

# AULDEN CELLARS · Sotheby's

Press Release New York

For Immediate Release

New York | +1 212 606 7176 | Blair Hance | Blair.Hance@Sothebys.com  
London | 44 20 7293 6000 | Dan Abernethy | Dan.Abernethy@Sothebys.com

## Sotheby's to Sell Wines Direct from the Cellars of Bodegas Vega Sicilia

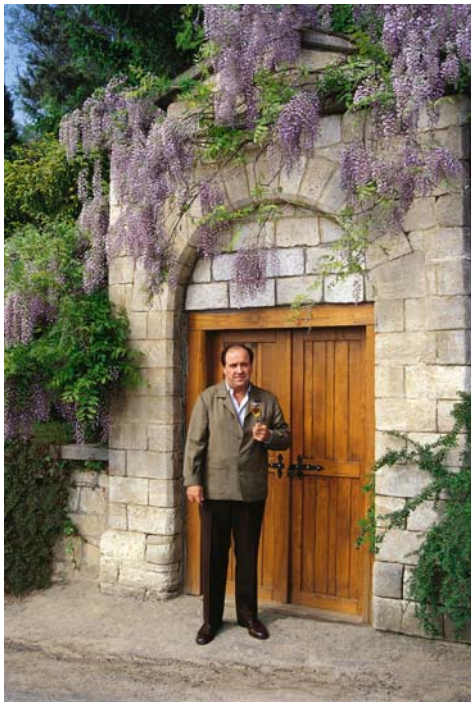


**New York, New York** – On November 14, 2009, Aulden Cellars-Sotheby's will sell a collection of wines direct from the legendary Spanish winemaker Bodegas Vega Sicilia owned by the Alvarez family. Following upon the tremendous success of Sotheby's June 2009 sale in London featuring wines direct from the Cellars of Château Cheval Blanc, Sotheby's once again brings collectors an unprecedented opportunity to acquire wines directly from one of the world's greatest and most revered wineries. The sale will comprise 214 lots estimated at more than \$350,000\*, with highlights including 436 bottles of the vineyard's signature wine Vega Sicilia Único from 1921 to 1999 and five vertical selections, including a vertical collection of 41 bottles from 1921-1999, all signed by the winery's general director Pablo Alvarez (est. \$15/25,000). Another highlight is the magnum collection of David Alvarez, which comprises a complete vertical of magnum #1 for each vintage of Vega Sicilia Único from 1960 to 1995, with the exception of 1968, which David enjoyed in celebration of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday (magnum #1482 will be included from the 1968 vintage) (est. \$12/20,000). Sotheby's sale will include not only wines from Bodegas Vega Sicilia, but also all of the wines from Grupo Vega Sicilia, which is led by Pablo Alvarez and includes Bodegas Alión, Bodegas Pintia, both in Spain, and Tokaj Oremus in Hungary.

Serena Sutcliffe, MW, International Head of Wine at Sotheby's, said, "This is one of the most exciting direct-from-the-property sales we have ever offered. Vega Sicilia is one of the world's most coveted wines and the only wine that literally created its area denomination. The Alvarez family look after this magnificent property with tremendous zeal, conscious that this is part of Spain's viticultural patrimony, while the



state-of-the-art winery is breathtaking in design and concept. Vertical tastings of Vega Sicilia form some of the most extraordinary experiences of my life, with vocabulary-defying aromas and tastes emerging after decades in bottle. There is an element of mystery in Vega – how does it achieve its stupendous complexity? The extreme climate of the Ribera del Duero can fix flavour in a very intense way and, when this is combined with the devoted care of Vega's owners, the result is show-stopping. This is the 'unique' vinous library you cannot miss.



Pablo Alvarez, General Director of Grupo Vega Sicilia, commented, "As owner of Vega Sicilia, Alion, Pintia and Oremus, it is an honor for my family to share a remarkable auction of our wines with Sotheby's, offering vintages from our cellars covering much of the last century in a special, once-in-lifetime occasion. My family started in the wine business in 1982 when we bought Vega Sicilia. Without any doubt, influenced by the prestige of the winery, the working philosophy was, and still is, the devotion to quality. We believe in quality above all, above trends, above uniformity. All four of the owners of Vega Sicilia since its founding in 1864 have shared this philosophy – this reverence for quality and respect for the wines and the terroir of a property such as Vega Sicilia. That philosophy, and the work of many people throughout these past 145 years, has brought our wines the joy of

worldwide respect."

Established in 1864 in Valbuena de Duero in the province of Valladolid, Vega Sicilia began when the founders bought 18,000 vine shoots of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Pinot Noir from Bordeaux intended

for the production of brandy; however in 1915 the vineyard's signature wines Vega Sicilia and Valbuena were developed solely for distribution to close friends and aristocracy, but not for sale purposes, thus giving birth to an exclusive and mysterious aura that surrounds the wine even today. In 1982, the winery and vineyards were purchased by David Alvarez, whose son Pablo Alvarez oversees all aspects of the vineyard and winery today. Under Pablo Alvarez's direction, Vega Sicilia has undergone a careful process of modernization in harmony with the traditional Spanish winemaking methods developed over centuries. Currently, the estate comprises 250 hectares of vineyard, 80% of which is planted Tempranillo or Tinto Fino, and the rest is a combination of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec.



Three wines are made at the Vega Sicilia estate: the legendary Vega Sicilia Único, the Reserva Especial and the “younger brother” Valbuena 5 años. Vega Sicilia uses only its own grapes and does not sell any of its wine in



bulk to other producers, thereby preserving the unique reputation of its wines. The Vega Sicilia Único is from each specific vintage and is released onto the market a minimum of ten years after the harvest (in the case of the great 1970, it was 25 years after the vintage). The Único comes from the estate's oldest vines, mostly Tempranillo with more Cabernet Sauvignon than Merlot. The Reserva Especial does not have a specific vintage on the label, as it carries on a long tradition of being a blend of wines from the best years, bringing together the balance of different vintages. However, the year the wine is released onto the market, as well as the three vintages included in the blend, are always shown. The Valbuena comes from younger wines, mostly

Tempranillo blended with more Merlot than Cabernet Sauvignon, and is released onto the market five years after the harvest, hence its full name. While Valbuena might not scale the heights of its bigger siblings, it has the structure, flavor, length and depth to last at least twenty years.

Sotheby's sale includes not only wines from Bodegas Vega Sicilia, but also all of the wines from Grupo Vega Sicilia, which includes Bodegas Alión, Bodegas Pintia and Tokaj Oremus. Bordering Bodegas Vega Sicilia on the River Duero is Bodegas Alión, which produces one wine: Alión Reserva Tinto. With Alión, the Alvarez

family creates a distinctly modern wine that still reflects the very high standards for which the family is revered. The wine combines the rich character of the historic River Duero region with the most up-to-date oenological practices, yielding a flavorful expression of the Tinto Fino grape that is distinctly different from the wines produced by Bodegas Vega Sicilia. Farther down the river Duero in the Toro region is Bodegas Pintia, whose wine, Pintia, reflects its warmer climate and rocky terrain. As well as the three vineyards in Spain, Grupo Vega Sicilia also owns and operates Tokaj Oremus in Hungary. Wines from the Tokaj region in Hungary represent a long tradition and were the first to be produced using grapes affected by noble rot. The wine from the Aszú region, in which the balance between sweetness and the freshness of the acidity reaches the fullness of its expression, was declared “*Vinum Regum, Rex Vinorum*” (wine of kings and king of wines) by Louis XIV, King of France in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Today, Tokaj Oremus produces a selection of wines that are in keeping with the traditions of this historic region and display their unique character. Wines produced by Tokaj Oremus include Mandolas, Late Harvest, Tokaj Aszú and Tokaj Eszencia.

Highlights from the sale include many large-format bottles and a selection from each of Grupo Vega Sicilia’s wineries:

- 436 bottles of Vega Sicilia Único 1921 - 1999 including,
  - 3 bottles of 1921 (est. \$2,500/4,000)
  - 3 bottles of 1936 (est. \$1,500/2,000)
  - 3 bottles of 1942 (est. \$3/5,000)
  - 6 bottles of 1953 (est. \$4/6,000)
  - 6 bottles of 1968 (est. \$6/9,000)
  - 6 magnums of 1968 (est. \$16/25,000)
  - 12 bottles of 1970 (est. \$6/9,000)
  - 6 magnums of 1975 (est. \$5,500/7,000)
  - 12 bottles of 1989 (est. \$3/4,000)
- 6 vertical selections including one of 41 bottles from 1921 – 1999 all signed by Pablo Alvarez
- 158 magnums of Vega Sicilia Único 1960 - 1995
- 181 bottles of Vega Sicilia Único Reserva Especial 1978 – 2009 releases
- 277 bottles and 72 magnums of Vega Sicilia Valbuena 1975 – 2004
- 191 bottles and 49 magnums of Alión 1991 – 2005
- 90 bottles and 45 magnums of Pintia 2001 – 2006
- 384 half liters of Tokaj 1947 – 2002

\*estimates do not include buyer’s premium

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