

KIRKUS REVIEWS

EXPLORING WINE REGIONS – MÉXICO

BY MICHAEL C. HIGGINS · RELEASE DATE: DEC. 10, 2024

A rich guidebook for dedicated foodies and newcomers alike that will inspire readers to make their own travel memories.

Higgins offers a work that's part love letter and part travel guide to Mexico's underappreciated wine regions.

An experienced world traveler and devout oenophile, the author opens this book with an admission: Despite his interest and access—he lives close by in California—he had never taken the time to dive into the rich and diverse viticulture in Mexico. This work is, in many ways, the diary of that finally undertaken journey. The guide is split up by region. Readers follow Higgins first to Valle de Guadalupe, where they learn about the area's unique terroir and are presented with the author's theory as to why certain wines their taste "salty" or "rotten" (sterilization, or, in the case of "rotten" wines, *not enough* sterilization). Higgins goes on to describe the fantastic and surprising gastronomy to be found in the locale and provides readers with a helpful list of wineries and restaurants, complete with lush photographs of enviable dishes. (Several restaurants receive full pages of praise and description.) Readers will partake in Higgins' sense of wonder at his surroundings as he narrates moments like finding a nearly entirely hidden eatery: "You are... meandering along a dirt road as it winds amongst oak trees, eventually, you will arrive at a massive oak tree that must be hundreds of years old. The entire restaurant is under this ancient tree. It's a totally natural dirt floor." The author then proceeds to Guanajuato and Querétaro, dining with friends along the way; he takes in some art at Casa Frida, and even encounters some wild animals in Ensenada. Higgins' book is essentially a travel guide, and it is an excellent one, not only for its wealth of useful information—the specificity he provides for each highlighted winery and restaurant is truly impressive—but for the joy which animates the entire project. From the world-class photographs to the enthusiasm for the region's offerings— "gastronomy and libation opportunities," as the author calls them—Higgins' work succeeds in shining a warm light on an underappreciated destination.

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