



## Spanish Wine Tours

adapted from: [spanish-wines.org](http://spanish-wines.org)

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### Spanish Tradition

Spanish wine history is strictly connected to Spanish history, and wine making has been practiced in the Peninsula from times as far back as those of the Phoenicians. With such a long history and tradition, it is only natural that Spain has a type of tourism specific for wine lovers: the Spanish wine tours. These tours give you the opportunity of visiting some of the most important and historic cellars and wineries in Spain where you can learn about the wine making process, as well as the history and legends about the specific wine cellars.

However, in spite of its long tradition, Spanish wines didn't acquire international recognition until fairly recently. When some wines like Rioja or Jerez started getting attention from international critics, the rest of the wineries in Spain picked up on it, modernized their machinery and techniques, and adapted this very traditional activity to the modern demands. This brought a whole new range of wine styles with a huge improvement in quality. The critics defined Spain as a gourmet wine producing region.

### Wine Tours

Suddenly, everyone wanted to visit Spain and try our excellent wines. With more and more people becoming interested in the Spanish wine tradition, there had to be a way of teaching Spanish wine history in a fun, entertaining way. So, Spanish wine tours became all the rage, and now every designation of origin or important cellar have them. Wine tours are a great way to both experience and learn about an important piece of Spanish industry and culture, not to mention, lots of fun! Wine tours can be a day excursion or span a whole week. Normally, they consist of visits to the cellars, wineries and vineyards, and include a tasting of their different wines where they teach how to differentiate one from the other and show the techniques used in the making of their wines. Some cellars will even gift a smaller bottle of one of their wines to the visitors or offer discounts for those who want to buy.

### Tours Organization

There are many ways to go on about organizing your wine tour in Spain. You can talk to the cellars directly and organize a visit directly with them. This is great as you can avoid any intermediaries, but often means that you have to wait until there is a large enough group to merit a tour. Another option would be to talk to a travel agent who specializes in these kinds of tours and who will be able to give you the best options. The latter is commonly the best and easier option, especially if you want to visit several wineries in the same day or want to make a whole trip out of it, because they can offer discounts and special promotions, as well as easy transport and lodging.

Organized transport is always a good idea, especially if you are planning to visit several wineries and try their wine – drinking and driving is both unadvisable and illegal. This is also something to bear in mind if you go for the last option of doing a Spanish wine tour. Many tour operators also offer self-sufficient tours. Spanish wine tours are a great way to get acquainted with the lesser known parts of Spain, discover the complex and fascinating world of Spanish wines and brush up on your Spanish lessons!

**A) Decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F)** 

T F

1. The production of wine in Spain has started recently		
2. Spain produces mass wines		
3. The appreciation of the Spanish wines is the result of the recent recognition of their quality		
4. The wine tours last one or two days maximum		
5. The safest way to have a wine tour in Spain is by your own car		

**B) Match the definition...** 

... to the correct word

1. pieces of land on which vines are grown .....	a. cellar
2. a room under the ground floor of a building, usually used for storing things .....	b. tasting
3. places where wine is made, especially from grapes that are grown there .....	c. vineyards
4. to improve your knowledge of something already learned but partly forgotten .....	d. wineries
5. to put food or drink in your mouth to find out what flavor it has .....	e. brush up

**C) Identify the Spanish region of designation of origin (one is exceeding)** 

a. GALICIA – b. CATALONIA – c. BALEARIC ISLANDS – d. MADRID – e. CANARY ISLANDS – f. ANDALUSIA

- ..... composes most of the south of Spain, and it's the heart of many renowned Spanish traditions. The most important designation of origin is the Jerez DO, under which the famous sherry is produced. There are several other designations of origin that produce good wines, such as DO Malaga in Malaga, but they are less known.
- The ..... are an archipelago in the Mediterranean, close to the northeast Spanish coast. The warm climate helps the growth of the grapes so their wines are separated in two different designations of origin: DO Binissalem-Mallorca and DO Pla i Llevant.
- The ..... with its capital Tenerife are a grouping of volcanic islands in the northwest of Africa that has been a crossroads for travellers going to and from America, Europe and Africa for centuries. Vines weren't introduced here until the XV century, but in spite of this, there are eight different designations of origin to house all of the wines produced, like DO Abona, DO El Hierro, or DO Lanzarote, to name a few.
- In the northwest of Spain lies ..... land of meigas (witches), with its coast bathed by the cool waters of the Cantabric Sea. This wine region has five designations of origin, all of them in the south, and mostly famous for their white wines. Amongst these designations of origin, the DO Rias Baixas has the best Albariño, a type of white wine very popular in the north.
- ..... is the capital and the most populated city of Spain, and it sits right at the very centre of it. It is the only capital city in the world with its own designation of origin. While visiting the city, you would be able to see three different regions of vineyards: Arganda, Navalcarnero y San Martín de Valdeiglesias, and the wine from each regions has its own characteristics.