



Carlos Moro with ESDOR Cosméticos products (above); Bodega Emina (right)

EDITORS' NOTE Carlos Moro's family has been tied to the land, vineyards, and wine for the better part of 800 years. Moro started his wine dream with Matarromera and over the years, acquired and built other wineries in various regions. With Moro's vision, Matarromera has become a diversified and highly qualified Spanish wine showcase. A deep understanding and respect for the land and his passion for wine have made Moro one of Spain's most influential wine-making personalities.

COMPANY BRIEF In 1994, Grupo Matarromera (www.grupomatarromera.com) was born in the heart of the Ribera del Duero. Since then, it has become one of the most important groups of wineries on the national scene, with three wineries in the Ribera del Duero: Matarromera, Emina and Rento; one in the D.O. Cigales: Valdelosfrailes; one in the D.O. Rueda: Emina Rueda; and the latest acquisition in Toro: Bodega CYAN. In addition, there is the Distillery del Duero, the only one in the area. Matarromera also launched its own olive oil, Emina, and cosmetics line, ESDOR Cosméticos.

How do you define the heritage of Grupo Matarromera and how has it evolved?

Our company has an 800-year-old tradition in Spain. I studied cultural engineering at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid and later had the opportunity to take the company over from my parents. My dream was to create one of the best wines in the world.

I created Grupo Matarromera in 1988. We had a lot of success in 1995 – the company was recognized then as having the best wine in the world in international competition. It had been 10 years since a wine in Spain had received this accolade. That's when I realized we not only had a good wine but a great company.

Moro's Mission

An Interview with Carlos Moro,
President and Chief Winemaker, Grupo Matarromera

My family then bought more property to make another top quality wine, which we developed in our white wine arena. We then started producing organic wines.

When I reached a minimum level of development, I began to invest in R&D. We are currently spending 30 percent of our turnover on it. We grew into cosmetics and nonalcoholic wines, as well as sustainability in the numerous areas that we are active in. We now have 18 new products in development at this moment to market all over the world.

We have a separate company to focus on nonalcoholic wines, because this is a new opportunity. Many people in the world are oriented toward eating or drinking fewer calories. But the wine was difficult to make because separating the alcohol was not easy work.

How broad is distribution for the wines? Is your main market still Europe?

As of this moment, we are in about 75 countries. We're all over Europe and all over America, except in the south. We have had a company in Chile for three years, but it's been difficult because Argentina and Chile produce wine as well. But we are also present in Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico – which is a very important reach for us – as well as the Dominican Republic and Panama. We are also in Sweden and in Russia, where Matarromera is one of the top wines in their restaurants. Over the past five years, we decided to take our product and create companies in the U.S. and China. We also have the opportunity to buy 30 percent of a company in the Philippines. So we are doing well.

In cosmetics, we now have a new venture in the Benelux countries, Mexico, and the Philippines.

In the United States, we're going to develop Matarromera USA, but we're open to a collaboration with another company to develop nonalcoholic wine or cosmetics, as well as for applying polyphenols to humans or animals.

With a proliferation of wines coming to market, how tough is it to show what makes a brand unique?

It's necessary to respect the experience of drinking wine, which is the moment you are sharing a glass of wine with your friends or competitors. This is challenging, because you must create a reaction in the consumer. When you are drinking Matarromera, you are not only drinking a good general wine from Europe; you are drinking a wine that is one of the best in the world, that is engaged with sustainability, with



the concept of a clean process of production. When somebody has the experience of drinking and they feel comfortable, as happens with our wines, they will stay with the product, but this is more difficult to achieve because you must translate that to the consumer. If not, there are thousands of wines to choose from at any moment.

You have received many awards for sustainability. How have you developed your environmental focus?

It's a structural concept of the company. We are in the Duero Valley and we want to stay clean and maintain the growth of the harbor.

We want to use the new technologies to save energy. It's excellent to use solar energy for electrical production. We have five models producing 100 kilowatts each. We have also implemented a system for biomass – to use all the rest of the vineyards to heat the Emina cellar.

The Bodega Emina is the first integrated winery for sustainability because we produce more energy than we can consume and we recycle everything – we recycle the wood via biomass and we use absolutely all the components of the grapes. With the grapes we make the wine; after the wine, we have a distillery where we extract the rest of the alcohol to produce an excellent distilled liquid; and the rest we use to extract the polyphenols, which is in the grapes – only about 35 percent is taken in the production of wine, but the rest is in the skin and seed of the grapes and we extract the polyphenols from that.

Is there an understanding of the quality wine Spain can produce?

Spain is now one of the top producers of wine in the world and has invested in new technology and new service over the past 25 years. Spain has also been successful in all of the international competitions with its top quality wines.

That said, we are very bad at commercialization and marketing. We are comfortable in Spain, but it has been tough to sell and present elsewhere, and there are no networks for commercialization in the rest of the world.

Now with the economic crisis, younger generations are going abroad. We have this marketing weakness so we have to compete. In China, for instance, our wine is quality but we offer it at cheaper prices than other wines.

I was recently in a room with 144 sellers from all over the world and we got a great response. I am sure we have one of the best wines in the global market, because both consumers and leading critics have consistently given us very high ratings. ●