

Ramón Bilbao holds WAW, the first symposium on future trends in the world of wine

- **The wine company brought together more than 200 acquaintances and customers in Haro for a day of knowledge and the latest trends in the sector.**
- **Lounge wine service, catering training, storytelling, neuroscience applied to the perception of wine, and new digital formats were the topics addressed by internationally recognised experts.**
- **A tasting of eight Rioja wines from the 2001 vintage was one of the activities to prove most popular with the public.**



Links to more photos of the symposium: <https://we.tl/t-ZeK2olStd4>

Haro, 22nd June 2022. Yesterday, Ramón Bilbao held WAW, the first symposium on future trends in the world of wine, at the Teatro Bretón in the Rioja town of Haro, which is also the headquarters of the winery. WAW, which stands for We Are Wine, was first conceived as a meet-up where Zamora Company staff and a small group of professionals from the sector were able to learn about trends in the world of wine from varied perspectives.



Hosted by Ferran Centelles, head of beverages of the ElBulli Foundation and delegate for Spain of the famous English wine portal jancisrobinson.com, the event was also attended by renowned professionals from the world of wine: director of training for the GuildSomm portal, Christopher Tanghe; director and founder of The Wine Studio, Elisa Errea; director of the Spanish Wine Academy project, Alberto Saldón, who led a round-table discussion on the present and future of the world of wine; managing director at Bodegas Ramón Bilbao, Rodolfo Bastida; project director at Series Nemo branding studio, Carles Anadón; director at Wine Intelligence in Spain and South America, Juan Park, who shared his vision of the importance of storytelling on a wine label; neuroscience expert Qian Janice Wang, PhD, from the Department of Food Science at Aarhus University (Denmark), who presented her studies on neuroscience in wine service; and Alejandro Sánchez-Gómez, Global Wine Brands Director & Wines Marketing Manager at Zamora Company, who gave a brief introduction to the concepts of NFT and blockchain as premiumisation opportunities for the future of the sector.

Sharing knowledge about wine and the future

The day began with a welcome from Javier Pijoan, CEO at Zamora Company, and Rodolfo Bastida, followed by a speech from Centelles, who explained the various ways of serving wine: French, Russian or English, each with their own particular characteristics, and concluding with the need for the person who serves the wine - the wine waiter - to make their clients relaxed as well as to inform and persuade them.

The round-table talk on training dealt with the importance of always being up to date, which was the focus of Master Sommelier Christopher Tanghe, while Elisa Errea highlighted the number of non-professionals who come to the WSET studies taught at The Wine Studio, and how this school teaches us to connect concepts, rather than memorise them; Alberto Saldón talked about the new Spanish Wine Academy website and underlined that, in order to learn about wine, the greatest requirements are passion and interest.

The content of a wine label was the central theme discussed by Rodolfo Bastida, Juan Park and Carles Anadón. Bastida went back to the first wines bottled at the request of Thomas Jefferson for his residence in Paris, and how this visual image has evolved since then. Anadón added that this content also has to do with the different people that have had come into the sector, who have given increasing importance to the way in which a wine's characteristics are portrayed. He spoke of the non-verbal language of a bottle, from its shape to its colour, the capsule, the weight or texture, which may or may not encourage the consumer to read the story on the label. Park spoke about the perspective of the market studies in which he specialises, mentioning that consumers are not only guided by a label when choosing a wine, but also by the brand, which

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may be more or less known to them. All the speakers highlighted the malpractice of promising something on the label that is not provided on the inside, because it leads to disappointment. At the end of the debate, the new image of the Ramón Bilbao bottles was presented, of which Anadón, designer of the restyling, highlighted the importance of the image in this new era.

Dr. Janice Wang explored taste perception, what it is and how it works, and explained that the brain predicts before something happens, and is able, when faced with a stimulus such as a smell, to trigger expectations. This is a survival instinct (which protects against poison, for example, because the smell makes the individual wary the smell is dangerous). Tasting, she said, involves all the senses, including her favourite, sound: the right music in the restaurant, she stresses, can affect how much a customer spends and their expectations of consumption and enjoyment. One of her experiments showed that, with different types of music, the perception of flavours was different, and that some sounds accentuate bitter tastes, while others accentuate sweet ones.

Alejandro Sánchez Gómez talked about the possibilities of blockchain as a marketing and information space for premium wines, which become completely traceable with this technology, making it possible to know where they have been stored, what their price is, who their owners are or have been, and so on. NFTs can be developed for high-value wines with which transactions are carried out, and this will bring in communities via these elements, whose members can be offered exclusive products with high added value.

Discovering Lalomba and travelling back in time





Following the series of presentations, WAW continued with a visit to Lalomba's facilities with the opportunity to taste, in addition to the winery's three estate wines (Finca Lalinde Rosado, Finca Valhonta and Finca Ladero), a new Garnacha red wine, Finca Ilex, which is fresh on the market and is made special by the fact that it has not been aged in oak like the other wines in the range.

This visit was followed by a historic tasting of the 2001 vintage, one of the best in the history of La Rioja, where two wines from Ramón Bilbao - Gran Reserva and Mirto - were joined by other big labels from wineries in Haro and the surrounding area, presented by their respective enologists and technical directors: Viña Ardanza, from La Rioja Alta, S.A., Prado Enea, from Bodegas Muga, Viña Tondonia, from R. López de Heredia, Valenciso, from the winery of the same name, La Vicalanda, from Bodegas Bilbaínas-Viña Pomal, and RODA II, from Bodegas RODA. All the winemakers present were grateful to Ramón Bilbao and Rodolfo Bastida for their generosity and presence at this tasting event, which highlighted the magnificent quality of the vintage and the varieties of wine it produced.