

# ABOUT TEQUILA AND MEZCAL

Tequila, and its cousin Mezcal, are made by distilling the fermented juice of agave plants in Mexico. The agave is a spiky-leafed member of the lily family (it is not a cactus) and is related to the century plant.

By Mexican law the agave spirit called Tequila can be made only from one particular type of agave, the blue agave (*Agave Tequiliana* Weber), and can be produced only in specifically designated geographic areas, primarily the state of Jalisco in west-central Mexico.

Mezcal is made from the fermented juice of other species of agave. It is produced throughout most of Mexico.

Both Tequila and Mezcal are prepared for distillation in similar ways. The agave, also known as maguey (pronounced muh-GAY), is cultivated on plantations for eight to 10 years, depending on the type of agave. When the plant reaches sexual maturity it starts to grow a flower stalk.

The agave farmer, or campesino, cuts off the stalk just as it is starting to grow. This redirects the plant growth into the central stalk, swelling it into a large bulbous shape that contains a sweet juicy pulp. When the swelling is completed, the campesino cuts the plant from its roots and removes the long sword-shaped leaves, using a razor-sharp pike-like tool called a coa. The remaining piña ("pineapple"—so-called because the cross-thatched denuded bulb resembles a giant green and white pineapple) weighs anywhere from 25 to 100 pounds.

At the distillery the piñas are cut into quarters. For Tequila they are then slowly baked in steam ovens or autoclaves (oversized pressure cookers) until all of the starch has been converted to sugars.

For Mezcal they are baked in underground ovens heated with wood charcoal (which gives Mezcal its distinctive smoky taste). They are then crushed (traditionally with a stone wheel drawn around a circular trough by a mule) and shredded to extract the sweet juice, called aguamiel (honey water).

The fermentation stage determines whether the final product will be 100 percent agave or "mixto". The highest-quality Tequila is made from fermenting and then distilling only agave juice mixed with some water. Mixto is made by fermenting and then distilling a mix of agave juice and other sugars, usually cane sugar with water. Mixtos made and bottled in Mexico can contain up to 40% alcohol derived from other sugars. Mixtos that have been shipped in bulk to other countries for bottling (primarily the United States) may have the agave content further reduced to 51% by the foreign bottler. By Mexican law all 100% agave or aged tequila must be bottled in Mexico. If a tequila is 100% agave it will say so on the bottle label. If it doesn't say 100% it is a mixto.

## MEZCAL

**DEL MAGUEY SINGLE VILLAGE** Smooth, smoky 2003 vintage wild mountain Maguey 15

**ILEGAL MEZCAL JOVEN** Smoke, pungent Espadin agave, pepper, heat and long finish 12

**ILEGAL MEZCAL REPOSADO** Sweet olive, lemon, wood char 13.5

**ILEGAL MEZCAL ANEJO** Big smoky flavor, apple and vanilla 22

**MONTE ALBON** Smoke, some fruit, earthy finish 6

**SCORPION SILVER** Lemongrass, dried fruit, sweet and hot finish 9

**SCORPION REPOSADO** Citrus, leather and dry smoke 11.5

**SCORPION ANEJO** Smoke, oak, vanilla 12

**VIEJO ZAPATOS** Raw charcoal, broken glass, saw dust 6

## HIGH END

DON JULIO REAL 36 months in white oak brings subtle chocolate, coffee, smoke 45

DON JULIO 1942 Vanilla nose, citrus oak 25

EL TESORO PARADISO Caramel nose, strong citrus, very mild finish 22

HERRADURA SELECCION SUPREMA Rich caramel nose, rich vanilla 45

JOSE CUERVO PLATINO Dried apricots, lemon zest, rose petals and a touch of pepper 17.5

LA RESERVA DE LA FAMILIA JOSE CUERVO Lots of oak, some spice 25

GRAN PATRON PLATINUM Sweet spice, smoke, pepper 35

MILAGRO BARREL SELECT RESERVE Anejo 20 Reposada 17 Silver 16

MILAGRO ROMANCE A unique bottle that has both anejo and reposada 25

PATRON BURDEOS Aged in Bordeaux barrels, strong wood, hints of vanilla and dried fruit. 60

RESERVA DEL MAESTRO DOBEL DIAMOND A unique blend of Anejo, Reposada and Extra Anejo. Gently filtered for diamond like clarity. 10

## ANEJO

Aged in oak for a period of at least one year, though many are older, Anejos are easily recognized by their dark color and strong notes of vanilla, smoke and oak. These tequilas are exceptionally smooth and are best when served straight up.

7 LEGUAS Pleasant fruit notes, butter, oak finish 12

1800 Very complex with lots of vanilla 8

CABO WABO Smoke, orange caramel 12

CAZADORES Citrus nose, light vanilla 9

CHINACO Caramel, butterscotch, oak, hint of white pepper 11

CORRALEJO Light caramel nose, mild hints of oak, slight citrus finish 11

CORZO Toffee, wildflower and dried apricot 12.5

DON EDUARDO Very mild, slight smoke, agave 10

DON JULIO Slight citrus, rich caramel, butterscotch 12.5

EL JIMADOR Oak, caramel, vanilla nose, cinnamon, butter 7

EL TESORO Intense agave, earth, smoke, caramel 10

GRAN CENTENARIO sweet, floral aroma, light spice and smoky oak 12

HERRADURA Sweet with oak, peppers, flowers, vanilla 10.5

MILAGRO Sweet spice, smoke and pepper 9

ORO AZUL Caramel, jalapeno, orange undertones 11

PATRON Oak nose, bourbon-like body with vanilla and caramel 12

PATRON BURDEOS Aged in Bordeaux barrels, strong wood, hints of vanilla and dried fruit. 60

SAUZA COMMEMORATIVO Agave nose, oak, sweet finish 8

SOLO Caramel and agave nose, oak flavors 12

SOL DIOS Baked pear, melon, nutmeg finish 11

TEZON Intense caramel, long creamy oak finish 17

TEQUILA OCHO ANEJO Fruity aroma with hints of cinnamon and citrus 19

TRES RIOS Vanilla, caramel, hint of oak 12

VIUDA DE ROMERO Slight fruit nose, spice, oak, agave 7

## **REPOSADO**

A Reposada spends between 2 and 12 months in Barriques (oak barrels). This slight aging mellows some of the agave flavors, while the time spent in oak gives the tequila a smooth finish.

- 7 LEGUAS** Orange blossom, cherry, light oak 8
- 1800** Strong agave with salty finish 7
- CABO WABO** Agave, dill, oak, pepper 9
- CASA NOBLE** Mellow with smoke, agave and citrus 12.5
- CAZADORES** Intense pepper flavors 8
- CHINACO** Smoke and floral nose, earthy agave 9
- CORAZON** Smoke, pepper and spice 9
- CORRALEJO** Mellow smoke, pepper 8.5
- CORZO** Hints of oak and honey 9.5
- DON EDUARDO** Pepper, vanilla, spice 9
- DON JULIO** Mellow with slight smoke, caramel, dried fruit, dark chocolate 12
- EL JIMADOR** Agave, oak, butter 7
- EL TESORO** Sweet, with pepper, agave, vanilla 9.5
- GRAN CENTENARIO** Dried tropical fruits, herbs, and anise 11
- HERRADURA** Sweet with oak, pepper, flowers 9
- MILAGRO** Oak, pepper 8
- ORO AZUL** Intense agave with sweet caramel finish 10
- PATRON** Citrus nose, pepper, sea salt 11
- RIPTIDE** Made in Nantucket 8
- SAUZA HORNITOS** Grilled pepper, mustard seed and spices 8
- SAUZA TRES GENERACIONES** Pepper, oak, butterscotch 10
- SOLO** Intense agave, sweet finish 10
- TEQUILA OCHO** Agave, citrus, spice and cinnamon 17
- TEZON** Smoky and sweet from traditional brick oven roasting 15
- TRES RIOS** Vanilla nose, sweet agave 11
- VIUDA DE ROMERO** White pepper, hints of citrus 8

## **BLANCO**

Bottled within 2 months of distillation, these tequilas are stored in stainless steel barrels, allowing the flavors of the agave to shine through. Great in margaritas, Blancos have strong flavors of pepper, citrus and herbs.

- 7 LEGUAS** Agave, grapefruit, mint, peppery spice 8
- 1800** Green pepper, sea salt, orange zest 6
- CABO WABO** Floral, strong agave, hint of sweetness 7
- CASA NOBLE** Spicy, heavy pepper, sweet floral nose 10
- CAZADORES** Sweet nose, mellow finish 7
- CHINACO** White pepper, citrus, chamomile, hints of caramel 8.5

**CORAZON** Sweet mellow nose, strong peppery finish 9

**CORRALEJO** Strong citrus nose, licorice undertones 8

**CORZO** Smooth body, lightly peppered, long lasting finish 11.5

**CUERVO PLATINO** Dried apricots, lemon zest, rose petals and a touch of pepper 17.5

**DON EDUARDO** Heavy citrus, hints of sea salt 8

**DON JULIO** Spicy, strong hints of sea salt, white pepper 10

**EL JIMADOR** Light agave, smooth finish 6

**EL TESORO** Mellow, sweet nose, clean finish 9

**GRAN CENTENARIO** Pineapple, fennel, dried fruit finish 10

**HERRADURA** Agave nose, white pepper, sea salt 8.5

**LUNAZUL** Agave, citrus, white pepper 6

**MILAGRO** Sea salt, citrus, floral aroma 7

**PATRON** Green pepper nose, orange zest 9

**ORO AZUL** Pear aroma, spicy fruit 9

**SOLO** Citrus nose, sea salt, hint of sweetness 9

**SAUZA TRES GENERACIONES** Very smooth, pepper, smoke, floral 9

**TEZON** Mild spice, fruity floral undertones 12

**TEQUILA OCHO** Bold agave, followed by earth and smoke 15

**TRES RIOS** Agave, smooth finish 9