



WINE  
SCHOLAR  
GUILD

**SPANISH WINE  
SCHOLAR**

*Study and  
Certification  
Program*



**ENDORSED BY**



Wines  
from Spain

“ The wines of Spain have resided in the shadows of those from France and Italy for decades. Today, Spain is producing some of the world’s finest and most interesting wines, both in terms of quality and value. The sheer volume of grape varieties and wine styles available could keep one drinking Spanish wine daily for the rest of his/her life!

**RICK FISHER**

*Spanish Wine Scholar Education Director*



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Spanish Wine Scholar™ education program is a Spanish wine course designed to provide committed students of wine with the most advanced and comprehensive specialization study program on Spanish wine bar none.

Developed by Spanish wine specialist Rick Fisher, the Spanish Wine Scholar™ study program mirrors the unparalleled level of depth, accuracy, detail and academic rigor offered by the acclaimed French Wine Scholar™ and Italian Wine Scholar™ programs.

Individuals who follow this in-depth curriculum and pass the exam earn the Spanish Wine Scholar title and the SWS post-nominal which may be incorporated into a professional signature (e.g. John Smith, SWS).

## PROGRAM CONTENT & DESIGN

The development of this course of study involved many Spanish wine consejos reguladores which shared resources, information and assistance.

The Wine Scholar Guild incorporated this body of information into a study program covering viticultural and winemaking practices, grape varieties, topography, climate, soils, history and wine laws for all Spanish wine regions.

This core body of knowledge is important whether an individual sells wine, buys wine or teaches about wine.

There is no other study and certification program in the world that covers Spain with such breadth and depth. The material is comprehensive and updated every year.

Why study Spanish wines?

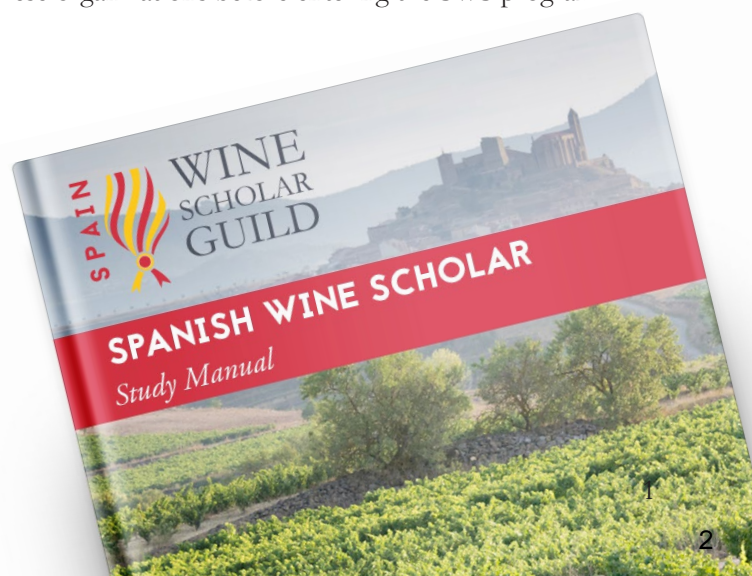
- Spain has more land under vine than any other country and ranks third in production (behind Italy and France).
- Indigenous Spanish grapes such as Tempranillo, Garnacha, Monastrell, Verdejo and Albariño have become increasingly popular on the world wine stage.
- Spain has been making wine for 3,000 years; as a classic wine region that is commercially significant today, it merits study.

## SPECIALIZATION FOR COMMITTED STUDENTS OF WINE

The SWS program allows wine professionals to set themselves apart from their peers by specializing in the wines of Spain.

This program is a great resource and supplement for students of wine moving toward advanced general wine study programs such as WSET Diploma, Master of Wine, Court of Master Sommeliers' Advanced Sommelier (and up) or Certified Wine Educator.

While not a prerequisite, we recommend that students successfully complete at least the lower level course from one of these organizations before entering the SWS program.





“ SWS is the only real complete study program on the wines of Spain. It not only covers all winemaking regions of Spain, but it also gives an in-depth understanding of the history and culture of this extremely exciting wine country. ”

**JONAS TOFTERUP MW**  
Owner of Iberian Wine Academy in Malaga, Spain



## CLASSROOM LEARNING

*Spanish Wine Scholar classes are offered by approved program providers around the world and delivered by an authorized SWS instructor.*

The live classroom study format includes:

- A copy of the SWS study manual
- Classroom instruction with tutored tastings
- A 1-year access to the complete SWS e-learning package (see next page)
- In classroom exam sit

All SWS program providers teach from the same Wine Scholar Guild-developed Powerpoint presentations and are supplied with uniform teaching materials.

Naturally, each instructor has a unique teaching style, the wine selection will vary by market, the class length and class structure (weekly, biweekly, weekends etc.) will vary from location to location, but the content will be the same no matter where you take the class.

For many, the classroom experience helps to hammer home the theory; a tutored tasting component brings each region to life. Additionally, there is interaction in a live classroom environment that distance-learning lacks; many students find the set “schedule” helpful in keeping on top of their studies.





“ Wines from Spain is pleased to have had the opportunity to witness and consult on the development of this much needed and important Spanish Wine Scholar program since its inception. The program showcases the richness of Spanish wines - their authenticity, huge diversity and premium quality - combined with the rich culture and history that gave rise to their origins. The program offers a great opportunity for those who want to widen their knowledge of the wines from Spain ”

**ALFONSO JANEIRO DIEZ**  
*Head of Wines From Spain*

## SWS E-LEARNING PACKAGE

Students following the program at one of WSG's approved program provider does also get access to the the Spanish Wine Scholar e-learning package for class prep and review.

The online course offers an interactive platform that is put into a measurable, meaningful format designed for maximum retention of content and ease of use.

The 315-page, full-color study manual provides all the information from which the test questions are derived. You do not need to research you own study materials; everything you need to know is in the manual.



E-learning resouces include multimedia E-learning modules with videos and learning games as well as...

- Review quizzes and flashcards for self-evaluation
- Pronunciation exercises
- A suggested wine list for each region
- Instructor Q&A forum for personal assistance
- Student forum for community interaction
- Downloadable maps

You can track your progress. Need to leave an online module before finishing it? Your place is automatically bookmarked for you and opens to where you left it when you return.

Distance learning eliminates travel and parking issues and all the costs associated with them.

Study materials are available 24/7.





“ The Spanish Wine Scholar Program is the industry's most up-to date and in-depth course on the wines of Spain. The level of detail and quality of the materials make this program a mandatory course for any serious student of wine. Viva España ! ”

**MONICA MARIN  
DIPWSET**  
*Director of Education programs , The  
Wine House – Los Angeles*



## ABOUT THE WSG EXAM

*Students who follow this in-depth curriculum on the wines of Spain and pass the exam, earn the Spanish Wine Scholar title and the SWS post-nominal.*

The exam is given in multiple-choice format. There are 100 questions and passing score is 75.

You have one hour to complete the test.

- Candidates scoring 85-90 pass with HONORS.
- Candidates scoring 91-100 pass with HIGHEST HONORS.

Each year, the Wine Scholar Guild honors the highest scorer of the year with the SWS Top Scorer Award.



## PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

In order to prepare properly for the SWS exam, you must read and study the SWS manual carefully. At first, it may seem a daunting body of knowledge to tackle...but we would like to give you a few tips.

The exam is comprehensive. It will cover all the wine regions of Spain. This means you must study everything, but the food and wine pairing texts are for your personal edification. There are no exam questions on this material.

For those **enrolled in the program with an SWS Program provider**: you will sit a **paper exam** with your class when scheduled.

For those **enrolled in distance-learning**: you will contact WSG office manager, Celine Camus, at [ccamus@winescholarguild.org](mailto:ccamus@winescholarguild.org) to schedule an **online exam** sit. You will need a computer with internet hook up, webcam and microphone.



# SPANISH WINE SCHOLAR DETAILED CURRICULUM

The Spanish Wine Scholar program presents each Spanish wine region as an integrated whole by explaining the impact of history, the significance of geological events, the importance of topographical markers and the influence of climatic factors on the wine in the glass. No topic is discussed in isolation in order to give students a working knowledge of the material at hand.

## UNIT 1: FUNDAMENTALS

In order for Spanish Wine Scholar candidates to study the wine regions of Spain from a position of strength, Unit One covers Spanish wine history, wine laws, geography, climate, grape varieties, viticulture and winemaking in depth. It merits reading, even by advanced students of wine, as much has changed, especially with regard to wine law and the new research on grape vine origins.

## UNIT 2: THE REGIONS



### GREEN SPAIN

Spain is normally associated with the production of red wine, but the four regions comprising Green Spain—Galicia, Cantabria, Asturias, and País Vasco—craft some of Spain's most interesting and unique whites. Indigenous grapes such as Albariño, Godello, Treixadura, and Hondarribi Zuri stand in the spotlight, with the exciting red variety, Mencía, moving ever closer to center stage. This dynamic region redefines the preconceptions of what Spain has to offer the global wine market.



### LA RIOJA

Rioja's wine culture represents a composite of tradition and modernity. Rioja was one of Spain's first demarcated wine regions yet it continues to reinvent itself. It has set itself apart as one of the world's greatest wine-producing areas and has maintained that allure for centuries. It is largely responsible for the growth of Spain's wine reputation around the wine world; it is also the country's most recognizable wine region by consumers around the globe. Find out why!



### THE DUERO RIVER VALLEY

The region of Castilla y León occupies one-fifth of mainland Spain and is home to some of the country's top wine growing areas such as Ribera del Duero, Rueda and Toro. This is a high-elevation, high-quality production area that experiences extreme seasonal temperature variations. In fact, an old Castilian saying states that the year is comprised of nine months of winter and three months of hell. Yet Tempranillo thrives within this hostile climate—and it produces some of Spain's most esteemed reds.



### THE EBRO RIVER VALLEY

The Ebro River Valley is the birthplace of Garnacha. Wine growing areas such as Navarra, Cariñena, Campo de Borja, and Calatayud are garnering international fame for what is done with this grape. The pure versatility of Garnacha has everyone talking. From rosés to old vine reds, from single varietal to blend, Garnacha has elevated itself from workhorse to thoroughbred. And the world is watching. The Ebro River Valley has also distinguished itself for its many Vinos de Pagos or single vineyard wines. This area is a hotspot for both tradition and trends.





## CATALUÑA

Cataluña is home to cava, Spain's traditional method sparkling wine. Utilizing local Macabeo, Xarel.lo, and Parellada grapes, Cataluña has put a very Spanish accent on this classic winemaking process. Did you know that the prototype of the gyropalette was developed here! The cooperative concept was also given a brand-new image here! Dubbed “wine cathedrals” many are stunning examples of modernist architecture. In Cataluña, wine has always been elevated to art.



## THE LEVANTE

The Levante, occupying nearly half of Spain's Mediterranean coast, is not only home to Spain's national dish, paella, but to two underrated, local grapes quietly taking the world by storm—Monastrell and Bobal. Monastrell has been globe-trotting under the radar for a long time. Fondillón, a dessert wine crafted from this grape, is believed to have been the first wine to join Magellan as he circumnavigated the globe! Explore the legacy that is Levante.



## THE MESETA

Castilla-La Mancha is the largest wine-producing region in the world! There are approximately 1,100,000 acres/450,000 hectares under vine which represents nearly one-half of Spain's total vineyard area! Once known for bulk wine, this area is now home to more than half of Spain's Vinos de Pago or single vineyard bottlings. These wines are creative and fresh expressions of an ancient land; they represent a vinous frontier that lies right beneath the feet.



## ANDALUCÍA

The dazzlingly white limestone-rich soils of Andalucía have been given voice by the Palomino grape. The combination of sea and heat and sun have taken wine and elevated it into something that reflects the passage of time—in barrel under a film of surface yeast or in barrels via a complex fractionalized blending process known as the “solera.” These fortified wines bear the salty tang of their birthplace, the heat of their climate and the soul of a winemaking process that honors wine with a hauntingly beautiful patina of age. Discover sherry.



## THE ISLANDS

The vines compete with the tourists as the consummate sun-worshippers of the Balearic and Canary Islands. Sunburn and wind burn are serious problems for human and grapevine alike! The islanders have developed some unique viticultural practices to block the west-erlies, collect rainfall and trellis the vine. And the grapes they grow—Prensal, Listan Blanco, Callet, Manto Negro, and Listan Negro—are equally singular. Just as the islands themselves represent but a small fraction of the landmass below the waves, wine production is distinguished not by its volume but by its sizable sweep of character.



“ Wine Scholar Guild sets the standard for education and credentials for Europe’s leading wine producing countries.

San Francisco Wine School has been a provider of WSG’s French Wine Scholar Program since 2011, we were one of the first in the world to offer their Italian Wine Scholar in 2017 and are eager to do the same with Spanish Wine Scholar in 2019.

The book, slides, exam, online and supporting materials are all first rate.

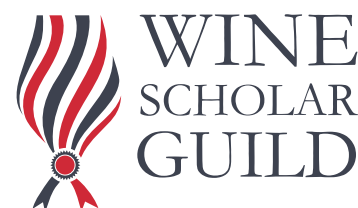
”  
**DAVID GLANCY**  
*MS, CWE, CSS, FWS, Founder & Chief Education Officer, San Francisco Wine School*



## CONTACT US

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

#### *Who is this program for?*

This advanced study program is designed for all committed students of wine, including:

- Wine professionals wishing to specialize in the wines of Spain
- Aspiring wine professionals looking to enter the wine industry with serious knowledge on the wines of Spain
- Serious wine hobbyists as well as Hispanophiles whose main interest is everything Spanish.

#### *How does the Spanish Wine Scholar program dovetail with other certification programs?*

The SWS program does not compete with or replace other general wine study programs. It complements them.

The scope of more general wine study program is too broad to dive deep on the individual wine regions of Spain. By focusing on just one country, the SWS program can explore the topic to greater detail and depth.

The Spanish Wine Scholar program is great resource and supplement for students of wine moving toward advanced general wine study programs such as WSET Diploma (level 4), Institute of Masters of Wine, Court of Master Sommeliers’ Advanced Sommelier (level 3 and up) or the Society of Wine Educators’ Certified Wine Educator (CWE).

Many existing SWS program providers teach general wine programs, such as those from WSET or SWE in addition to the Spanish Wine Scholar program. Far from cannibalizing, the SWS program gives the graduates from other programs a reason to return to the school for more (specialized) wine education.

#### *Are there any prerequisites for students to enter the SWS program?*

While not a prerequisite, we recommend that students have successfully completed one of the following programs before enrolling in the Spanish Wine Scholar program: WSET level 2, Court of Master Sommeliers’ Introductory Sommelier Certificate (Level 1) or Society of Wine Educators’ Certified Specialist of Wine (CSW).

#### *How was the Spanish Wine Scholar program created?*

The Spanish Wine Scholar program was researched and written by SWS Education Director, Rick Fisher, with the support of the Wine Scholar Guild’s educational/editorial team.

Recognizing the exceptional depth and breadth of the program, Wines from Spain (ICEX España Exportación e Inversiones) officially endorsed the program in advance of its public launch.

The following Inter-Professional organizations also shared resources, information and assistance:

Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación (Gobierno de España), Pix of Spain (ICEX), Observatorio Español del Mercado del Vino (OEMV), The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), European Commission Agriculture and Rural Development, DOCa Rioja, DO Jerez-Xérès-Sherry, DO Rías Baixas, DO Ribeiro, VP Dominio de Valdepeña, DO Vinos de Madrid, DO Islas Canarias, DO Lanzarote, DO Tacoronte-Abentejo, DO Valle de Güímar, DO Valle de la Orotava, DO Ycoden-Daute-Isora, DO Ribera del Duero, DO Rueda, DO Navarra, DO Cariñena, DO Cava, DO Empordà, DO Montsant, DOQ Priorat, DO Tarragona, DO Alicante, DO Jumilla, VC Granada, DO Montilla-Moriles, DO Binissalem, DO Pla i Llevant, and Institut Català de la Vinya i el Vi (INCAVI).