBRETABLA: literally 'on the board' – young wines that have been racked clear of their lees and have had their first fortification so that they are ready to feed into a criadera.

SOLEO: the sunning of the grapes.

SOLERA: the last scale of butts from which wine is drawn for use. It is then refreshed from the oldest scale of the criadera. The term is also used to describe the whole unit, consisting of the solera itself and all its criaderas.

SUCIO: dirty, particularly on the nose.

TANNINO: tannin, polyphenols.

TENT: a red wine made at Rota. It used to be a popular communion wine.

TIERNO: tender – a light must likely to turn into vinegar.

TIERRA BLANCA: albariza soil.

- TIERRA DE ANAFAS: albariza soil.
- TIERRA DE VINO or TIERRA DE LEBRIJA: Spanish earth used in fining wine.
- TINAJA: tall earthenware pot used for storing and fermenting wine. Now obsolescent.
- TINETA: a wooden carrier used for taking grapes to the press.
- TINTILLA DE ROTA: Rota tent.
- TINTÓMETRO: tintometer, a device for measuring colours
- TIRADOR: a man working the screw press in the old lagar system of pressing grapes.
- TONEL: a very large cask with the capacity of two, three, four or more butts.
- TONELERÍA: cooperage.
- TONELERO: a cooper.
- TOSCA: albariza soil.
- TRANSIEGO: moving the wine.
- TRASEGADOR: the name used for a bodega workman in Sanlúcar.
- TREBOLILLO: diagonal pattern in planting out vineyards.
- TURBIOS: the lees of wine, as compared to lías, the lees of must.
- ULLAGE: the empty space in a wine cask.
- UVA: grape.
- VACIO: empty, ullage.

VENDÍMIA: vintage.

VENENCIA: an instrument consisting of a small silver or stainless steel cup on the end of a long whalebone handle used for drawing small quantities of wine from casks for tasting; it is alternatively made of bamboo.

VERDE: green. Wine made from unripe grapes.

VID: vine.

VIDUEÑO: wine made from grapes other than Palomino, and grown on albariza soil.

VIEJÍSIMO: very old.

VIEJO: old.

VIÑA: a vineyard.

VINEGRE: vinegar.

VINO GENEROSO: the category of wine defined by EU and local regulations into which sherry falls. See Appendix.

VINO DE PASTO: a light, slightly sweetened oloroso.

VINO DE XERES: sherry.

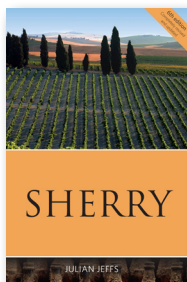
VORS: vinum optimum rare signatum, or very old rare sherry. Sherry certified to be more than 30 years old.

VOS: vinum optimum signatum, or very old sherry. Sherry certified to be more than 20 years old.

YEMA: free run or top-quality must from the first pressing.

YESO: gypsum (calcium sulphate), sprinkled over the grapes before they are pressed.

ZAPATOS DE PISAR: nail-studded boots worn for pressing the grapes.



This directory was extracted from *Sherry*, the sixth and thoroughly revised edition of Julian Jeffs' classic study of this great Spanish fortified wine. This benchmark book recounts the exciting and turbulent evolution of the sherry region and explores the timeless combination of its history and culture, and the development of the sherry trade. Julian Jeffs chronicles the changing face of sherry—its viticultural methods, the complex production techniques, its growing trade and the region itself. This classic wine book unravels the timeless appeal of sherry, making it an essential resource for both enthusiasts and those involved in the world of sherry.

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