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Cava, Spain's sparkling wine, is both affordable and delicious



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Cava has a conundrum.

Spain's preeminent sparkling wine built a reputation over decades for pleasant, inexpensive bubbly, the kind you'd keep a bottle of in your fridge to take the edge off a lousy day. The problem: When consumers want cheap fizz, they turn to Italy's prosecco instead of cava.

Need proof? The U.S. imported 134 million bottles of prosecco in 2022, an increase of 5.8 percent over the previous year, the Prosecco D.O.C. Consortium announced earlier this year. By contrast, Spain sent 21.6 million bottles of cava to the U.S. market, a decrease of 8.85 percent over 2021, according to the regulatory body of Denominación de Origen Cava, the official appellation.

So D.O. Cava's producers have embarked on a quality push. They want you to know that the word "Cava" on the label doesn't mean low price and low quality, and that many examples are world-class wines worthy of pairing with fine food. These cavas have always existed, of course; they've just been well-kept secrets.

"We need to court consumers who want sparkling wines with quality and personality, long-aging and a story," says Javier Pagés, president of the D.O. Cava regulatory board.

Cava, Spain's primary sparkling wine, is a reliable bubbly at an affordable price. To find standouts, look for organic viticulture, "reserva" (extra aging in bottle before release) or different grapes, such as the pinot noir rosé in this week's selections.

U mes U Cygnus Albireo Cava Brut Reserva

(3 to 5 stars)

Spain, \$22

This is a reserve bottling from the winery that produces the popular and humorously named 1+1=3 Cava that is widely available in the D.C. area. While the basic Cava is exuberant, this is more restrained and complex, with aromas of white flowers and flavors of green apples and pears. Certified organic and vegan. ABV: 11.5 percent.

- Read the [full article](#) at the website