

What potential Catalan Independence could mean for their wines

The regional president of Catalunya, Carles Puigdemont laid out the argument for Catalans to secede from Spain on October 10th. While essentially declaring independence, at the same time, he delayed the effect of the violently-repressed referendum of October 1st in order to open dialogue with Spain. As this leaves open the door for Catalunya to still breakaway, what could it mean for their wines?

Catalunya is not Spain's largest area in terms of production, that would be Castilla la Mancha by a factor of four in terms of export volume. Catalunya forms around 8% of Spain's total export production with half of this comprised of Cava. Interestingly, Catalunya earns about 22% of the total derived in selling the wines internationally which monetarily puts it on par with Castilla la Mancha.

A loss of this income, which totaled some €648 million in 2015 would indeed be a serious blow to Spain, but it potentially offers Catalunya the ability to rebuild its brand, largely free of the bargain wine image that fuels much of the Spanish wine industry. This wouldn't be without its difficulties however as Catalunya would then need to create a new brand in a crowded market for Catalan wine outside Spain--and potentially the EU. There's also the added issue that Spain could take the name, "Cava" as it's a process, not a region and Catalans would then also need to rebrand one of the main motors of their wine industry.

There is nothing to say these obstacles are insurmountable but they and others are potential issues if there is to be an independent Republic of Catalunya.

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