

Wines of the Guadalupe Valley

A BRIEF HISTORY

The letter G coiled like a snake on an aged barrel.



It greeted the alumni group as it disembarked from the tour bus.

A few hours earlier, the intrepid gringos had crossed the busiest border in the world by foot at San Ysidro. Yet even this early in the day, the trip was turning from leisure to adventure. Alex Moreno, the guide of the group, had gathered *chilaquiles* (a local breakfast specialty) and freshly squeezed orange juice to help the travelers make it to this first vineyard.

The crazed bus driver and the tortuous turns of the hilly Mexican roads had deterred all but the most impetuous of the group from using the bus lavatory. Now, they found themselves before lines of grapevines bearing crosses like gravestones under the heat of the Baja sun. The **Viñas de Garza** contained the rustic artefacts of the region's

history – half-buried farming equipment, rusting hoops around wooden barrels, and (perplexingly) a large anchor from a seagoing vessel.



The group sampled six wines from this remote vineyard: two white wines and four reds.



The first -- **Blanco del Rancho Mogorcito** – was a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay and well worth the trip. It was preferred by the travelers over a second wine of the vineyard's namesake (Viñas de Garza), which was 100% Chardonnay. Among the reds.

It was the **Colina Norte** (a blend of Tempranillo, Cariñena and Grenache) that

won the highest praise, though many preferred **Amado IV** (a blend of Cabernet, Merlot, Tempranillo and Zinfandel) .



Under Mr. Martin Dagleish's encouragement, the group continued their journey to **Emevé Vinos**. The Emevé sommelier was experienced in the business of wine, and had identified one white and two reds with promise. It was the **Emevé Vinos Cabernet Sauvignon** that impressed the travelers most at the Guadalupe Valley vineyard though the Los Nietos 2015 Reserva, a blend of Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon attracted a notable following..

Among the party, a Cuban gringa named Maylén Rafuls Rosa recounted stories of enormous barrels. There, she said, could be found traditional meals of the valley prepared with great skill.

The famished group continued their journey until they arrived at **Finca Altozano** where, just as Maylén had foretold, giant barrels stood watch like sentinels.



The daring biochemists scaled the barrels to survey the surrounding terrain while a large, jovial pig superintended visitors of the *finca*.

Numerous conflicting accounts exist as to what occurred next. The most plausible explanation is that many members of the party fell into food comas of one sort or another as a result of what has become known as the Gluttony at the Finca Altozano. Reliable records emerge once the travelers resumed their northward journey.



There, they reclined as the sun set in a cloudless sky over the Pacific Ocean.