

## International Cava Day: 15 award-winning wines to try

The top-scoring Cavas of the Decanter World Wine Awards 2023 to cheers with.



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Since the late nineteenth century Spain has been producing traditional method sparkling wines, and like Champagne, French Crémants or Italy's Alta Langa, Franciacorta or Trentodoc, Spanish Cava is produced with this method, remaining on its lees for a minimum of nine months with secondary fermentation in the bottle.

What's unique, however, is that Cava is often produced with a blend of indigenous white grape varieties: Macabeo, Xarel-lo and Parellada. Several international varieties, including the more common varieties for sparkling wines, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, can also be used.

Cava has established a global reputation for making some of the best value sparkling wines produced by the traditional method. But it's important to note the quality to be found across Cava's categories and styles, with top expressions on par with some of the world's best.

## Styles of Cava

There are three main categories of Cava which produce different styles of sparkling wine.

When labelled Cava, the wine must undergo a minimum of nine months of lees aging, providing subtle notes of autolysis (the bready aromas and flavours found in traditional method sparkling wines). These Cavas typically have light apple, citrus and herbal notes with moderate acidity.

Cava Reserva must spend a minimum of 15 months on the lees – 3 months less than Champagne requires. Here, biscuit autolytic notes are more evident.

Aged a minimum of 30 months on the lees, Cava Gran Reserva wines can show pronounced autolytic characters including smoky and toasty notes. These Cavas can be premium in price but can show outstanding quality for value, especially when compared to traditional method sparkling wine counterparts.

To strengthen Cava's notoriety as a world-class sparkling wine, estate produced and bottled Cava can qualify for a relatively new category, Cava de Paraje Calificado. These wines must age a minimum of 36 months, showing even more development and integration of flavours.

## Quality rising

Joint Regional Chair for Spain at the Decanter World Wine Awards 2023, Pedro Ballesteros Torres MW commented:

'What excites me about judging at the Decanter World Wine Awards, as a professional in this sector, is that it's a wonderful opportunity to taste a wide array of wines from my country, all levels of quality, without being influenced by the label. Looking at what is there, it helps a lot to understand the present state of the fine wine industry in Spain.'

DWWA 2023 results were announced just last month, with Cava wines receiving five Gold, 34 Silver and 63 Bronze medals.

To celebrate International Cava Day, we highlight the top 15 to cheers with.



### U Mes U, Rara Avis Territ Brut Nature NV

Silver, 90 points

Fresh, crisp and clean with citrus aromas, green apple acidity, a creamy texture and a long cleansing finish.

Alc 12%

- Read the complete [article here](#)