



LUXURY WINE TOUR TO SPAIN

Exploring Rueda, Ribera del Duero, Rioja, Bilbao and More

SEPTEMBER 16TH – 20TH, 2024

— Hosted by Mini Constant, MW & Brent Fraser —

US \$3,995 per person
+ US\$100 administration booking fee

Come join us on a vinous odyssey through the best vineyards of Spain. From Madrid to Bilbao we'll explore Spanish wine, dine on delectable local food, and immerse ourselves in the local lifestyle and culture.

You will discover the powerhouse reds from the high plateau of Ribera del Duero, the classic wines of Rioja's finest estates, and the unique thirst-quenching whites of Rueda. We also visit major landmarks, cathedrals, and castles that are nothing less than architectural wonders.



FINE VINTAGE
BY JAMES CLUER MW

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YOUR HOSTS



MINI CONSTANT MW

Mini started her career at the Harrods wine department in London before moving on to working in fashionable restaurants, the Oporto-based Symington Port family, and eventually to Southwest France where she has been living since 1987.

Since 2003, Mini has been running Tastevin du Monde, a multi-facet company that includes wine education in France and abroad, and wine blending services for local producers.

We also have the benefit of our local guide Jenny Siddall who can explain the Spanish culture, traditions, and history. You are in good hands.

Brent Fraser will also join you to share his knowledge and passion for Spanish wines.

PRICE

US \$3,995 (plus \$100 administration booking fee)

The price includes all accommodation during the tour, all visits and tastings at wineries, all meals (except dinner on the Tuesday free night), all wine at meals, and local transport. Flights and travel arrangements to Madrid, return journey from Bilbao, items of a personal nature, and travel insurance are not included. We recommend that you contact your travel agent to arrange travel insurance.

If you are travelling by yourself there will be a single supplement of US \$400.

The payment schedule is:

Deposit at booking: \$100 non-refundable booking administration fee

120 days from start: Remaining deposits (plus single supplement if applicable)



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ITINERARY | DAY 1

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH - THE ROAD TO RUEDA AND RIBERA DEL DUERO

Please make your own flight arrangements to Madrid. We will leave from central Madrid and meet in the lobby of the newly renovated 5-star NH Paseo del Prado. The Westin Palace hotel is right around the corner as an ultra-luxurious alternative.

NH Paseo del Prado, Plaza Canovas del Castillo 4, 28014, Madrid
www.nh-hotels.com/hotel/nh-collection-madrid-paseo-del-prado
Tel + 34 913302400

9:30 AM – MEET GUIDES AND DEPART

Meet with Mini, Jenny and Brent in the lobby of the NH Paseo del Prado. As we will be outdoors for much of the visit to Segovia, please bring an umbrella and/or raincoat in case of wet weather. We board the luxury bus and we're off for our one-hour drive to Segovia, a historic city in Spain. Here, we wander through the streets soaking up the local culture before enjoying a guided tour of the Alcázar. This is Segovia's landmark fortress; a stunning castle perched on the edge of a cliff. This was home to many of the Kings of Spain and Walt Disney modeled his logo on the Alcázar.

SUCKLING PIG LUNCH IN SEGOVIA WITH WINES FROM AROUND SPAIN

After a tour of this historic castle, we walk a few minutes to experience a suckling pig lunch at Segovia's finest asador, José Maria. The entire pig is carved tableside, and the skin is so crispy that you can smash a plate on it. You'll be able to try for yourself – it's an amazingly fun experience. During lunch, Mini will introduce the big picture of Spanish wine and guide you through a tasting of six classic styles, including the famed Unico from Vega Sicilia. It's an authentic introduction to Spanish food, wine, and culture. www.restaurantejosemaria.com

FINCA MONTEPEDROSO, MARTINEZ BUJANDA TOUR

After lunch, we drive to our first winery in a small gem of a wine region, Rueda. Finca Montepedroso is one of the Grandes Pagos in Spain with 25 hectares of its own vineyards where exceptional white wines are produced. A Finca is a farm, and a Pago is a vineyard in Spanish. It is very rare to be classified as a Gran Pago, as this estate has been. The grape variety that we explore and taste is called Verdejo. It produces fresh, crisp white wines with a very interesting character that we will learn all about during the visit. As this is our first winery we will go through the process from vine to bottle.

www.familiabujanda.com/en/finca-montepedroso

DINNER IN HOTEL PESQUERA

We then continue to our final destination, the Hotel Pesquera in Peñafiel, which is our home for the next two nights. This is a modern and fun hotel, set up by the late Alejandro Fernandez near his winery of the same name. Tonight, we have a 3-course dinner with wines from Ribera del Duero, priming ourselves for the next day's visits. www.hotelpesquera.com



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ITINERARY | DAY 2

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH - IBERIAN LEGENDS OF RIBERA DEL DUERO

9:30 am - Depart hotel

After breakfast we'll drive a few minutes along Ribera del Duero's golden mile to one of the star wineries of the area, Abadia Retuerta.

ABADIA RETUERTA

Owned by the pharmaceutical giant Novartis, Abadia Retuerta is one of the most interesting producers in the area. It is an extremely modern winery, designed with no expense spared. We begin with a short walk into the vineyards which are more than 100 years old and learn about the key grape variety here, Tempranillo. You will marvel at the barrel cellar, the high-tech production methods, and then sit down for a guided tasting of six beautiful wines. Our tasting includes the award-winning Selección Especial, which has been ranked "best wine in the world" by Decanter. www.abadia-retuerta.com

PESQUERA

Pesquera is one of the most famous wineries in Spain, and arguably in the world. It was started by the late great Alejandro Fernandez, who became known as El Rey (the king) of Tempranillo. Although Alejandro passed away in 2021 the Pesquera winery remains one of the region's icons. We enjoy a private visit, culminating with a tasting of two of the finest wines. It's a magical experience. www.familiafernandezrivera.com

LUNCH AT CONDADO DE HAZA (OWNED BY PESQUERA)

After a short 15-minute drive we arrive at the stunning estate called Condado de Haza, one of the family's other wineries. Its classic Spanish architecture is only superseded by the delicious wines that accompany our typical Castilian lunch of lamb. We are hosted by one of Alejandro's daughters and typically lunch is a long, relaxed affair ending in the late afternoon. Welcome to the Spanish lifestyle. www.familiafernandezrivera.com

DISCOVER PEÑAFIEL

On our way back to the hotel we make a quick visit to the centre of Peñafiel, a quintessential Spanish town. You will see the stunning hilltop castle and stroll to the famous Plaza del Coso, home to one of Spain's few sandy bullrings that is surrounded by Arabesque balconies.

When we get back to the hotel in the early evening, we have a short cocktail 'workshop.' Spain is mad about gin and Alejandro's barman will show us how to make the perfect G & T, as well as mojitos for good measure, served with some light tapas. This is a lot of fun. They always free pour in Spain...

The rest of the evening, including dinner, is on your own – if you are still hungry after your delicious long lunch.



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ITINERARY | DAY 3

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH – THE MANY FACES OF RIOJA

9:30 am Depart Hotel

We check out of the hotel and head north towards Rioja, stopping briefly for a coffee en route in Burgos where we visit the magnificent Gothic cathedral.

BURGOS CATHEDRAL

After a little coffee, we'll have a short, guided tour of Burgos Cathedral. This Gothic cathedral is a world heritage site and holds the remains of El Cid, a legendary Castilian knight. It is absolutely spectacular, and you'll be able to see why it took hundreds of years to build. This is a landmark in Spain and likely one of the most incredible cathedrals you'll ever see.

BAIGORRI VISIT & LUNCH

It's time to get back to business and tuck into the great wines of Rioja. We arrive in the region and go directly to another architectural wonder, an ultra-modern winery called Baigorri that is perched on a hilltop overlooking swathes of vineyards. We will have a brief tour before we sit down in their restaurant to a multi-course tasting menu lunch. Each dish is paired with one of Baigorri's finest wines. This is always a highlight experience of the tour. www.bodegasbaigorri.com

AMAREN WINERY

After lunch we drive a few minutes to Amaren, a fabulous new winery in Samaniego. It's time to discover all the nuances of the different red and white grape varieties found in Rioja, including Tempranillo, Garnacha, Mazuelo, Graciano, and Viura. This is a fun and engaging visit because you will take part in a barrel-tasting exercise. As always, we cap the visit off with a fantastic tasting of the Amaren wines. www.bodegasamaren.com

THE VIURA

We then check into our luxury hotel in the tiny village of Villabuena de Alava. The Viura Hotel has a remarkable design, and the team always gives us a warm welcome. We're here for our two nights in Rioja.

In the evening, we get together for casual tapas. It's a chance to mingle with your fellow guests, graze on far too many tapas, and sip on some interesting and different wines. You will discover some of the new and revived Rioja varietal wines made from white Tempranillo and Maturana. The dining room has wine barrels suspended from the ceiling. Riojan chic. www.hotelviura.com/english



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ITINERARY | DAY 4

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH – THE BIG GUNS OF RIOJA

10:00 am Depart hotel

It's time to set off for our first visit of the day at a very innovative cult producer in Haro.

FINCA VALPIEDRA

Finca Valpiedra is an estate winery surrounded by its own vineyards within a meander of the Ebro River. Finca Valpiedra gets its name from the smooth pebbles (piedras) from the river and the vineyards are dotted with stones. The stones are an important feature of the vineyard as they retain the warmth at night and help produce top quality grapes for the Crianza and Reserva wines. Taste their wines with spectacular views over the river.

<https://familiamartinezbujanda.com/en/finca-valpiedra/>

LUIS CAÑAS

This is one of my personal favorites and a phenomenal visit. A family winery since 1928, Luis Cañas has continuously reinvented itself through its dynamic owner and winemaker. Five of Spain's 3-Michelin star restaurants carry Luis Cañas wines, now a Riojan benchmark. We have a brilliant, tutored tasting led by their expert team in a salon overlooking the vineyards. To cap it off, we tuck into a classic Spanish lunch with local dishes. www.luiscañas.com/en/

It's time for a short siesta back at the hotel. We set off again at 4:45pm for our final evening's fun.

MARQUÉS DE RISCAL

This is one of the great names in Spanish wines. Frank Gehry followed up the stunning Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao with the remarkable city of wine in Elciego. I've never seen anything quite like it, anywhere. You can admire the wild architecture, see inside the winery's historic cellars, and then get your taste buds primed for dinner with a flight of their internationally acclaimed wines. After this visit, we head down the road for a Michelin star dinner. www.marquesderiscal.com/en/

MICHELIN DINNER AT VENTA MONCALVILLO

The Echapresto brothers run the Michelin-starred Venta Moncalvillo restaurant in Daroca, the smallest village in the world to hold a star. Population: 25. Carlos was recently voted Spain's best sommelier, so the wines are always excellent and unusual, complementing the farm-to-table style Michelin dining. As a special treat, we enjoy some fabulous older whites and finely aged reds to showcase the region's most unique wine styles. It's our last blow-out evening and our private room is always filled with laughter. www.ventamoncalvillo.com



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ITINERARY | DAY 5

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH – THE GRAND FINALE

9:45 am Depart Hotel

We had a big night so there is time to sleep in before checking out and heading off.

MUGA

Muga is a great name in the wine world and known for their traditional-style wines. We explore the labyrinthine cellars, watch the barrel makers at work. Many of the wines are aged for a decade before release and the winery still employs a master barrel maker. Fasten your seatbelts. This is a wine lover's dream.

www.bodegasmuga.com/en/

MICHELIN LUNCH IN BILBAO

After the tour and tasting we set off for Bilbao just one hour away. It's time for one last blow-out lunch at Martin Berasategui's Michelin-starred *Ola* restaurant in the Old Town. This is the Bilbao showcase for one of Spain's best loved chefs and the playful and creative cuisine that gives us a fitting and memorable end to our Spanish journey. www.olaberasategui.com

BILBAO

After lunch we will drop you off by 5 pm at Bilbao airport for flights back to Madrid or many other destinations in Europe. The bus will continue to central Bilbao to the below hotels which are a few blocks apart.

The Hotel Carlton, Federico Moyua Square, 2, 48009, Bilbao
carlton@aranzazu-hoteles.com Tel +34 94 416 22 00

www.hotelcarlton.es/en

Hotel Gran Domine, Alameda Mazarredo 61, 48009, Bilbao
sales4@hoteldominebilbao.com Tel +34 94 425 33 05

www.hoteldominebilbao.com

Price: \$3,995 US plus \$100 booking administration fee based on double occupancy.

There is a \$400 US per person single supplement.

Space is limited to 20.

This is a luxurious trip, hosted by local and international wine experts, visiting the great estates with a small group of about 20 like-minded fun-loving people. It's suited to all wine lovers. It's a bucket list trip. If you have any questions, please contact us at info@FineVintageLtd.com.



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