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wines worth sharing

## Valdespino 'El Candado' Pedro Ximénez NV

**Grape Varietal:** 100% Pedro Ximénez

**Growing Region:** Jerez - Spain

**Chief Winemaker:** Eduardo Ojeda

I have had the pleasure of spending some quality time in Jerez - Spain and visiting with the team at Valdespino. Which is one of the oldest bodegas in Jerez, originating in 1264, when King Alfonso X gave Don Alfonso Valdespino the gift of land in the city of Jerez. He was one of 24 Christian Knights who fought to regain the city of Jerez from the Moors. The stables and cellars at winery standing today along with commercial activities are thought to date as far back as 1430.

Valdespino Sherries are among the very best, with their Inocente Sherry arguably still the best Fino on the market. The name 'Candado' is the Spanish word for 'padlock' - and each bottle is sealed with one along with two keys. It is an old tradition which is still preserved at the winery and protects this delicious wine ageing slowly in casks, from anyone wishing to steal even a glass. The idea was that a butt from this solera used to be locked for special occasions for the Valdespino family - who wanted to ensure the wine was safe and secure.

The Pedro Ximénez grapes are harvested when they are extra ripe - then left out in the sun to dry/ dehydrate for at least two weeks on straw mats. This concentrates the natural sugars through evaporation, turning them into raisins. A very sweet must is then obtained after pressing, which is fermented and then fortified to around 17-18% Alc. using grape spirit of 96%. The wine is then aged in a Solera system made up of three 'criadera' and a 'solera', made from American oak casks and fractionally blended. The wine is aged 100% oxidatively and has an average age of 10-12 years. The final wine must meet requirements to show standard characteristics and qualities expected by Eduardo for this Pedro Ximénez Sherry.

In your glass you will be greeted by a rich and alluring viscous liquid with a deep mahogany colour and glistening surface. The aromas seem to leap from the glass hypnotising your senses with intense aromas of raisins, dried figs, prunes and dates, along with subtle hints of coffee, nougat and allspice. The palate is rich, smooth, unctuous and unashamedly sweet, expressing flavours that seem to have no end - rich toffee, dark caramel, Turkish coffee, molasses, black walnut along with cloves, cinnamon, cardamom, caramelized citrus peel and much more - making it an excellent partner for rich desserts or as a dessert in itself. *Treat yourself - this wine is definitely worth sharing.*

This Valdespino 'El Candado' Pedro Ximénez NV has 18% Alc./vol and 405g/L residual sugar. Chill and serve in a dessert or aromatic wine glass at 8-10°C.

### **Cellaring Potential:**

Drinking perfectly well this season; plus, will hold well for another 8-10 years.

### **Food Pairing Suggestions:**

Perfect wine pairing with sticky pudding, tiramisu, chocolate hazelnut torte, caramel cheesecake, poured over walnut ice-cream, and figs with blue cheese - *enjoy.*

***Valdespino 'El Candado' Pedro Ximénez is second to no dessert on earth.***

