

In the business of TASTE



TEQUILA BLANCO
100% PURO AGAVE AZUL

By Christina Staalstrom

AMERICANS ARE DRINKING A LOT OF TEQUILA, and we're not talking Margaritas, tequila shots, and floaters anymore. Tequila is rising to one of the fastest-growing spirits categories in the United States, with 181 new entrants recorded in 2019. The question on every tequila producer's mind is, what will resonate with consumers? Celebrity endorsements play well in our new "influencer" culture, putting tequila in the spotlight on social media. But trend reports all seem to agree that today's consumer is looking for premium products, authentic production methods, and sustainable practices. In other words, small batch or handcrafted tequilas with a story.

Casa Dragones is very much at the forefront of this tequila craze with a portfolio of ultra-premium handcrafted tequilas that have come to change the way we view this 500-year-old Mexican elixir. As for the celebrity stardom bit, while Bertha González Nieves, CEO and co-founder of Casa Dragones has certainly earned this recognition in her own right, the brand's growth trajectory is largely driven by its mission to shape the future of the industry through innovation and modern, sustainable production.

"Innovation is at the foundation of our company," says González Nieves, a Mexican native and Master Tequilera. She is the heart of Casa Dragones, whose meticulous attention to detail impacts everything from the harvest to custom-made barrels. Staying true to the authenticity of quality Mexican tequila and combining traditional craftsmanship with modern production and innovation, it has seemingly stumbled on the winning combination.

THE LOCALS BRAND PROFILE

"We are a small batch producer trying to push the conversation of the industry into the future, using the most sustainable, modern processes available," explains González Nieves. "We're in the business of taste, not in the business of volume."

The tequilas are produced in Jalisco on Mexico's western coast. Jalisco is one of five tequila producing states in Mexico and produces two main styles; the "Highlands" tequilas, grown in fields at elevations above 6,000 feet known for higher sugar content and fruitier flavor, and the "Lowlands" tequila, grown in fields on the valley floor delivering a more earthy, spicy, and herbal profile.

Casa Dragones is Lowlands tequilas with clean, crisp tastes, and bright, round finishes. The agave matures for at least 7 years in the rich volcanic soil before it is hand-harvested at the highest possible sugar content. Using spring water from the Volcano of Tequila's headwaters, Casa Dragones' modern and sustainable elaboration process results in less water usage, less energy, and less waste than any other process.

This independent producer's award-winning portfolio includes three expressions, each handcrafted and

designed to deliver extraordinary sipping experiences at the highest possible quality. Its goal is to entice sipping enthusiasts and expand the tequila category to a new set of drinkers.

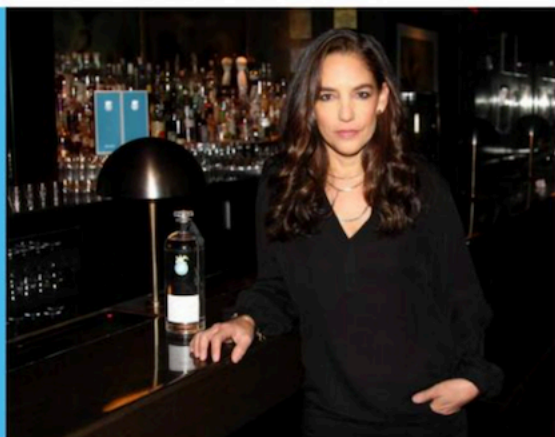
Its first entrant, Casa Dragones Joven, arrived on the tequila scene in 2009. The first expression quickly garnered attention of award winning-chefs and top sommeliers as a tequila uniquely crafted for pairing with food. This master blend is comprised of 100% Blue Agave silver and extra-aged tequila that has rested in new American oak barrels for five years. It is complex with a rich, silky body and fresh, inviting aromas. Its smooth taste and clean finish make for perfect sipping, food pairing, and is often poured in place of champagne in the spirit of celebration.

In 2014 the company aimed its sights at the everyday tequila enthusiast with Casa Dragones Blanco. Crafted to deliver the pure essence of agave, this 100% Blue Agave silver tequila is a testament to the brand's perfectionist aesthetic. Smooth and full-bodied with a fresh herbaceous aroma that culminates in a crisp, light finish is served on the rocks or in a cocktail and has been recognized as one of the best Blanco tequilas on the market.



“We’re in the business of taste, not in the business of volume.”

— BERTHA GONZÁLEZ NIEVES,
CEO AND CO-FOUNDER OF CASA DRAGONES



This year, its distinctive Añejo tequila, Casa Dragones Barrel Blend, hit the market amidst a national pandemic and unprecedented market conditions. The Barrel Blend is a 100% Blue Agave Añejo sipping tequila that achieves its distinctive character from being matured in two different wood barrels. The barrel selection process alone took two years of exploring the possibilities of wood, its flavors, and characteristics, before honing in on new French Oak and new American Oak, both sustainably sourced. At the end of the aging process, both barrel styles are blended to create a uniquely smooth, agave-forward taste profile. With the launch of Añejo Barrel Blend tequila, Casa Dragones targets not only tequila sippers but also sets its eyes on the dark-spirit imbiber hoping its smooth and rich tequila will entice the whiskey drinker to dip into the tequila category.



These premium tequilas deserve an equally thoughtfully designed vessel, and here again, Casa Dragones follows through with tribute to traditional Mexican apothecary bottles discovered by González Nieves at Mexico City's Museo de Arte Popular. These ancient bottles were historically covered with artisanal glass engravings called Pepita, whereby “pepitas,” or small teardrop-like seeds, are carved into the glass with the use of a grinding stone. The bottles we see are a modern take on this artisanal vessel; Casa Dragones Joven actually continues the tradition with its hand-engraved crystal decanter, while all three styles are hand labeled and hand signed as a tribute to the craftsmanship. Of course, if you are a die-hard Mexican art or a tequila collector, its limited-edition Casa Dragones Joven Tequila Art of Pepita bottle is a classic, hand-blown bottle hand-etched with this rare and ornate pepita design. Only 100 bottles are produced, each taking 100 hours to complete, so this \$1,500 tequila has become quite a collector's item.



There is no question that Casa Dragones knows how to make great quality tequilas with unique character. Like “Los Dragones de San Miguel de Allende” whose independent spirit sparked Mexico's independence from Spain on September 16, 1810, (hence the 16 emblem on each label), Casa Dragones honors its namesake by disrupting the tequila category. As an independent producer with a reputation for exploring and pushing boundaries, we look forward to the Casa Dragones team once again delivering something truly different and special.

