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by Publishers Weekly



With this stellar fourth entry in the Exploring Wine Regions series, author and photojournalist Higgins performs a welcome service, introducing the English-speaking wine world to Mexican viticulture, terroirs, and above all wines. This inviting, informative, highly practical, and unabashedly opinionated (“I have only included wineries that have good-tasting wines,” he promises) guide to touring, imbibing, and eating refreshes both for Higgins’s choice to venture beyond familiar locales in Europe and California and for the rich pleasures of that tour itself, captured in gorgeous photography and clear, descriptive prose that suggests the richness of the many tasting experiences that Higgins recommends as he profiles wineries, bistros, restaurants, microbreweries, and more. As the subtitle suggests, these suggestions go beyond wine to include food—the “exquisite” cuisine of the Purepecha Plateau looks particularly inspired—plus lodgings and activities.

Higgins’s survey of the premium wines he encountered in all these regions opens new doors to the adventurous wine traveler. The focus is on Baja California’s Valle de Guadalupe, which has boomed in wine production in recent decades, plus the states of Querétaro and Guanajuato. Ten years ago, Higgins notes, the latter state had eight wineries. Today, it has nearly 50 and counting. So fresh is this territory that Higgins addresses a question some readers might harbor: what if one is “not sure” about Mexican wines? Such uncertainty is “understandable,” he writes, before digging with persuasive evidence and excitement into the promise, pedigree, and likely future prominence of the nation’s viticulture.

Higgins writes in an engagingly direct, unfussy style, unclogged with the hyperbole and specialized vocabulary of much wine writing. Rather than showcase his erudition, Higgins celebrates wine, food, and locations worth discovering. He covers a host of off-the-beaten-track wineries, restaurants, and hotels with clear-eyed, super-localized tips for travel, packing, and getting the most out of the trip. Readers will find their appetites whetted and senses of adventure aroused.

Takeaway: Gorgeous, practical guide to touring Mexico’s booming wine regions.

Production Grades

Cover: **A**

Design and typography: **A**

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