Tempranillo is an ultra-accessible varietal that plays well with a large variety of different foods. Go ahead and give this Spanish Tapas Pizza recipe a try, perfect for a small get together or as a late-night companion to that evening glass of wine. For some variation and testing, switch up the toppings and pick up an additional bottle or two of Tempranillo to gain better insight into the versatility of the crown varietal of Spain. ¡Impresionante!

### Spanish Tapas Pizza
Sourced from goodhousekeeping.com

**Ingredients**
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 prebaked thin pizza crust, large
- ½ c marinara sauce
- ½ c chorizo sausage
- 1 c Manchego cheese, shredded
- ½ c roasted red peppers
- ½ c red onion, small
- 3 Tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped

**Directions**
Preheat oven to 425 F.
Brush large cookie sheet with oil.
Place crust on prepared cookie sheet.
Spread marinara sauce evenly on crust.
Top with Manchego cheese, sausage, red peppers and onion.
Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until crust is golden brown and cheese has melted. Garnish with chopped parsley.

Getting To Know Navarra…

While Rioja may be known as Spain's preeminent wine producing region, its bordering neighbor, Navarra, deserves attention as well. The Navarra is situated along the northeastern boundary of neighboring Rioja in Northern Spain. Like Rioja, the climate of Navarra differs greatly across its subzones. An Atlantic climate is enjoyed in the northwest; the northeast is more continental while the Southern climate is Mediterranean. The climate and Navarra’s proximity to France, greatly impacts the choice of varietals grown.

Historically speaking, Navarra was a powerhouse for Garnacha (Grenache) production. Throughout the 20th century, the old vine Garnacha was being used to make phenomenal rosados (rosé) and used as a core to many juicy red blends. The French influence was crucial to bringing more international varietals to the region including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Chardonnay. Tempranillo transitioned from neighboring Rioja as well. The result of these influences and history of Garnacha has led to a renaissance of producing more mainstream wines. Garnacha production has dipped with the introduction of other varietals but I always like keeping an eye out for the truly old vine Garnacha wines from Navarra.

Today, Navarra vineyard sites have transitioned to growing more Tempranillo and international varietals such as Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. The convergence of old school and new school gives all palates an opportunity for enjoyment.

If you find yourself in Navarra for Pamplona’s Running of the Bulls, you may want to venture to a few of the up-and-coming wineries…preferably after the running!

Peace + Happiness,
Dustin Best

Vino Lingo: Mutation

A change in a grape’s genetic structure that is caused by a bottle of Ooze from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Ok, not really. Mutations are strictly sporadic and are responsible for some of the great white wines we enjoy today. Genetic mutations of the Pinot Noir grape spawned Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc, and Garnacha led us to Garnacha Blanca. Whites from Reds: it’s in their DNA!

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Pricum Primeur • 2012
$24.99 Code 2931
"Variatel notes of cherries and red roses highlight this prieto picudo, with its delightfully wild edge of tannins. The wine’s acidity makes it feel juicy, a friendly red for pizza. This comes from ancient vines, some more than 100 years old."
—90 POINTS, Wine & Spirits Magazine, June 2015
Winemaker Raul Perez does a fantastic job focusing on small production wines. Raul comes through once again with this 100% Prieto Picudo. Prieto has a nice bit of natural acidity that is reflected well in this wine while remaining in sync with the oak-softened tannins. — Dustin Best

Adrás Godello Ribeira Sacra • 2012
$15.99 Code 2933
"Pale yellow. Mineral-laced aromas of pear, green apple and honeysuckle, plus a touch of lemon zest. Brisk, sharply focused citrus and orchard fruit flavors show impressive clarity and cut, gaining spiciness with air. Closes with lingering orange pith and floral character and very good persistence."
—90 POINTS, Vinous, September 2013
One of my favorite white Spanish varietals is Godello, due to its versatility. Much like Chardonnay, Godello is very impressionistic. Godello is fully capable of taking in some oak, making it broader and richer, or none, like this Adrás, giving it more zip and refreshing nuances. — Dustin Best

Bodegas Príncipe de Viana Graciano Roble • 2013
$24.99 Code 2935
"Varietal notes of cherries and red roses highlight this prieto picudo, with its delightfully wild edge of tannins. The wine’s acidity makes it feel juicy, a friendly red for pizza. This comes from ancient vines, some more than 100 years old."
—91 POINTS, Vinous, September 2014
Winemaker Raul Perez does a fantastic job focusing on small production wines. Raul comes through once again with this 100% Prieto Picudo. Prieto has a nice bit of natural acidity that is reflected well in this wine while remaining in sync with the oak-softened tannins. — Dustin Best

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