



If only sidra satisfied the apple-a-day quota.

DRINK THIS NOW: Spanish Sidra

Sidra, or hard apple cider—which in 12th century Europe was said to be more popular than wine—is gaining a legion of fans and is showing up on more and more drink menus around the country. It hails primarily from the Asturias and Basque regions in northern Spain, and is made from the relatively low-sugar indigenous crabapple. It has a welcoming tart, dry taste, but without the cloying sweetness usually associated with popular brands like Magners Irish Cider or American soft apple cider.

It's poured out about a foot or so above the glass in a slow stream—a technique known as *escanciar* (see left)—which creates a light effervescence, says Gil Avital, general manager and beverage director at New York City's **Tertulia**.

“Sidra is versatile, goes well with food, refreshes the palate, and because it's low in alcohol, it's easy to consume,” says Avital, who recommends the low-acid sip with mild cheeses and seafood.

Max Kuller, wine director at **Estadio**, a Spanish tapas restaurant in Washington, D.C., says sidra's tasting notes are funky, and a tad briny, but ultimately delicious and the perfect alternative to beer or sparkling wine. At Tinto, a Basque-inspired tapas bar in Philadelphia, general manager Paul Rodriguez has long curated a dizzying sidra list, and believes sidra is shifting from a fringe trend to a wine-and-cocktail menu staple.

“People are really attracted to the uniqueness of it,” he says. “It offers that authentic food culture experience that people are craving these days.” —KATE PARHAM

NOT-SO-HEAVY METAL

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Prices range from \$29–\$119. winecaddys.com

—LAUREN BUZZEO

