

# FROM THE BAR STOOL

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FROM YOUR LA  
CRAFT SPECIALISTS:

Our guide to new products, things we have learned, people we have met, places we have visited, and upcoming events that are getting us excited

## What's New In Young's Market Company's Craft Spirits Portfolio?

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# What is Tequila?

## Tequila

Is a distilled beverage made from the blue webber agave plant, primarily in the area surrounding the city of Tequila, 40 miles northwest of Guadalajara, and in the highlands (Los Altos) of the western Mexican state of Jalisco.

The red volcanic soil in the surrounding region is particularly well suited to the growing of the blue agave, and more than 300 million of the plants are harvested there each year. Agave tequila grows differently depending on the region. Blue agaves grown in the highlands region are larger in size and sweeter in aroma and taste. Agaves harvested in the lowlands, on the other hand, have a more herbaceous fragrance and flavor.

Mexican laws state that tequila can be produced only in the state of Jalisco and limited regions in the states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, Nayarit, and Tamaulipas. Mexico is granted international right to the word "tequila". The United States officially recognizes that spirits called "tequila" can only be produced in Mexico, although by agreement bulk amounts can be shipped to be bottled in the U.S



# The History of Tequila

## History

Tequila was first produced in the 16th century near the location of the city of Tequila, which was not officially established until 1656. The Aztec people had previously made a fermented beverage from the agave plant, which they called octli – later called pulque – long before the Spanish arrived in 1521. When the Spanish conquistadors ran out of their own brandy, they began to distill agave to produce one of North America's first indigenous distilled spirits.

80 years later, around 1600, Don Pedro Sánchez de Tagle, the Marquis of Altamira, began mass-producing tequila at the first factory in the territory of modern-day Jalisco. By 1608, the colonial governor of Nueva Galicia had begun to tax his products. Spain's King Carlos IV granted the Cuervo family the first license to commercially make tequila.

The style of tequila that is popular today was first mass-produced in the early 19th century in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Don Cenobio Sauza, founder of Sauza Tequila and Municipal President of the Village of Tequila from 1884–1885, was the first to export tequila to the United States, and shortened the name from "Tequila Extract" to just "Tequila" for the American markets. Don Cenobio's grandson Don Francisco Javier gained international attention for insisting that "there cannot be tequila where there are no agaves!" His efforts led to the practice that real tequila can come only from the State of Jalisco.





# The Production of Tequila

## Tequila Production

Planting, tending, and harvesting the agave plant remains a manual effort, largely unchanged by modern farm machinery and relying on centuries-old know-how. The men who harvest it, the jimadores, have intimate knowledge of how the plants should be cultivated, passed down from generation to generation.

After harvesting, the piñas are transported to ovens where they are slowly baked in order to break down their complex starches into simple sugars. Then the baked piñas are either shredded or mashed under a large stone wheel called a tahona.



The extracted agave juice is then poured into either large wood or stainless steel vats for several days to ferment, resulting in a wort, or mosto, with low alcohol content. This wort is then distilled once to produce what is called "ordinario," and then a second time to produce clear "silver tequila." A few producers distill the product a third time, but several connoisseurs consider this third distillation a mistake because it removes too much flavor from the tequila. From there the tequila is either bottled as "silver tequila", or it is pumped into wooden barrels to age, where it develops a mellower flavor and amber color.

Usually, there are noticeable differences in taste between tequila that is made from lowland and highland agave plants. Plants grown in the **highlands often yield sweeter, floral, and fruitier-tasting** tequila while **lowland agaves give the tequila an spicy and earthier flavor**.

# Classification of Tequila

There are two basic categories of tequila: mixtos and 100% agave.

**Mixtos** use no less than 51% agave, with other sugars making up the remainder. Mixtos use both glucose and fructose sugars.

Tequila is usually bottled in one of five categories:

**Blanco/White/Plata:** white spirit, un-aged and bottled or stored immediately after distillation, or aged less than two months in stainless steel or neutral oak barrels.

**Joven or Oro:** a mixture of blanco tequila and reposado tequila.

**Reposado:** aged a minimum of two months, but less than a year in oak barrels of any size.

**Añejo:** aged a minimum of one year, but less than three years in small oak barrels.

**Extra Añejo ("extra aged" or "ultra aged"):** aged a minimum of three years in oak barrels. This category was established in March 2006.





One of the most important factors in a great tequila is the agave. Casa Noble is a distillery and also an agave grower with more than 3000 acres of agave fields under cultivation. One of the secrets of ultra premium Tequila is in the soil from which it comes and for this reason, Casa Noble only uses agave from its own fields located in the hills near the city of Tequila in the state of Jalisco. These regions inside the designated area of the origin of tequila contain a unique soil that produces the best blue agave.

Within ten to fourteen years of patiently watching them grow, the plant reaches the peak of maturity and is carefully selected to be harvested (jimada) by hand and taken to the distillery that is located in the city of Tequila. At the distillery, the centuries-old traditional ovens with thick stone walls are filled with the hearts of the Blue Agave Tequilana Weber to be steam cooked for 36 hours. We prefer the old way of cooking the agave because, in our opinion, it produces the most intense flavor for our tequila.

After the hearts of the agave (piñas) are cooled, they are shredded and squeezed to extract the sweet juice (mosto) that is set to rest for five days in a natural fermentation. This step is customary of the best tequilas producing fuller body, greater aroma and lasting taste.

Traditionally, tequila is distilled twice but Casa Noble is distilled three times with great care to make sure we obtain a distillation showcasing the best characteristics, the purest tequila and the highest-quality product. The distillation is completed in small stills with more even heat throughout to insure the aromatic essence of the tequila.

Casa Noble uses white French oak barrels from Limosin. Though this is not typical for tequila, French oak imparts the special complex characteristics we desire in this tequila. After 364 days for Casa Noble Reposado, the oldest possible age for this type of tequila, and five years for Casa Noble Añejo, the oldest tequila in the market, the Master Distiller has completed his artistry and approves Casa Noble to be bottled.



It was 1952 when the late Don Ignacio Gonzalez Vargas, the original founder, started making his extraordinary Tequila 7 Leguas. Carrying on the tradition are his widow, the matriarch Sra. Amparo de Anda and their 7 children, who have continued producing Tequila 7 Leguas, one of the very finest tequilas in Mexico, under NOM 1120. (A NOM is the unique number given by the Mexican Government to each production facility.) Francisco Tonarely, President of Brand Equity Partners Inc., stated, "Assisting Tequila 7 Leguas in developing its business outside Mexico is all the more gratifying given the family's longstanding commitment, its 60-year history, its revolutionary spirit and its passion for quality in every serving."

Tequila 7 Leguas is made using a proprietary formula, a combination of the agave "juices" from the family's two distilleries, El Centenario est. 1942, and La Vencedora est. 1956. Each distillery has its own process, "Molino" or roller mill and the traditional Tahona or "Millstone," which to this day is pulled during different shifts by one of 7 mules from Arkansas. The mixture of the two exceptional juices, together with the time-honored process for crushing, cooking and fermenting, produces a very smooth, sweet taste inherent in the quality of the agave cultivated by the family.

Don Ignacio Gonzalez Vargas's strength, vision and commitment to make the highest quality tequila, whatever the cost, is still true today after more than 60 years. Mr. Fernando Gonzalez de Anda explained that the Siete Leguas mission has always been to respect the traditional methods used to cook, grind, ferment and distill the very best tequila. "Tahona, the way it was done yesterday, still revolutionary today!".





Siete Leguas carries a name and symbol that was inspired by none other than the revolutionary hero General Francisco Villa (Pancho Villa) himself, who named his horse Siete Leguas (Seven Leagues) in recognition of the distance the steed galloped on one of the many conquests.

Tequila Siete Leguas Distillery is located in Atotonilco el Alto, Jalisco, Mexico. Since its founding in 1952 by Don Ignacio Gonzalez Vargas, Tequila Siete Leguas Distillery has been selling its tequila in Mexico under its own Siete Leguas trademark. The Siete Leguas Distillery sold its super-premium tequila to St. Maarten Spirits, Ltd. in the U.S., where it was marketed under the brand name Patron from 1991 through 2002. Siete Leguas therefore has been enjoyed by tequila aficionados across the U.S. since 1991, with over 100,000,000 servings of its unique formula for Silver, Reposado and Anejo being served under the Patron label during that period. Siete Leguas NOM 1120 has remained under the same family's control for 3 generations, with the same commitment to produce the finest tequila. It no longer produces its formula for Patron, which now has a different formula and NOM. The Patron brand has no affiliation to Tequila 7 Leguas and its NOM 1120. Old bottles of Patron, shown below, displayed Pancho Villas horse, not the Patron bee.



Old Patron Bottle





## Tequila Ocho is revolutionary.

It demonstrates the centuries old concept of “terroir” by harvesting agaves from single estates at different altitudes in unique microclimates. It delivers its tequilas in vintages named for the estates from which the agaves were harvested. Each vintage bears a unique flavor and aroma imparted from the character of the soil in which its agaves were grown. Farming and distillation parallel the principles of “Slow Food”. Slow food preaches care about the origin of raw materials and the manner in which these materials are grown, harvested and prepared for consumption.

It is about taking the time necessary to ensure the finest possible outcome from the field to the table. It is a process that ensures the full character of a product presents itself in a manner that showcases its color, its nose and its flavor. The consequences for Ocho are a powerful agave forward tequila whose flavors go on and on and whose range demonstrates the full potential of the agave.



**Tequila Ocho is from Arandas, Jalisco, Mexico.**

**Conceived by:** Tomas Estes, who is also the ambassador for the entire Tequila category to the European Union.

**Master Distiller:** Carlos Camarena

**Water Source:** Local spring water from Arandas.

**Ingredients:** 8-10 year old highland agave harvested annually from different single estates at different altitudes in unique microclimates around Arandas.

**Production Technique:** **overly mature agaves** are steamed in old stone ovens for 3 days at low heat to ensure the maximum conversion of starch into sugar. Juice from the first 8 hours of cooking is discarded in order to eliminate bitter elements. **Open air fermentation** using natural yeast takes 5-7 days to complete. Lastly, Ocho is twice distilled: first, in a stainless steel pot still (3500 liters) and then, in a copper pot (600 liters). The second distillation is done at 48% ABV and then brought to 40% using demineralized water ensuring a high concentration of agave flavor.

**Expressions:** Plata, Reposado, Anejo, Extra Anejo, Single Barrel

Age:

- Reposado, 8 weeks 8 days
- Anejo: 1 year
- Extra Anejo: 3 years
- Single Barrel: between 1 year and 3 years at the discretion of the buyer

**Barrels:** American Oak previously used for aging bourbon

**Tasting Notes:** Each vintage of Ocho is harvested from a different single estate in the Camarena portfolio and therefore offers aromas and flavors unique to itself. Tomas Estes provides his personal tasting notes on the back label of every bottle produced.





## Reserva del Maestro Dobel Diamond Reposado Tequila

A 100% Agave blend of Reposado, Anejo, and Extra Anejo Tequilas which have been gently filtered giving the Tequila an incredible Diamond Clarity and crispness.

Juan Dobel, working with Maestros Marco Anguiano and Luis Yerenas, wanted to create his own brand and offer Tequila Aficionados something truly unique. Each Agave used is grown for 8 to 10 years, and hand selected at one of a small number of our family's best quality producing ranches. This hand-crafted product is produced in small batches and aged in new oak casks from Southern Europe.

Juan-Dobel's dedication to providing the finest hand-crafted tequila extends to Maestro Dobel's meticulous packaging. Each imposing bottle is built on a thick metallic base and is emblazoned with a unique crystal-cut design. Each bottle is filled and labeled by hand and then individually numbered. Unique for tequila, Dobel recognizes the ranch from which the 8-10 year-old agave was harvested.







## A TRUE GROWERS TEQUILA

**TEQUILA CABEZA - THE VIVANCO FAMILY HAS BEEN CULTIVATING AGAVE IN THE LOS ALTOS REGION OF JALISCO FOR FIVE GENERATIONS. THEY BUILT THEIR DISTILLERY EL RANCHITO ON THE EDGE OF THEIR 800-ACRE MOUNTAINSIDE FIELD IN ARANDAS, WHERE THEY NOW HAVE BEEN TEQUILEROS FOR 3 GENERATIONS.**

The Jimadores pick the agaves at seven to nine years of age and with a sugar content of 23-28%. The piñas are cooked in brick ovens at 100 C° for 24 hours. Fermentation of the mosto is kick started with champagne yeasts, and fermentation takes place during the winter months – the cooler temperature allows for an extended mash period giving fruitier flavors. Distillation occurs in two separate copper pot stills. The destrozador still first produces the ordinario at 20-22% ABV, which is filtered, and the second distillation, in the rectificator still, produces tequila at 55-56% ABV. There is no filtration after the second distillation. Distilled water is added to bring it down to 43% AVB (86 proof).

## SINGLE ESTATE TEQUILA

### THE AGAVE

Tequila Cabeza is made from 100% estate owned agave that is grown in the Los Altos region in Arandas. The agave are grown by the Vivanco family, who have been cultivating agaves on their 800-heactare mountainside land for five generations, and handpicked by the Jimadors at seven to nine years of age when the agave has a sugar content of 23-28%. It is grown without pesticides, on land that has been used for the cultivation of agave for over 100 years.

### COOKING & MILLING

The piñas are cooked in brick ovens for 24 hours at 100 C°. They are then left to cool for 24 hours before being manually fed into the shredder. This is where the agave juice is extracted and the fibers are separated. Natural spring water is added to aid this process.

### FERMENTATION

The pure sweet agave juice (mosto) is fermented with the aid of a champagne yeast in cooper tanks during the winter months. The cooler temperature allows for an extended mash period (approximately 10 days) giving fruitier agave flavors. Once the fermentation is finished, the mash sits for two days before distillation.

## BOTTLING DETAILS

PROOF 86	NOM 1414
ABV 43%	100% PURO DE AGAVE

DISTILLED IN  
ARANDEZ, JALISCO, MEXICO



**"THE VIVANCO FAMILY HANDLES EVERYTHING FROM PLANTING THE HIJUELO SPROUT TO BOTTLING MAKING...TEQUILA CABEZA, A TRUE GROWERS TEQUILA."**

# Young's Market Company

## BOUTIQUE TEQUILA PORTFOLIO

We hope you enjoyed this more in-depth look at our boutique Tequila portfolio.

All of the Tequilas we featured are all incredibly unique, yet share amazing quality and story.

We loved learning about Siete Leguas and its relationship to the original Patron. Its also great to see that distilleries like Siete Leguas still believe doing things the old way, because they believe it is the RIGHT way.

We also have the distinct pleasure of representing Tequila Ocho. The first Tequila that explored the "Terror" of agave. In this beautiful partnership with

one of the masters of Tequila in Carlos Camerena and one of the visionaries of Tequila in Tomas Estes, you know you're in for a treat, at each sip.

Have you tasted Maestro Dobel yet? The worlds first Diamond Tequila is Special. Its a real contender and soo incredibly unique, that all we can recommend is to drink it Now!

**Salud!**

**Alessandro**

