

# HARVARD

ALUMNI TRAVELS



## EXPLORING THE WINE REGIONS OF BORDEAUX, SAN SEBASTIAN, AND RIOJA

MAY 25–JUNE 3, 2023

DETAILED ITINERARY

Providing a stellar overview of the best wines of Bordeaux and the north of Spain, this trip includes dining at Michelin restaurants, top classified Bordeaux chateaux, Riojan reds, several wine-pairing dinners, and a wine blending class. Visit top producers in two of the world's great wine regions and savor winery lunches in Pauillac, Sauternes, La Rioja, and Saint-Emilion. Enjoy a gourmet tapas (*pintxos*) tour in San Sebastian's Old Town and try rare Bordeaux and Rioja wines in a special dinner at the restaurant with Europe's most extensive wine cellar. Stay at a boutique hotel in the village with Spain's largest number of wineries. End your journey in Bilbao.

### SCHEDULE BY DAY

*B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner*

#### SATURDAY, MAY 25

DEPART U.S. FOR BORDEAUX, FRANCE

Participants make independent arrangements from their home cities to Bordeaux, France. Prior nights are available at the Intercontinental Hotel in Bordeaux.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 26

ARRIVE BORDEAUX

Participants should make their way to the 5-star designer Intercontinental Hotel in the center of Bordeaux where rooms will be available from 3pm. We can request early check-in for earlier arrivals, but it is not guaranteed.

There will be an included airport transfer from the airport to the hotel for flights arriving between 11am and 2pm. Details will be provided individually closer to departure.

Meet in reception at the hotel at 4pm for an introductory tour of the historic center of Bordeaux. Return to the hotel around 5:30pm.

Meet again at 6:30pm to enjoy an introductory presentation and tasting of the wines of Bordeaux hosted by James Lawther, Master of Wine.

Afterwards, enjoy a classic dinner in an historic room overlooking the Place de la Comedie at the hotel.

Overnight: *Intercontinental Hotel (D)*

#### MONDAY, MAY 27

BORDEAUX

After your first lecture from your study leader, drive north into the Medoc along the left bank of the Gironde.

Your first stop is at Pichon Baron, a picture-postcard 2nd growth chateau in Pauillac with wonderful wines to match the setting. Enjoy a visit followed by lunch in the chateau.

In the afternoon, head to Château Leoville Barton in St Julien in the heart of a Haut Medoc. Barton is a 2nd growth château, with a burgeoning reputation for its supple but fine wines. Enjoy a wine tasting before heading back to the hotel.

The evening is at leisure.

Overnight: *Intercontinental Hotel (B, L)*

## **TUESDAY, MAY 28**

### **ST. EMILION**

Today is centered on the historic medieval town of St.Emilion, a UNESCO World Heritage site and perhaps the world's most beautiful wine village.

Start with a tour and tasting at Château Tour St Christophe, a St Emilion Grand Cru Classe founded by Harvard alumnus Peter Kwok and family.

After a short visit to the monolithic church in St Emilion, have lunch in the 2-star Michelin restaurant, La Table de Pavie.

Continue to Château Pavie, the largest of the Premier Grand Cru Classe estates and one of the elite names of St Emilion.

Upon returning to the city, dinner is informal at the delightful Baud et Millet bistro, which specializes in a vast range of French cheeses.

Overnight: *Intercontinental Hotel (B, L, D)*

## **WEDNESDAY, MAY 29**

### **DEPART FOR SAN SEBASTIAN, SPAIN**

Heading south, stop in Sauternes to visit the tranquil Château Climens. Savor the noble rot wines before continuing to Le Cercle Guiraud in the village of Sauternes for lunch—a fitting conclusion to the Bordeaux part of your journey.

Continue on a 3-hour drive to the Basque country for an afternoon check in to the Londres y Inglaterra Hotel, overlooking the stunning La Concha beach in San Sebastian.

In the evening, enjoy a gourmet pintxos (tapas) tour of the old town, visiting 5 or 6

bars and restaurants to savor modern and traditional style tapas and wines

Overnight: *Londres y Inglaterra Hotel (B, L, D)*

## **THURSDAY, MAY 30**

### **SAN SEBASTIAN**

In the morning, visit the top txakoli producer, Txomin Etxaniz, in the lovely Basque coastal town of Getaria. Txakoli is the most Basque of wines, a light spritzzy white produced from local grapes grown on hillsides overlooking the Cantabrian Sea. Try some local tuna at this tasting in this stunning location.

Return to San Sebastian for a fine wine lunch at Rekondo, which has Spain's most extensive and best-known wine cellar—named by Wine Enthusiast as one of the world's top 5 restaurant wine cellars. Indulge in some stunning wines from Bordeaux and Rioja paired with a sumptuous Basque menu after a private visit to the cellar.

The remainder of the afternoon and the evening is free.

Overnight: *Londres y Inglaterra Hotel (B, L)*

## **FRIDAY, MAY 31**

### **DEPART FOR RIOJA**

Leave San Sebastian for a drive south to Haro, the capital of the Rioja wine region.

Stop in Roda, a recent Riojan icon that showcases the modern style of wine that challenges the traditional styles epitomized by its neighbors in the Barrio de la Estacion.

Next, visit the old school at Muga, one of the very few wineries to retain its own cooperage, and the perfect place for a traditional roast lamb lunch at the winery (accompanied by top Muga wines).

After lunch, head into the Basque part of Rioja to the village that has the most wineries in Spain (45), Vill-abuena de Alava, and check in at the designer 4-star Viura Hotel.

Enjoy a simple dinner with wines from the village this evening.

Overnight: *Viura Hotel (B, L, D)*

## **SATURDAY, JUNE 1**

### **RIOJA**

The day begins with a brief visit to the family-owned Luis Canas winery in the village, the house wine in many 3-star Michelin restaurants across Spain and a great location to savor the terrain from the spectacularly appointed tasting room.

Continue to the Marqués de Riscal City of Wine complex designed by Frank Gehry for another tasting.

Next is an extended lunch at Venta Moncalvillo, located in the smallest village in the world to have a Michelin star. You will be served sophisticated modern Riojan cuisine that accentuates local seasonal ingredients with imaginative wine pairings.

In the late afternoon, return to the hotel where the evening is free.

Overnight: *Viura Hotel (B, L)*

## **SUNDAY, JUNE 2**

### **RIJOA / BILBAO**

Leave Rioja after breakfast and travel north to Bilbao, the final stop on your journey.

Check in to the 5-star Gran Hotel Domine and take a guided tour of the Guggenheim Museum, followed by a fine farewell lunch at the Michelin star Ola de Martin Berasategui restaurant in the old town.

The later afternoon and evening are free.

Overnight: *Gran Hotel Domine (B, L)*

## **MONDAY, JUNE 3**

### **BILBAO / DEPART FOR U.S.**

The program concludes after breakfast.

There will be two transfers to Bilbao airport for morning flights. Details will be communicated directly to participants based on their departure times. (B)