

Whether THE TASTING PANEL goes to the brand execs or the brands call us, there is an abundance of news to report, from the latest releases to behind-the-scenes experiences with some of the world's most influential importers, growers, distillers. . . well, you name it.

Brief Encounters

We may not have enough pages in each issue to devote as much attention as we would like to each person whose path we cross, but please note that if it's in the publication, we deem it noteworthy.

—Meridith May, Publisher & Executive Editor



**Where there's a will there's a whey:
Casa Noble Reposado with Roquefort
was a rare and noble treat.**

Tequila and ... Cheese?

I've said it for years: David Ravandi is a marketing guru. The co-owner of ultra-premium Casa Noble recently offered an intimate tasting of the USDA-certified organic luxury tequilas . . . but with a slight twist.

Ravandi held court at Maison 140, a boutique hotel in Beverly Hills right down the street from his office. He was surrounded by food, wine and spirits writers who had tried nearly everything—but not this. “This is an untraditional pairing,” claimed Ravandi, whose knowing smile was the result of some good investigative work on his part.

It's de rigueur to match food with wine, and Ravandi explains that tequila-making is not dissimilar to wine-making: picking the ripened agave from fields that are rustically reminiscent of vineyards, then aging and blending.

The first bite of Spanish goat cheese was a bit sharp on my palate, but when I chased it with a sip of Casa Noble Crystal (Casa Noble gave its blanco this moniker as a way of stating that it's “superior to all silver tequilas”), it not only took away that severe bite, but also brought out a delightful nutty flavor in the tequila.

With a ripe Roquefort, Casa Noble's sensuous Reposado, aged for 364 days in new French white oak barrels, created a sensation that inspired this story. The tequila calmed the spirited cheese, and with the first pass, the vanilla notes in the tequila burst through, with a finish of lemongrass and lavender and a hint of dried fruit.

Read more about Casa Noble tequila in our next issue, when Anthony Dias Blue tastes through the line-up.



**David Ravandi of
Casa Noble Tequila.**