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June 23, 2010

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Wednesday, June 23, 2010

## One Tequila, Two Tequila

by **Rob Bralow**, Wine Post Editor

Drinking tequila to excess is the quintessential American rite of passage. At bars across the country, 20-somethings are giving each other cheap shots of Jose Cuervo or Sauza. However, the super-premium category of tequila has grown by almost 33% since 2002, which means more people are thinking of tequila as a premium liquor and not just as a binge drink.

The base fruit used to make tequila is the blue agave, a spiky **succulent** (a plant that retains water. eg. a cactus) that is related to the yucca plant. The plant requires between eight and fifteen years of growing before it is ready to harvest. When you consider how much tequila is consumed at frat parties, there must be an extremely large area where the blue agave is grown (some people call it Mexico).



[www.tequilapartida.com](http://www.tequilapartida.com)





Tequila has several types that it comes in:

*Blanco* ("white") or *plata* ("silver"): clear spirit, aged less than two months in stainless steel or neutral oak barrels and then bottled

*Joven* ("young") or *oro* ("gold"): is the result of blending Silver Tequila with Reposado and either Añejo or extra Añejo Tequila

*Reposado* ("rested"): aged a minimum of two months, but less than a year in oak barrels

*Añejo* ("aged" or "vintage"): aged a minimum of one year, but less than three years in oak barrels

*Extra Añejo* ("extra aged" or "ultra aged"): aged a minimum of three years in oak barrels

Like Spanish wine regions, Mexico has a governing body that oversees the production of tequila called the **Consejo Regulador del Tequila**. The Consejo enforces the regulations regarding the aging and labeling of all tequila and allows the use of its mark, which is the letters CRT inside of a box, to show that the tequila has met the requirements for how it is labeled (Blanco, Reposado, etc.).

So how is tequila doing? Just fine I think. I sat down with two expert taste specialists with many years of tequila experience, Leah and Heather. That might be over stating the truth slightly, but regardless we had some interesting insights. For this tasting we did not have a very wide selection to taste from, but I thought you might be interested in our notes. Each of these tequilas we tasted by itself with a splash of water (<1 oz) to release flavors and aromas.



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**Partida Blanco** - A much lighter style, with a good deal of mineral aromas. It reminded me of the smell of rain. The flavor was earthy, with a smooth heat that added another enjoyable level to the flavor.

**Partida Añejo** - Here the alcohol started to take over. The smell was all hot caramel and toasty aromas. The flavor was much sweeter, showing caramel, vanilla, and slightly singed sugar.



**Partida Reposado** - The nose had great candied apple, rich with caramel and an overall floral background. The taste was smooth and light, confirming on the palate what was on the nose.



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