

Wine Comes to the Land of Mezcal & Tequila

When you think of drinking in Mexico, wine probably isn't the first thing that comes to mind. Most visitors stick to mezcal and tequila cocktails and never even consider ordering a glass of red or white. That's unfortunate, because Mexico quietly produces some truly impressive wines that rarely reach foreign shelves. The Oaxaca Food & Wine Festival, taking place February 25–March 1, 2026, aims to change that.

Wine is made in roughly seven Mexican states, with Baja California leading the way (yes, it's still Mexico), and notable production also coming from Querétaro, Coahuila, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, and Guanajuato. Many of these wineries are small, family-run operations that only produce enough to satisfy domestic demand, so their bottles almost never leave the country. At the festival, however, you'll be able to chat with the winemaker behind Baja's Cava Maciel, and taste organic labels like Dos Buhos from Guanajuato at the Guelaguetza Brunch.

I fell hard for Oaxaca's vibrant culinary scene four years ago, and that passion led me to launch this festival in 2025 as a multi-day, city-wide food and wine experience. In fact, "festival" doesn't quite capture what it is. This is not a one-size-fits-all, wander-under-a-big-tent-with-a-sample-glass sort of event. Instead, over 5 days we host 8 intimate, highly curated meals and gatherings across different venues in the city. The drinks menu features exclusively Mexican wines, along with local craft beers and, naturally, mezcal—this is Oaxaca, after all.

Food and drink are among the best entry points into any culture. A festival like this offers a window into historic cooking techniques, foundational recipes, and ingredients native to this region (yes, that includes the grasshopper-topped guacamole). But tasting local culture goes beyond what's on your plate. In Oaxaca, traditions like **calendas**—lively street parades for weddings and special celebrations—are key to understanding the city's spirit. So we've created our own calenda, leading guests through the streets to the Mole y Mezcal dinner. Along the way, you'll experience Oaxaca in full: the vivid street murals, handwoven rugs, whimsical alebrije folk art creatures, pottery, and magnificent colonial architecture.

The menus go well beyond classic Oaxacan dishes. You'll sample the work of inventive chefs who reinterpret heritage recipes with a contemporary touch. The OaxAsia Cocktail Party showcases exactly this approach, fusing Oaxacan and Asian flavors into playful small plates and drinks. While many dishes remain grounded in pre-Hispanic ingredients and techniques, Spanish culinary influences still show up—hence our Rooftop Paella Lunch, which feels right at home in this cultural mix.

If you're drawn to deep cultural immersion through what you eat and drink, this festival will deliver. Consider extending your stay by a few days to explore nearby indigenous villages. Visiting these communities feels like stepping back in time, where everyday life still unfolds much as it did a century ago.

You can opt for a VIP package that includes all 8 events, or choose tickets for individual experiences. All tickets are sold exclusively online in advance through the festival website. For full details and to purchase tickets, follow the festival's official channels. www.oaxacafoodandwinefestival.com