



Written by
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Sweet and strong assortment

- [Tweet](#)



See *Sorting through the assortments* for a guide to the collections of tasting notes already published and those yet to come.

More than 70 sweet and strong wines here for our seasonal delectation. An array of great sherries first, then a wide variety of sweet wines of many different strengths, and finally some ports. A collection of tasting notes on mouthwatering madeiras will follow next month.

Within each group, the wines are listed in order of descending score.

SHERRY

- **Equipo Navazos, 52 La Bota de Palo Cortado NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Young wine from the 2010 vintage but it may well be refreshed in future. Palomino from Sanlucar - exactly the same as Mas Alla but fortified to 18% and aged in 600-litre sherry casks and more recently in Bordeaux casks.*
Pale brassy colour. Very umami on the nose! Vibrant and rich and super-tangy. Fabuloso. Rich yet lively and bone dry on the end. Real energy.15% Drink 2014-2019
£49 RRP 18
- **Equipo Navazos, 54 La Bota de Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Deep gold. Really tangy and with wonderful depth. Bone dry and very firm. Long and serious.*15% Drink 2014-2018
£27 RRP 18
- **Sánchez Romate, Cayetano del Pino y Cia Solera Palo Cortado NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Best dry fortified, Wines From Spain Awards 2014.*
Toasted nuts, acrid smokiness, expansive complexity on the palate and huge persistence. Incredibly savoury, with tons of umami character. Quite incredible length. (RH) 20% Drink 2013-2016
£14.95 The Wine Society 17.5
- **Equipo Navazos, 45 La Bota de Fino Amontillado NV Montilla-Moriles***Bottled Oct 2013 from Perez Barquero. PX not Palomino and probably unfortified. About 20 years old.*
Dark copper. Really tangy nose. Notably fruity nose. Broad and very fresh. Wonderfully earthy. Mushroomy. I'd love to drink this with a savoury dish with a creamy mushroom sauce.
15.5% Drink 2013-2018
£42 RRP 17.5
- **Equipo Navazos, Navazos En Rama Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Saca of March 2014. Not yet on sale in the UK yet but should be from Feb next year. It's a Fino in answer to the I Think Manzanilla bottling for Bibendum, Australia!*
Really impressive on the nose. Lovely balance. Limpid and salty. Really lovely and perfectly balanced. Firm and fine. Solid and salty. 15% Drink 2014-2018
£11.50 37.5cl RRP 17.5
- **Sánchez Romate, NPU Amontillado NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Much more convincing than their Fino: complex, rich, nutty, caramelised character. Full, almost heavy body. Long spiced finish. Big and bold and very satisfying.* (RH) Drink 2014-2016
RRP £17.55 17
- **Álvaro Domecq, Alburejo Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Raisins, roasted nuts, prunes. Potent, concentrated, chewy. Very salty and intense - a great, uncompromising Oloroso.* (RH) Drink 2014-2016
17
- **Rey Fernando de Castilla, Antique Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Average 20 years old. Pale orange. Toffee nose with a strong green streak. Pungent and rancio and a silly low price. So clean. But I suspect the supermarkets are challenging it with even lower prices for old wine.* 20% Drink 2014-2017
£23 for 50 cl The Wine Society 17
- **Emilio Lustau, Almacenista Juan García Jarana Pata de Gallina Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Pale yellow tawny. Very clean and fresh. Super pure. Nutty. Bring on the nuts and cheese! So pure.* **GV**20% Drink 2014-2018
£19.95 per 50 cl Berry Bros & Rudd 17
- **Emilio Lustau, Waitrose Solera Jerezana Dry Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - Sherry***Best own label fortified, Wines From Spain Awards 2014.*
Salty, dried mushrooms, dried fruits, bitter chocolate. Yeasty and fiercely dry, but no less drinkable for that. (RH)20% Drink 2013-2017
£9.75 Waitrose 17

- Delgado Zuleta, Goya NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de BarramedaMinty, saline, herbal, fennel, rich and broad and fungal. Really great - deep and long but retaining lightness. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£39.99 per magnum RRP 17
- Hidalgo, 1874 El Tresillo Amontillado NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryChunky, dense, saline. Loaded with dried, figgy fruit. Thick, rich, satisfying. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£71.98 RRP 17
- Hidalgo, Villapanes Dry Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryViscous, thick, salty, almost searing. Impressive but overbearing. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£36.50 RRP 16.5
- Equipo Navazos, 48 Bota Punta la Bota de Palo Cortado NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryFrom the cask on the end. Pale greenish tawny. Sweetish hint on the nose. Then hugely tart on the palate but less demanding. Essence and hard work. 15% Drink 2014-2018
£90 37.5cl RRP 16.5
- Emilio Lustau, Waitrose Solera Jerezana Dry Amontillado NV Jerez - Xérès - SherrySaline, iodine and dried nuts - very serious and boldly flavoured. Spot on in terms of style, and with loads of satisfying, dry persistence. **VGW** (RH)19% Drink 2013-2016
£9.75 Waitrose 16.5
- Equipo Navazos, I Think En Rama NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de BarramedaSaca of October, 2010. Deep coppery colour. Lots of evolution - very different on the nose - and actually tastes as though it had a bit of oak age! Full and satisfying with just as much refreshment as the 2014 bottling but with less freshness. You could love this with food. Whereas the 2014 bottling is an aperitif wine. Drink 2010-2015
16.5
- Equipo Navazos, I Think En Rama NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de BarramedaSaca of October, 2014. Just arrived. Latest release of something that started with the 2010 release intended for Oddbins initially. Sells very well in the US and Australia. Pale. Lots of tang and then like a feather brushing the palate. Lightly nutty and flattering. Probably about four years average. Bone dry and yet revitalizing. Very, very clean. Bone dry. Drink 2014-2018
£11.50 per half RRP 16.5
- Equipo Navazos, 46 La Bota de Oloroso NV Montilla-MorilesPedro Ximénez from Perez Barquero. Maybe 25-30 years. Deep lustrous golden tawny. Just a little syrupy on the nose. It's easier to see that this is Pedro Ximénez. Vibrant but a little bit heavy underneath. 20.5% Drink 2014-2017
£49 RRP 16.5
- Emilio Lustau, Waitrose Solera Jerezana Palo Cortado NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryMilder than their Amontillado, but no less complex - nutty, dried fruits, dried mushroom, salt. A remarkable amount of flavour for under ten pounds. (RH)19% Drink 2013-2016
£9.75 Waitrose 16.5
- Hidalgo, Gobernador Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryGentle, layered textured, chewy. Subtle but not thin. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£18.48 RRP 16.5
- Equipo Navazos, 47 Bota NO La Bota de Palo Cortado NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryThis is from a cask you're not allowed in - with padlock! Comes from a stock that was forgotten about. Greenish brownish mid tawny. Rancio nose. Super tangy fragilistic. Quite extreme and extraordinary. Hard work! Should be an ingredient rather than a wine, I feel. Fruit left this long ago... For interest only. 15% Drink 2014-2018
£90 37.5cl RRP 16
- Delgado Zuleta, Dry Amontillado NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryNutty, doughy, raisined with some charry, smoky character. A little bit loose on the finish - dusty and almost sour. (RH)Drink

2014-2016

£11.49 RRP 16

- César Florido, Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryPure apple fruit, gentle palate, soft and easy drinking. Beginner's sherry - nothing wrong with that! (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£12.99 RRP 16
- Hidalgo, El Tresillo Amontillado Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryDelicate, spicy, soft, rounded. Good, classically styled stuff. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
RRP £36.50 16
- Sanchez Ayala, Gabriela Oro NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de BarramedaOddly musty - hard to know if that is deliberate or not. A bit clumsy, especially for Manzanilla. (RH)Drink 2014-2015
£24.99 RRP 15.5
- Rey Fernando de Castilla, Classic NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de Barrameda*Best dry fortified, Wines From Spain Awards 2014.*
Classic, unmistakable salted nut character and green apple. Finishes with that mushroom funkiness so typical of Sherry. (RH)15% Drink 2013-2016
£11.83 Corks of Cotham, Woodwinters, Worth Brothers 15.5
- Gutiérrez-Colosia, Puerto Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryDry, smooth, quite tart. Pretty dilute - somewhat unsatisfying finish. (RH)Drink 2014-2015
£14.65 RRP 15.5
- Cazes, Ambré 2000 RivesaltesOrganic. Elegant tall bottle and attractive pale orange colour and some rancio notes on the nose but a little soft, raisiny and dull on the palate. Not expensive but not thrilling.16.5% Drink 2014-2015
£8.99 per half Majestic 15.5
- Sánchez Romate, Marismeño Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryPretty one-dimensional palate, brief finish. (RH)Drink 2014-2015
£15.35 RRP 15
- Álvaro Domecq, 1730 30 Year Old VORS Oloroso NV Jerez - Xérès - SherrySomewhat subdued nose: bitter, sour, almost citric. Has an almost emetic sourness. (RH)Drink 2014-2017
15
- Sanchez Ayala, Gabriela NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de BarramedaFeatherlight, but lengthy with good balance. A bit simple - fresh citrus fruit to the fore. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£14.49 RRP 15
- Hidalgo, La Panesa Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - SherrySubtle, floral, semi-sour. Perfectly nice if a little simple. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
£38.50 RRP 15
- Álvaro Domecq, La Jaca NV Manzanilla-Sanlúcar de BarramedaCompact, bready, a little salty, fine and refreshing - but a tad short. (RH)Drink 2014-2015
15
- Sánchez Romate, Bella Luna Pedro Ximénez NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryRich, thick, demerara sugar, milky coffee and caramel. All sugar of course, but it just about gets away with it somehow. (RH)15% Drink 2013-2016
£6.95 Great Western Wine, Blanco & Gomez, Framlingham Wine Shop 15
- Álvaro Domecq, La Janda Fino NV Jerez - Xérès - SherryRich and scented but also TCA tainted, it seems. Dirty barrels? Certainly infected by something somewhere along the line. (RH)Drink 2014-2016
14

SWEET

- JJ Prüm, Wehlener Sonnenuhr Goldkapsel Riesling Auslese 2012 Mosel White currant, leafy, lots of character on the nose already! Drink 2014-2040
£270 per case of 6 Justerini & Brooks 18.5
- Bott, Aszú 6 Puttonyos 2008 Tokaj Honey, marmalade, lemon juice. Sumptuous, indulgent, exotic and thoroughly delicious. Crystallised ginger, floral character, citrus peel. Great length. And miraculously fresh on the finish. Masterful. (RH) Drink 2014-2024
18.5
- Weinbach, Faller & Filles, Cuvée d'Or Pinot Gris Sélection de Grains Nobles 2002 Alsace Deep orange tawny. Apricot syrup. Drink 2008-2018
£575 per case of 12 halves Justerini & Brooks 18
- Weinbach, Faller & Filles, Furstentum Gewurztraminer Vendanges Tardives 1994 Alsace Grand Cru Not much Gewurztraminer aromatic identity on the nose. Mint, caramel and orange marmalade on the palate – thick but not heavy, somehow – a lovely trick! No oxidative character at all, incredible length and beautiful fragrance. (RH) Drink 1999-2019
17.5
- Bentomiz, Ariyanas Terruño Pizarroso Dulce 2007 Málaga Sun-dried Moscatel de Alexandria, six months in French oak. Deep burnished gold. Intensely aromatic – marmalade, bitter orange and caramelised apricot. Still manages to be fragrant even though it is so intense. Super sweet and tangy but complex too – the oak is in the background giving just a touch of spice. Very long and delicious with an aftertaste of honeyed apricots. (JH) Drink 2012-2017
17.5
- Fritz Haag, Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr Nr 10 Riesling Auslese 2007 Mosel Racy with definite botrytis. Spritz. Very fresh and light. Very racy. Filigree with still some chew. Drink 2010-2030
£220 per case of 12 Justerini & Brooks 17.5
- Pelle, Zsofia 2011 Tokaj Late harvest. Marmalade, lime curd, caramelised nuts and a heavenly, fabulous succulence. Just a touch of vegetal character to finish. Wonderful! (RH) 11% Drink 2014-2018
£22 per 50 cl Theatre of Wine 17.5
- Rolly-Gassmann, Kappelweg de Rorschwihr Riesling Vendanges Tardives 2000 Alsace Petrol and oil – the very picture of mature Riesling, and seems much more like Mosel than Alsace on the nose. Some charming sweetness on the palate, but it's not luscious. Honeyed fruits with allspice and a little grapefruit freshness to finish. (RH) Drink 2004-2020
17
- Trinity Hill, Gimblett Gravels Noble Viognier 2009 Hawke's Bay RS 200 g/l, approximately. Rich gold. Minty, marmalade, ginger. Really sweet and very unctuous. Superb richness and texture; superb volume of flavour. I'd actually like to see a little more new oak here, for even more complexity. (RH) 12.5% Drink 2012-2018
17
- Greywacke, Late Harvest Gewurztraminer 2009 Marlborough Pale gold. Intense and inviting aroma of very ripe apricots plus pineapple and a note of honey. Gewurztraminer's classic rose-like perfume is just discernible, more so on the palate, but the botrytis apricot and orange dominate. Some delicate almond character too. Unctuous and deeply sweet but with the acidity to keep it balanced. Viscous without being heavy. Delicious and with the potential to age further. (JH)
12% Drink 2013-2017
17
- Ch Pierre-Bise, Les Rouannières 2010 Coteaux du Layon Golden orange colour. Unusual nose: chamomile, hay and apricots. Honeyed and gorgeous on the palate. I'd love to try this with some hard cheeses. Silky texture, viscous but no heaviness. **GV** (JH) 10% Drink 2014-2018

£16.50 per 50 cl Stone, Vine & Sun 17

- Ch Richard, Coup de Coeur 2009 Saussignac Bergerac blend of botrytised Muscadelle, Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc. Round, golden and very sweet without masses of acidity but at its peak and deliverer of huge pleasure. At its peak now. **GV**11.5% Drink 2012-2016
£24.99 per 50cl Handford 17
- Kyperounda, Commandaria 2005 Cyprus Deep gold. Aromas of stewed - reduced to intensity - apricot, tangy marmalade, and similarly intense and tangy on the palate, with very good freshness and a gently warming finish. Delicious and finely made. (JH)13% Drink 2014-2014
£17.95 Berry Bros & Rudd 17
- Dom de la Renardière NV Macvin du Jura Lots of fun, almond essence and freshness. I think any household would wallop this over Christmas. So bright. Maybe it is walnuts...?!
18% Drink 2014-2016
£25 The Wine Society 16.5
- Bentomiz, David Naturalmente Dulce 2012 Vino de España 100% Merlot. First vintage 2009. *They wanted to make a wine that would go with chocolate. Bought-in fruit. Sun-dried grapes (rather than late harvest) so that the acidity was retained. 4 months in French oak - 1 to 2 years old. 15-18 days' ferment. RS 115 g/l RS.*
Aroma of orange and spice and doesn't really smell sweet. Very slight hint of raisins. Nice dry tannins to keep it dry with sweet cherry in the middle. Cherries and fig. Works with game and with chocolate figs, apparently. Very good and definitely a food wine thanks to the tannins. 13.5% Drink 2014-2016
16.5
- Ch Rieussec 2008 Sauternes Pale orange and relatively low in acidity but with lots of depth, richness and complexity. Cheese, please! But this is really a candidate for the cellar rather than the table for the moment. Drink 2016-2034
£65 Handford 16.5
- Barberani, Aleatico Passito 2007 IGT Umbria Deep purple-crimson. Perfumed and rich. Wild dark berries and cassis, with sage and juniper notes looming up on the finish. Real tang and intensity, despite the opulent sweetness of the wine. A purple explosion! Really quite delicious and a rather good lower-alcohol alternative to port. (TC)13% Drink 2013-2022
16.5
- Clemente Guasti, Spumante NV Brachetto d'Aqui Pale strawberry red. Heady raspberry pop on the nose. Almost smells syrupy. Very sweet and frothy. Like liquidised strawberry mousse. Not astringent but a real challenge for food matching because it is too light for most sweet foods. Just sliced strawberries? A curiosity...6.5% Drink 2014-2015
£13.41 The Sampler 16
- Ch Tirecul La Gravière, Les Pins 2012 Monbazillac Not 100% clean and fresh but with great sweet apricot compote fruit. Very sweet. At the end of a meal people may not notice the lack of 100% purity. **GV**12.5% Drink 2014-2017
£12.95 per 50 cl Lea & Sandeman 16
- Barberani, Calcaia Muffa Nobile Dolce Superiore 2010 Orvieto Classico 'Muffa nobile' means noble rot. *The Calcaia vineyard has a particular microclimate which means that it is affected by thick fog on autumn mornings. They harvest five or six times during November and December, with a very long slow fermentation. Grechetto, Trebbiano Procanico, Sauvignon Blanc.*
Pale amber and smells of marmalade. Surprisingly light on the palate, layers of clementine peel, white currants and honeybush tea. Lots of orange. A slight hole towards the finish, but it would be great with a slice of lemon drizzle cake! (TC)10.5% Drink 2013-2016
£20 The Wine Society 16
- Ch Barréjat, Moelleux 2012 Pacherenc du Vic-Bilh Honeyed apricots. Rich, juicy, sweet and

finely balanced. There's a slight grip to enhance its food friendliness. **GV** (JH)13% Drink 2014-2018

£12.50 Stone, Vine & Sun 16

- Casa Silva, Late Harvest 2012 Colchagua Semillon and Gewurz blend. Much, much richer and more convincing than the 2013. Deep-flavoured even if far from subtle. A little sticky but the balance is ok. 12.5% Drink 2014-2015
£8.95 per half from various independents 15.5
- Ch Vartely, Ice Wine 2011 Moldova Picked at -7 ° C. RS 210 g/l. Rich and sweet but a bit thick and jagged. Sherbet elixir.
10.5% Drink 2014-2016
£16.99 per half Adnams 15.5
- Dom de Pellehaut, L'Escoubasso Petit Manseng 2012 IGP Côtes de Gascogne Pale gold. Toasty, floral, Very sweet but not very deep-flavoured. Just a bit simple. I can't really see the grace of Petit Manseng here. 11% Drink 2014-2015
£12 per 50 cl Cambridge Wine Merchants, Thos Peatling 15.5
- Barberani, Villa Monticello Moscato Passito 2009 IGT Umbria 100% Moscato Bianco. 12 months in stainless steel. TA 5.6 g/l, RS 140 g/l. In a 500 ml bottle.
Pale amber. Lusciousness balloons out of the glass, peach and plum dripping with honey. Tastes not unlike a teaspoon of liquid apricot jam. Very rich and a lovely expression of fruit, but it does seem to lack a bit of acidity, giving it a somewhat cloying finish. You'd tire of this after a very small glass. (TC) 10.5% Drink 2012-2015
15.5
- Ch Les Mingets 2010 Sauternes Golden, scented with barley sugar and almond paste. Fat on the palate and lacks freshness to balance. (JH) 13.5% Drink 2014-2020
£16.50 per half Stone, Vine & Sun 15
- Casa Silva, Late Harvest 2012 Colchagua 12.5% Drink 2014-2015
£8.95 per half from various independents 15
- Dom des Baumard, Carte d'Or 2012 Coteaux du Layon Screw capped half bottle. Rather tired nose and watery on the palate. Where's the Chenin cut? Light toastiness but pretty dull really. 12% Drink 2014-2016
£9.99 The Vineyard of Dorking, Sheridan Coopers 15
- Gorka Izagirre, Arima Vendimia Tardía 2010 Bizkaiko Txakolina Best sweet wine, Wines From Spain Awards 2014.
Not hugely sweet, not hugely interesting either. Good acidic freshness, but precious little complexity. (RH) 12.5% Drink 2013-2015
£17.03 Buon Vino, Noel Young Wines, Philip Pruden Wines 14.5
- Casa Silva, Late Harvest 2013 Colchagua Light and crisp and floral. Lacks intensity. Just (quite) sweet and simple. Fast fade. 12.5% Drink 2014-2015
£8.95 per half from various independents 14.5
- Grant Burge, 10 Year Old Tawny NV Barossa A blend of Grenache, Mataro and Shiraz. Matured in a solera.
Pecan brown. Not unlike an Oloroso on the nose - more so than a tawny port. Gingerbread and toasted coconut and almonds. A spicy savoury nose that reminds me of sawmills and old furniture shops. Molasses and cola, dried figs, more coconut and cedar spice. Layered and just as savoury tasting as it smells despite that fig-syrup note and the rich slow texture. Clean finish. Very well made! (TC)
19% Drink 2014-2025
17
- Ch La Tomaze 2013 Coteaux du Layon Rablay Quite luscious and almondy but still a little astringent. Baked-apple character. 12% Drink 2015-2023

£15.95 Yapp 16

- Dom Bellegarde, Cuvée Tradition Moelleux 2012 Jurançon Not much nose but fabulous balance of tang, acidity and sweetness. Foie gras wine? So direct and revitalising. **VG**V13.5% Drink 2014-2016
£14.95 Yapp 17

PORT

- Quinta do Noval, 20 Year Old Tawny NV Port Pretty sweet, rosy tawny colour with more depth than Graham's and Taylor's 20 Year Olds. Great depth and toffee and real age. Sumptuous, complex.
20.5% Drink 2014-2018
£40 The Wine Society 18.5
- Taylor's, 20 Year Old Tawny NV Port Frosted bottle. Vegy, savoury, not that sweet and refined. Lots of fun. Silky smooth. 20% Drink 2014-2018
£34 The Wine Society 18
- Quinta do Vesuvio 2004 Port Seems a little raw after three 20 Year Old Tawnys! But correct and very fine. Sinewy and with great integrity, but quite dry.
20.5% Drink 2017-2035
£36 The Wine Society 18
- Graham's, 20 Year Old Tawny NV Port Squat bottle. Nutty and very sweet. Tart and lively and fresh. Almost raw! 20% Drink 2016-2020
£37 The Wine Society 16.5
- Ramos Pinto, Quinta da Ervamoira 10 Year Old Tawny NV Port Bricky colour. Spirit on the nose. Full of lovely tawny flavours - plums, spice, but a little bit hard on the finish. (JH) 20% Drink 2014-2018
£17.50 per 50 cl Stone, Vine & Sun 15.5