

## Chapter 43

### Sherry

Jerez (Jerez de la Frontera) - must be matured in city limits, or smaller towns of Sanlúcar de Barrameda or El Puerto de Santa Maria

<p>IN THE VINEYARD</p>	<p><b>Climate and Soils</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Climate: <b>hot, sunny Mediterranean</b> (Jerez) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Vineyards cooler by coast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Poniente</b> = cool humid westerly wind</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Hot temp from <b>Levante</b> = hot Eastern wind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Can stress vines/damage grapes</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Rainfall (limited in growing season)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Soil: <b>Albariza</b> = very high chalk content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stored water in summer through depth (also has good drainage) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Maximised in autumn/winter = rectangular pits dug between rows of vines to trap water/reduce run-off (after harvest)</li> <li>■ Soil smoothed out in spring</li> <li>■ Soil forms hard crust in summer = limits evaporation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Grape varieties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Palomino</b> (majority plantings) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Low acid/lacks obvious varietal aromas = good for Sherry (style made by bio/oxy)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Pedro Ximénez (PX)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Little varietal character</li> <li>○ Thin skin = can be sun-dried for sweet sherry production</li> <li>○ Grown in Montilla-Moriles</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Muscat of Alexandria</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small amount grown</li> <li>○ Used to make sweet wines</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>IN THE WINERY (Dry styles)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Palomino</b> → pressed quickly (avoid oxidation)</li> <li>● Stainless steel ferm 20-25°C → warm to produce neutral base wine (11-12% abv)</li> </ul> <p><b>First classification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In Autumn, grapes classified into biological vs oxidative ageing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Biological ageing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lighter, paler wines (more finesse)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Grapes from cooler, coastal regions/ferm at lower temp</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Oxidative ageing           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Darker, richer, heavier wines</li> <li>■ Grapes grown warmer inland vineyards/ferm at higher temp</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Flor on surface of all wines at this stage</li> <li>● Commercial/sales demand considered by producers</li> </ul> <p><b>Fortification and Sobretabla</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wines fortified using 96% abv neutral spirit</li> <li>● Wines set aside before Solera = Sobretabla</li> </ul> <p><b>Wines for biological ageing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fortified between 15-15% - to develop Flor</li> <li>● Flor must develop during Sobretabla</li> <li>● Second classification = determine style/character of wine for Solera           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fail = refortified + oxidative, or rejected</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Wines for oxidative ageing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fortified to 17% abv - Flor dies</li> <li>● Sobretabla not critical = no need for Flor to develop</li> </ul>
<p>IN THE WINERY (Naturally sweet styles)</p>	<p><b>Grape handling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Picked + sun-dried (concentrate sugar levels) - raisin flavours</li> </ul> <p><b>Fermentation and Fortification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● After desired must weight achieved = grapes pressed and fermented           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ So concentrated, yeast struggles to ferment sugars = few degrees managed</li> <li>○ After fermentation - must fortified to 17% abv</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>MATURATION IN THE SOLERA SYSTEM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Matured in ‘butts’ = 600-litre oak barrels (used so no oak influence) - oak allows oxidation.</li> <li>● Filled 5/6th full to oxidate</li> <li>● Must be kept cool in Jerez (can be a challenge)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bodegas = whitewashed walls, high ceilings, windows to let cooling Poniente wines in.</li> <li>○ Earth floors - damp for humidity (can be AC)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>The Solera System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ‘Solera’ = system of maturation (+ final level that holds oldest average wine)</li> <li>● ‘Criaderas’ = groups of butts</li> <li>● The process:</li> </ul>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wine for bottling taken from final solera (equal amount from each butt)</li> <li>2. Replenished with wine from younger (first) criadera. Equal volume of wine taken from each butt in 1st criadera + blended. Blended wine tops up Solera.</li> <li>3. Repeated for criaderas below.</li> <li>4. Youngest wine criadera topped up with Sobretabla wine.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Few → 14 criadera levels</li> <li>● Complex system = can only consider average age</li> <li>● Advantage: wine for bottling/blending same every time. New level wine takes on older wine characteristics.</li> <li>● To avoid disaster potential - criaderas from same solera stored in different buildings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Flor and biological ageing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flor = made up of yeast strains. Forms a thick surface layer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feed of alcohol in wine/oxygen in atmosphere = CO<sub>2</sub> + acetaldehyde (gives unique flavours to sherry)</li> <li>○ Needs: precise alcohol levels/temp/humidity</li> <li>○ Can't thrive with alcohol that's +15.5%</li> <li>○ Prefers cool-mod temp (grows better in spring/autumn - due to humidity)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Butts partially filled - Flor protects wine from oxidising. Flor has access to oxygen to grow.</li> <li>● New wine added for Flor to consume - which has fresh alcohol/nutrients</li> <li>● For steady flow - wine drawn off Soleras frequently</li> <li>● Finos (bio-aged Sherries) - lose freshness quickly after bottling.</li> <li>● After 7+ years nutrients deplete, Flor can fail = average Solera 3-4 years old.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oxidative ageing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Oloroso/PX/some Muscat sheries= aged oxidatively (no Flor)</li> <li>● Amontillado = aged oxidatively (some bio)</li> <li>● Young wines help preserve base character of Sherry (or too oxidised)</li> <li>● Matured up to 30 years (rare)</li> <li>● ABV up to 22% = water evaporates</li> </ul>
<p><b>BLENDING AND FINISHING</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most sheries blend of several Solera systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ie, Oloroso = benefit of blending young + old adds balance</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Most sheries undergo fining and filtration (although recent push to stop interventions)</li> </ul>

<p>STYLES OF SHERRY (Dry)</p>	<p><b>Fino and Manzanilla</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Biological ageing (Flor)</li> <li>● Pale lemon/citrus fruits/almonds/herbs/bready notes (from Flor)/tangy/salty</li> <li>● Consume young</li> <li>● Manzanilla de Sanlúcar de Barrameda - separate DO to Jerez - humid conditions (coastal) mean Flor vigorous all year - more tangy</li> <li>● Manzanilla Fino = most famous Fino style from Manzanilla</li> <li>● 'En Rama' = label for min fining/filtration</li> </ul> <p><b>Oloroso</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Oxidative ageing</li> <li>● Brown colour/full-body/toffee/leather/spice/walnut</li> <li>● Old wines - astringent - balance with younger wines in Solera</li> </ul> <p><b>Amontillado</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bio ageing → fortified to 17% (Flor killed) → fed into an Amontillado Solera system (oxidative)</li> <li>● Amber or brown/less full-body/yeast + oxidative flavours</li> <li>● Can be matured for as long as Oloroso</li> </ul> <p><b>Pale Cortado</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rare = aroma of Amontillado + body/richness of Oloroso</li> <li>● Very high quality</li> </ul>
<p>STYLES OF SHERRY (Naturally sweet styles)</p>	<p>Oxidative ageing/rare/component in sweetened sherries</p> <p><b>Pedro Ximénez (PX)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deep brown/lusciously sweet/500g/L RS/dried fruit/coffee/liquorice</li> </ul> <p><b>Muscat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sim to PX/dried citrus peel character</li> </ul>
<p>STYLES OF SHERRY (Sweetened)</p>	<p><b>Pale Cream</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bio ageing prior to sweetening (with RCGM)</li> <li>● Sim to Fino - no Flor character</li> </ul> <p><b>Medium and Cream</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diverse; covers inexpensive and premium</li> <li>● Medium sherry = bio + oxi characteristics</li> <li>● Cream sherry = oxi characteristics</li> <li>● Sweetened with PX wine</li> <li>● Best = balance of dry (toffee/leather/walnut) and sweet (dried fruit)</li> </ul> <p>Dry: Amontillado/Oloroso/Pale Cortado</p>

	(Historically Olorosso Dulce = no longer allowed)
SHERRIES WITH AN INDICATION OF AGE	<p>Four age-indication categories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. VORS (Vinum Optimum Rare Signatum) = average age of blend 30+ years</li> <li>2. VOS (Vinum Optimum Signatum) = average age of blend 20+ years</li> <li>3. (+4) Lesser categories of 12 + 15 years apply to whole solera system</li> </ol> <p>Only Amontillado/Pale Cortado/Olorosso/PX can quality for age indications.</p>