

The Lusch List

UNIQUE WINE RECOMMENDATIONS & EXPERIENCES



The Wine: [Mustiguillo Mestizaje Red Blend, 2018, Valencia, Spain](#)

Where I Purchased: [Bar & Garden Dallas](#)

Cost: \$18

I don't remember exactly what struck me first about Spain, but I can say that I have dreamt of traveling there (with a side trip to Portugal) from exceedingly early on in my food and beverage career. Spain truly has something for everyone: tapas, flamenco, conquistadores, Pablo Picasso, Jamón ibérico, bullfighting, beaches, Salvador Dali, sangria, and la siesta. While I am still waiting to go on that trip, I have managed to drink quite a bit of Spanish wine to prepare.

When my husband and I used to shop for wine together (20 years ago), we would try to find the best wines for \$10 or less. Every great one we found was usually from Spain. Spain respects tradition and history while embracing the modern and vibrant. Whether it is climate, culture or geography, Spain offers

magnificent diversity. Any place that values a daily nap is a place I need to experience!

Spain is one of the largest exporters of wines in the world with over 400 grape varieties grown. It consistently produces high-quality affordable wines. The most planted and respected grape is Tempranillo, the star of Spain's Rioja and Ribera del Duero regions. But the Uteil-Requena region within the Valencia region of southeast Spain has grabbed people's attention for its reds made of Bobal. Named after the Latin word for the shape of a bull's head, this under-the-radar grape happens to be the 3rd most planted red grape in Spain. It has been used as a blending grape for other "glamorous" grape varieties but is gaining recognition. Wines are loved for their spicy dark fruit notes, chewy tannins, balanced acidity, and velvety finish. I don't remember having it before but I won't forget it now.

Bodegas Mustiguillo shows off classic old country Spanish architecture set against the beautiful landscape of Valencia not far from the Mediterranean coast in eastern Spain. Toni Sarrion, the family winemaker, traded in his career in business for a life tending vines and making wines. His initial mission when he founded Mustiguillo in the early 1990s was to save the ancient red Bobal grape from extinction. He rejuvenated the vineyards that were in his family and also purchased more old vine vineyards (at least 40 years old with some dating back to 1917) that had been abandoned. He started farming organically and making elegant, age-worthy Bobal like no one imagined could be done.

Tasting Notes:

74% Bobal, 16% Garnacha, 10% Syrah

Style: fleshy, concentrated, medium-bodied

Nose: black fruits, violets, cedar

Palate: blackberry, black currant, mineral acidity

Finish: sweet & spicy, fine tannins, lingering dry finish

Pairing:

Finding the right balance is key when pairing wine and food. Neither the food nor the wine should overpower the other. Following the rule of "what grows together goes together" is always a great place to start. Spanish reds are stunning and unique and will match well with rich foods like stews and paella (which originated in Valencia). You could also try a roasted chicken or pork dish with a fruit-based sauce made with pomegranates or cranberries.

Where to buy:

Bar and Garden strikes again!

Until next time!

Courtney

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