

EL MAESTRO SIERRA OLOROSO 15 YEAR



100% Palomino. Incredibly complex aromas of hazelnuts and exotic spices with smoke, bright bitter oranges, fresh figs and toffee. Medium-bodied and dry with a surprising lightness and ease. Good balance of acidity, a suggestion of caramel sweetness, lightly bitter notes and a soft, gingery warmth. Richly textured. Fades on mineral and saline notes, with an aftertaste of mocha and dried fruit. Should be served at room temperature. Drink as an aperitif, with mature cheeses and cured meats.

From the Jerez de la Frontera site in Jerez-Xérès-Sherry, Andalucía, Spain. Aged for 15 years in solera without exposure to flor.

All of the wines in production are aged much longer than many of their contemporaries.

El Maestro Sierra was founded in 1830 by the master carpenter José Antonio Sierra. Recognized as one of the top coopers in the area, José Antonio made the barrels for all of the big Sherry houses, but he longed to become involved in the Sherry trade itself. Eventually, he built a small winery with the aim of making the best sherries possible. Over time he overcame many hardships and became one of the top Almacenistas (stock-holders) of high quality Sherries. El Maestro Sierra was passed down through the family and protected by the legendary Doña Pilar Pla Pechovierto, (a brave and resolute woman who inherited the business after the early death of her husband) from 1976 until her passing in 2020. It became the first bodega run entirely by women. Their treasures are many. From their unique location in Jerez, they have a clear view of the Atlantic Ocean, where they are exposed to the cool Poniente winds which nourish the *flor*, allowing it to be present all year round, giving their wines elegance. This is one of the keys to their *terruño*. They have been buying their palomino grapes from the same suppliers for many decades and these growers are known for having some of the best parcels within Jerez Superior. And since the wines at El Maestro Sierra have seen little sales, the stocks have remained virtually untouched for the last 30 years.

The soleras at the winery are easily over 60 years old, some may be close to 100. Today the tradition is continued by Pilar's daughter and current owner, Dr. Carmen Borrego Pla, and capataza Ana Cabestrero; aided by long-time-family-friend and consultant master capataz, Paco Salas. Being fierce protectors of tradition, they are one of the last bodegas still working entirely by hand. Ana and her team of four "run the scales" manually with the traditional *canoas*, *jarra*, *sifón*, and *rocíador*. This traditional way of moving the wine introduces the right amount of aeration, which in turn adds to the complexity. Upholding their heritage, all cooping and barrel repair is still done in-house, with no new barrels used. By anyone's standard in Jerez, the crown jewel of Sherry is El Maestro Sierra.

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Tasting Note:

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100% Palomino. Aromas of hazelnuts, exotic spices, smoke, bright bitter oranges, figs & toffee; medium-bodied & dry; lightness & ease; balanced acidity, a suggestion of caramel sweetness, lightly bitter notes & soft, gingery warmth; richly textured; saline minerality on the finish with mocha & dried fruit.

Shelf Talker:

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