

Home > Lifestyle > Travel > 7 perfect pairings for organic cheese and wine from Spain

SPAIN

7 perfect pairings for organic cheese and wine from Spain

In partnership with FWS Food & Wine from Spain



Spain is the EU country with the largest number of acres dedicated to organic farming. Copyright: Fuertillejos / Pixabay

By Euronews • last updated: 10/09/2020

TOP SITE

Spanish cheeses are some of the finest in the world, with over 100 varieties thanks to the country's diverse climate and geography.

Spain is also the EU country with the largest number of acres dedicated to organic farming, a sector that is growing year on year. In addition to not using chemical products, the country's organic farms use traditional techniques that aim to respect biodiversity and animal welfare.

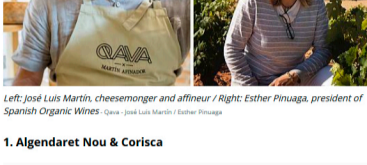
"Organic farming promotes the diversity of species and breeds raised in their natural habitat. The feed is mainly based on the wild flora of the area, taking care to provide the livestock with food grown following natural cycles", explains Spanish cheesemonger and affineur José Luis Martín.

According to Martín, organic milk makes the cheese not only superior in taste but also higher in nutritional value.

"They don't contain any chemical-synthetic additives, the rinds are not treated and the flavour is expressed in all its fullness with a multitude of aromas and nuances", says Martín, also the owner of a renowned cheese shop in Madrid.

The growth of organic farming across Spain has also enabled the development of high-quality organic wines. According to the Spanish Organic Wines association, organic vineyards represent 12.7% of the total vineyard area in Spain.

The country's national export agency expects the production of organic wine to increase by more than 70% between 2018 and 2023, from 361 million bottles to 613 million bottles, positioning it as the world's second-largest producer of organic wines, after Italy.



Left: José Luis Martín, cheesemonger and affineur / Right: Esther Pinuaga, president of Spanish Organic Wines - Queso - José Luis Martín / Esther Pinuaga

That's a lot of impressive numbers for the industry, but the most important analysis remains the taste test.

With the help of cheese expert José Luis Martín and wine expert Esther Pinuaga, president of Spanish Organic Wines and owner of a winery, we drew up a list of pairings of seven delicious organic cheeses and wines that represent the country's diverse flavours.

Here are their recommendations.

1. Algondret Nou & Corisca



'Algondret Nou, queso de leche cruda de vaca menorquina' / 'Corisca' Albariño - Algondret Nou / Bodegas Corisca

The cheese: 'Algondret Nou' from Mahón - Menorca

This cheese, made with raw cow's milk, comes from Algondret Nou, one of the first farms in Menorca to go organic. It is also one of the few to work with the Menorcan cow, which, despite producing less milk than Friesian breed, provides an exceptional quality of cheese.

Our cheese expert says: "It has an acidified lactic smell of cream and butter. Notes of cellar and mushrooms. A semi-hard texture: buttery and melting on the palate with an aftertaste of wild mushroom, spices and nuts. High persistence in the mouth."

Pair it with: 'Corisca' by Bodegas Corisca, Denomination of Origin Rias Baixas.

Our wine expert says: "It is an organic white wine made with Albariño grapes characterised by its fresh, balanced and full of fruit taste, with a touch of apple and a long fresh ending."

2. Suerte Ampanera & Piedra Luenga



'Suerte Ampanera, queso de cabra moho blanco' / 'Piedra Luenga' - Suerte Ampanera / Bodegas Robles

The cheese: 'Suerte Ampanera' from Colmenar Viejo - Madrid

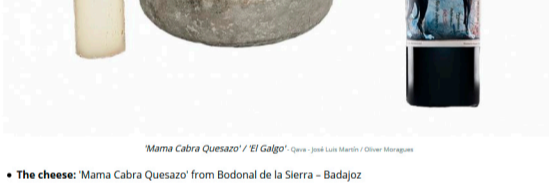
Suerte Ampanera, a white mould goat cheese, is the creation of two brothers who started back in 1997 with a small herd of goats and some organic eggs. Fast forward to 2011 and they win a prize for 'Best Spanish Cheese', a recognition given by the Ministry of Agriculture that led them to go from 100 goats to 1,200.

Our cheese expert says: "A semi-soft texture, very creamy when at its best. Soft yoghurt acidity and notes of sweet cream over a very subtle and elegant goaty scent. Aftertaste of raw nuts and mushroom, if eaten with rind."

Pair it with: 'Piedra Luenga Oloroso' by Bodegas Robles, Denomination of Origin Montilla-Moriles.

Our wine expert says: "It is an organic mahogany-brown wine, very powerful and harmonious, made with Pedro Ximenez grapes and aged for six years in oak barrels."

3. Mama Cabra Quesazo & El Galgo



'Mama Cabra Quesazo' / 'El Galgo' - Queso - José Luis Martín / Oliver Moragues

The cheese: 'Mama Cabra Quesazo' from Bodonal de la Sierra - Badajoz

This cheese, made with raw goat's milk, comes from the cheese factory Mamá Cabra, which started as a small project in the countryside based on agroecology, respect for the environment and animals.

They own a small herd of 150 goats that graze in an ecologically-certified farm. It started producing cheese in 2015 using only renewable energies.

Our cheese expert says: "A medium intensity and clean animal smell. Fungal and wet earthy notes. Firm and semi-hard texture. Buttery on the palate with an intense and persistent flavour. Fruity and lactic, with a very elegant and well-integrated acidity. A spiced and elegant aftertaste with hints of nuts."

Pair it with: 'El Galgo' by Oliver Moragues, Protected Geographical Indications "Vino de la Tierra" of Mallorca.

Our wine expert says: "It is an organic red wine made with Callet grapes that bring smoky and balsamic aromas, incredibly creamy and elegant with soft tannins at the end and a long and persistent aftertaste."

4. La Faya & Be Bike



'Queso de oveja churra La Faya' / 'Be Bike' - Quesos La Faya / Quaderna Via

The cheese: 'La Faya' from Fariza de Sayago - Zamora

Made with raw milk from the Churra breed of sheep, this variety is produced by Quesos La Faya, a family farm in the Arribes del Duero Natural Park that has been around since the 1980s. In 2000, it switched to organic farming and was the first to obtain this certification in Castilla and Leon.

Their sheep move freely in the mountains, without any fences, but with a GPS system that allows the family to track them.

Our cheese expert says: "An elegant and fruity smell, notes of cellar and forest mushrooms. Semi-hard texture, very buttery on the palate. It has a balanced flavour, with a very elegant acidity. Hints of clean wool and ripe olives. Nutty aftertaste over a spicy base. Edible rind."

Pair it with: 'Be Bike' by Quaderna Via, Denomination of Origin Navarra.

Our wine expert says: "It is a fruity organic wine made with Garnacha Tinta grapes, with aromas of cherries, raspberries, strawberries and even hints of lavender, delicate tannins and a very sweet ending."

5. Fuertillejos & La Servil



'Fuertillejos, queso manchego curado' - Pedro Gámez Castañer / Finca Fuertillejos

The cheese: 'Fuertillejos' from Pobleto - Ciudad Real

This cheese, made with raw milk from the Manchega breed of sheep, is produced by Finca Fuertillejos, a farm that has been breeding this type of sheep in a traditional and ecological way for more than half a century.

It was the first organic livestock farm in the province of Ciudad Real and the first P.D.O (Protected Destination of Origin) Manchego cheese to obtain the organic certification in the world.

Our cheese expert says: "A clean and pleasant smell, lactic and fruity notes. A fine texture with a slightly greasy and buttery sensation on the palate. Elegant acidity and fruity hints of pineapple. Aromas of clean wool, nuts and a spicy aftertaste, with high persistence in the mouth."

Pair it with: 'La Servil' by Viña Cerrón, Denomination of Origin Jumilla.

Our wine expert says: "It is a red organic wine made with Monastrell grapes coming from two plots in height."

6. Montes de Alcalá & Pinuaga Rosé



'Montes de Alcalá, queso de cabra curado en manteca ibérica' / 'Pinuaga Rosé' - Quesería El Gazul / Bodegas Pinuaga

The cheese: 'Montes de Alcalá' from Alcalá de los Gazules - Cádiz

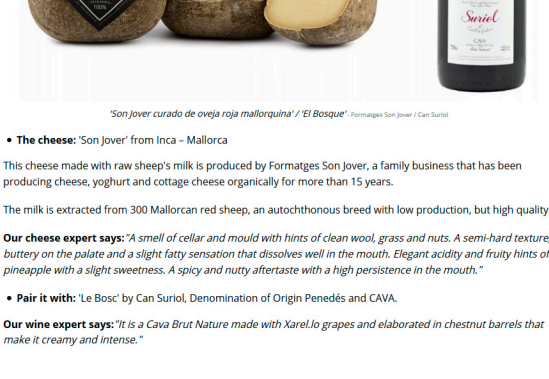
This cheese is made with pasteurized goat's milk and cured in Iberian bayonet. It is produced by El Gazul, located in the Natural Park Los Alcornocales. The farm started making cheese with Payoya goats in 2002 and became organic in 2008 when it launched the 'Montes de Alcalá' cheese, which has won several awards.

Our cheese expert says: "A smell of clean goat milk, leather and cellar. The texture is hard, firm, compact and slightly crumbly, with crystals that denote its maturation. It has a slightly acidic taste, which is developed and persistent, with an animal scent of clean barns, leather and a very attractive spiciness."

Pair it with: 'Pinuaga Rosé' by Bodegas Pinuaga, Protected Geographical Indications "Vino de la Tierra" of Castilla.

Our wine expert says: "It is a rosé wine made with Tempranillo y Garnacha grapes, with aromas of red forest fruits such as raspberry, strawberry and redcurrant, and a long aftertaste."

7. Son Jover & Le Bosc



'Son Jover curado de oveja roja mallorquina' / 'El Bosque' - Fromages Son Jover / Can Suriol

The cheese: 'Son Jover' from Inca - Mallorca

This cheese made with raw sheep's milk is produced by Fromatges Son Jover, a family business that has been producing cheese, yoghurt and cottage cheese organically for more than 15 years.

The milk is extracted from 300 Mallorcan red sheep, an autochthonous breed with no production, but high quality.

Our cheese expert says: "A smell of cellar and mould with hints of clean wool, grass and nuts. A semi-hard texture, buttery on the palate and a slight fatty sensation that dissolves well in the mouth. Elegant acidity and fruity hints of pineapple with a slight sweetness. A spicy and nutty aftertaste with a high persistence in the mouth."

Pair it with: 'Le Bosc' by Can Suriol, Denomination of Origin Penedès and CAVA.

Our wine expert says: "It is a Cava Brut Nature made with Xarel·lo grapes and elaborated in chestnut barrels that make it creamy and intense."