

## Spain's Interesting White Wines from the North by Collin Williams



Those of you that have traveled to Spain are sure to be aware of the sights and sounds of Barcelona and Madrid. Having traveled to Spain, you may have also ventured into the smaller towns and

cities like Pamplona or Toledo. However, one of the absolute hidden gems of this country is part of "green Spain" or the Northern and Western provinces.

Over the years, I'm sure that you have heard me talk about Albarino and the other wonderful wines from Galicia and Rias Baixas. However, it dawned on me recently that I have never written an article about one of the best kept secret white wines from Spain – Txakoli (Chalk-o-lee). This wine, which is the name of the type of wine and the area from which it is produced, is a very dry, high acid, slightly spritzzy, lime and green citrus flavored wine from the Basque region on Spain's Northern coast.

With most of the wines made from two grapes, Hondarabbi Zuri (White) and Hondarabbi Beltza (Red), Txakoli is one of those wines meant to be consumed quickly, very cold, and preferably with tapas or some other type of light dish. Usually served as an aperitif before the meal (every time I've tried them), these wines constitute a very social atmosphere when drinking. In fact, similar to the formal style of pouring sherry, Txakoli requires the pourer to position the bottle of wine high above the glass in order to allow the wine to create a generous flow of oxygen and aeration in the glass. This action allows the wine to express its aromatics and refreshing effervescence. What's more, these wines are not to be served in a common wine glass like you would for most wines. The preferred type of glass is more of a wide bottom/stout glass that resembles a water glass versus a wine glass.

In this part of Spain, similar to Galicia, there is a lot of influence from the sea. You will find fishing is a major economic driver which also lends way to the cuisine that represents the area. This is important to note in order to understand what foods to pair the wines. As I've always said; when in doubt with what foods to pair with the wines you are serving, simply look into the cuisine that is consumed in the region from which the wine is produced.

Recently, when traveling in Madrid I noticed there has become a trend (say a fashion) of opening more tapas restaurants dedicated to the wines and cuisine from the Northern regions of Spain. I saw many of these types of bars located in the more urban and youthful communities within the city.

In fact, I took some video while in one of the bars showing the pouring technique and the particular wine we were drinking. To check it out: follow this link:  
<http://www.youtube.com/specs1962#p/a/u/0/HhITuczJFSM>

or go to YouTube and search Spec's Txakoli. Very cool to see!

### **Txomin Etxaniz Getaraiko**

#### **Txakolina 2009**

**\$19.17 cash**

#### **90pts – Wine Advocate**

Txomin Etxaniz's 2009 Txakoli de Guetaria remains the prototype. Light straw-colored with an enticing bouquet of sea salt, mineral, baking spices, spring flowers and green apple, on the palate it is crisp, vibrant, impeccably balanced, and totally refreshing. But beware, its low alcohol and hint of spritz makes it go down very easy; in an instant the bottle is empty and you're ready for more. If you have some ability to delay gratification, note that it should be consumed over the next 12-18 months 🍷



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