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## **MORE THAN A WINE TOUR OF SPAIN.....**

### **Personally conducted by Dr Richard Smart, July 1-13, 2008**

*Dr Smart will be assisted by his wife Vanessa Bosanko and by translator Maria Plasencia. Maria will offer simultaneous translation through headsets which will be provided. She will also act as guide on our coach journeys.*

All winery visits are in the process of being finalized

#### Tuesday July 1, Sevilla

Guests arrive at Sevilla and make their way to the hotel NH Viapol. Transport is not provided to the hotel as guests will be arriving at different times.

At 7 p.m. there will be welcoming drinks in the hotel. These will continue until 8:30, and will feature various wines of Spain. This session is designed as a “get to know you” session. Guests are free to take dinner at their leisure. For those that like to dine together, Richard and Vanessa will recommend and accompany you to nearby restaurants.

#### Wednesday, July 2, Sevilla and Jerez

Some people may be tired and prefer a day of relaxing tourism rather than driving off to Jerez region. For this reason we are offering two alternative programs.

Program one will be to the Jerez region by bus, about 90 km. There we will visit two wineries specializing in sherry. Perhaps some of you know that chilled flor and manzanilla sherries are among the finest wines in the world! This is a very old winemaking practice carried out with solera systems, with vines grown on the famous white albarizza chalky soil.

We will visit a vineyard and the Osborne and Barbadillo wineries in Jerez and Sanlucar. Lunch will be in nearby Cadiz at a well-known seafood restaurant “El Faro de Cadiz”, where we will enjoy local seafood and wines.

#### Program two

Sevilla is a wonderful place for tourism. Vanessa and professional guides will lead you through the tourism highlights, including the Cathedral, the Alcazar and Hospital de los

Venerables. You will have lunch in the charming Barrio de Santa Cruz, the old Jewish quarter. There you will enjoy tapas and local wine in a colourful local bar.

We will all join together in the evening for a Flamenco show at 7:30 p.m. where we will also eat tapas and enjoy the local wines.

#### Thursday July 3, Castilla la Mancha

This morning we will experience first-class luxury travel on Spain's very fast train, called the AVE. We leave Sevilla at 9 a.m. and arrive at Ciudad Rial at 10.40 am. We are now in the heart of what was the world's largest wine region, Castilla La Mancha. This is also the home of the fabled Don Quixote.

Our first visit is to one of the largest and most modern wineries in the region, that of Felix Solis. Following this visit we will have lunch at a local restaurant Sucot where we will enjoy local cuisine and wines. In the afternoon we will visit a small family winery called Dionisios, an organic enterprise.

We finish the day with some tourism by visiting the village of Consuegra. We will see some of the famous windmills (molinos) of Don Quixote.

We then drive to the vineyard of Pago del Vicario, an up and coming winery in the La Mancha region, and a client of Richard Smart. They have an architecturally designed winery which looks like an opened telescope. We will stay the night at a luxury hotel in the grounds and have dinner in the winery restaurant, hosted by the winery General Manager Jose and winemaker Susanna.

#### Friday, July 4, La Mancha and Toledo

We begin the day with a vineyard and winery tour of inspection at Pago del Vicario. We then travel northwards by bus to the modern vineyard and winery of Vallegarcia. We will have lunch en route to a Toledo at a rural restaurant, and also include a visit to a traditional winery. There will be time in the late afternoon for a stroll around the wonderful ancient city of Toledo. Toledo was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986 for its extensive cultural and monumental heritage as one of the former capitals of the Spanish Empire and place of coexistence of Christian, Jewish and Moorish cultures.

This evening will be a gastronomic treat. We will dine in the restaurant of Casa Adolfo, regarded as one of the finest restaurants of Spain. Adolfo has promised a treat with two appetisers, four dishes and two desserts, it with wines to match.

#### Saturday July 5, Toledo to Madrid

You have the morning for tourism which will be self guided. You will be able to stroll the highlights at your own leisure. On this day you are free to choose your own restaurant, but you must be finished your meal and ready to leave at 2.30pm.

Today we have only one vineyard visit, that of Carlos Falco, the Marquis of Grinon. Carlos is one of the pioneers of Spanish wine industry. He was among the first to plant Cabernet Sauvignon and now has a modern vineyard mainly of smart Dyson trellis and using partial root zone drying irrigation system. Carlos has championed many varieties in the past

including Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Petit Verdot and most recently Graciano. He produces some of Spain's more expensive wines. He is a charming Spanish aristocrat.

From the vineyard of Carlos Falco we have a coach trip of little over one hour to downtown Madrid where you will be staying in a conveniently located hotel, N. H. Nacional, near Atocha station and museums.

This evening you are free to choose where you want for your evening meal. Our suggestion is Plaza Major, a convenient 30 minute walk from your hotel and with many restaurants located in a magnificent courtyard. It is a memorable experience!

### Sunday, July 6, Rest in Madrid

Today is a day of rest and tourism. A couple of blocks from your hotel is one of Europe's finest art galleries, the Prado. We will organise a group visit and a professional guide to add to your enjoyment. The rest of the day is free. There are many sites to visit in Madrid. We recommend the Reina Sofia Museum of Modern Art, and in the afternoon a half day bus tour of Escorial, a major palace to the north of Madrid.

Your only commitment on this day is to a dinner at 9 p.m. in the hotel where we have an expert on Spanish wines speak to you about Spain and show you some typical wines.

### Monday, July 7, Madrid to Barcelona and Penedes

This morning will be an early start as we have a 9:45 a.m. flight to Barcelona. You will leave from one of the most beautiful and modern airport terminals in the world.

The bus meets us at the airport and takes us immediately to the famous Penedes wine region, south of Barcelona.

Our first visit is to the famous Miguel Torres vineyards and winery. Here we will see evidence of Torres "farming for the future", with considerable emphasis on terroir and wine quality, mixing traditional and international varieties. Torres is one of the most respected wine producers in Europe and makes every effort to be abreast of modern technology. Lunch will be in a restaurant on the property called Vinoteca Torres.

Following lunch we will travel to the nearby Codorniu cava cellar. You will be amazed at the magnitude of this operation, and thoroughly impressed by the train and coach ride through the underground cellars.

In the late afternoon we return to Barcelona where you will be staying at a hotel NH Constanza, a modern hotel in downtown region. You will be free to make your own dinner arrangements among nearby restaurants.

### Tuesday, July 8, Priorat visit

To day there are two options again. Program one is for tourism in Barcelona. Program two is for a visit to the nearby wine region of Priorat.

### Program one

The choice is yours between three options. One is the popular hop-on, hop-off tourist bus which allows you to see most of the tourist highlights of Barcelona in one day, spending as much as you like at each stop. Secondly, you can take a designated full day or half day tour with a professional tour operator. A third option is to take a walking tour, where you program the items of interest to you. However you do it, Museo Picasso is not to be missed. You will be responsible for your own lunch.

### Program two

We will drive about 120 km southwest of Barcelona through Taragona to the famous Priorat region. Here we plan on three visits, to Alvaro Palacios, Rene Barbier Clos Mogador and Jose Luis Perez Verdu Le Clos Martinet. Lunch will be in El Celler de L'aspic, Falset.

We return for a special evening out on the town in Barcelona. There will be a bus tour taking in some of the highlights including a visit to Gaudi's La Sagrada Familia, walking tour at La Rambla, and a dinner at restaurant La Fitora in Olympic Port. Following the dinner the coach takes you back to the hotel.

### Wednesday July 9, Barcelona to Bilbao and Rioja

An early morning I am afraid as we take an 8:45 a.m. flight to Bilbao. No time for tourism in this city, but we will drive past and stop outside the famous Guggenheim Museum designed by Frank Gehry, so that you can appreciate its majestic exterior, and take a photo.

We drive south to Rioja, probably Spain's most famous wine region.

Here we will visit some of the most beautiful wineries in one of the world's most beautiful wine regions. The final order of visits is yet to be determined, but will include the magnificent Marques de Riscal, with a new cellar and hotel also designed by Frank Gehry. This winery is one of the oldest in the Rioja, and has been much influenced by French technology.

Another visit will be to the Roda cellars and vineyards. This is a relatively modern winery which uses modern technology along with cost saving measures to air-condition the cellars. We will visit their old vineyards, nearby. We will also visit the traditional Lopez de Herida winery in Haro, regarded by some as the icon of Rioja.

In the evening we will stay in Logrono, is in the heart of Rioja, at the hotel Hotel Husa Van Gria. You are free to choose your own restaurants for the evening meal

### Thursday July 10, Rioja

We will visit the new Ysios winery at Laguardia, another architecturally designed cellar. This will contrast with Contino estate at Laguardia, with a small 45 ha Tempranillo vineyard and the winery located in a 17 Century manor. The next visit will be another modern winery, CVNE, which was a very traditional producer but was made over by heavy investment in 1989, and which now makes some of Spain's finest wines

Tonight we will stay in the magnificent Parador Sto Domingo de la Calzada, where we will dine together, and drink a bottle of Rioja or two!

### Friday July 11, Ribera del Duero

We now drive south west to the newer but equally famous Ribera del Duero region, where we will stay in the delightful small town of Penafiel, complete with castle!

The first visit will be to Pago de Carrovejas, a small winery within sight of the famous castle of Penafiel. This is a modern winery making red wine from Tempranillo and 15% Cabernet, and is typical of the modern wineries of the region.

Our visits here include two of the most famous wineries of the region, Vega Sicilia and also Abadia Retuerta. Vega Sicilia is one of the oldest and one of the most famous wineries of the region, and Abadia is a modern winery using no pumps in the winemaking process. The old buildings here are magnificent.

Our itinerary will allow a visit to the magnificent castle of Penafiel.

This evening we will stay in the Hotel Convento las Claras, Penafiel. We will have dinner at restaurant Asador Molinode Palacios in Penafiel.

### Saturday, July 12, Rueda and Bierzo

This morning we will visit two wineries in the Rueda region, and taste impressive white wines made from Sauvignon Blanc and the local Verdejo variety. We will visit the large Marquis de Risqual winery and also the smaller Dos Victorias, run by two ladies named Victoria.

Lunch will be in a local restaurant before we travel to Bierzo in the north-west.

There we will make a visit to Dominio de Tares, a local and top producer of the interesting red variety Mencia.. We will also make a brief visit to Palacio de Arganza, Villafranca del Bierzo, in a 15 century ducal palace.

The evening will be spent in Ponferrada at the Hotel AC Ponferrada. Own arrangements will apply for dinner.

### Sunday, July 13

This morning is the final travel day for the tour. We will drive eastwards through beautiful rolling green countryside into regions of Galicia and Rias Baixas.

This is the home of interesting white varieties grown in this part of Spain and nearby northern Portugal. We will concentrate on the variety Albarino but also see wines made from Treixadura, Godello and Loureira.

There will be visits to two wineries. One is large known as Martin Codax and the other a small producer known as Santiago Ruis. Lunch will be at a restaurant of the region.

We conclude our visit by driving to Santiago de Compostela, a famous town for mediaeval pilgrims of Europe. Our accommodation this night is a special feature as we will stay in the Parador Santiago. By now you will have learned to appreciate the special thrill of staying in famous old buildings.

Tonight we have last dinner together in the Parador. This is normally the time of reminiscences about the tour, and what we have seen and tasted. It also gives all of us a chance to talk about how we might benefit from the information we have learned on this tour.

Monday July 14

Most of use will take the coach to Vigo in the south for out going flights. The time of this departure will depend on plane times out of Vigo.

## **Tour Costing**

- Includes two internal air fares, one very fast train fare.
- Accommodation 3-4 star hotels, cooked breakfast, 10 lunches and 8 group dinners, including one of Spain's best restaurants.
- Single, twin share or double accommodation available.
- Maximum guest number is 30.

**\$8,850 land cost twin share, single supplement \$1,360, plus international fare approx. \$3,100 return.**

Deposit \$1,200 guarantees place, balance by 20 April.

Contact Richard Smart [vinedoc@bigpond.net.au](mailto:vinedoc@bigpond.net.au), 0418 656 480

***“ Tempranillo and other Spanish varieties will be the vinous equivalents of merino sheep in Australia”...Richard Smart***