

# Cognoscenti magazine

Because life is short

POSADA DOS ORILLAS  
TRUJILLO, SPAIN

Question: What do you get when you take a 16<sup>th</sup> century house in one of Spain's most captivating and legendary old towns, then renovate it from the top down to suit the most sophisticated of 21st century tastes? Answer: **Posada Dos Orillas**, a fine new lodging establishment in the center of the old walled town of Trujillo, the home of many famous (or, depending on your perspective, infamous) Spanish *conquistadores*. The house in which the hotel now operates once belonged to the great horseman Alvaro Calderon, who, alas, squandered his fortune through hard living.



View on the streets of Old Trujillo

caught in nearby Galician waters.

We began our meal with two delicately fried quail eggs and two bowls of well-chilled *gazpacho* served with crunchy vegetables on the side. Next came a plate of regional specialties, which included no fewer than 5 separate manifestations of Iberian pork—*salchichon*, *chorizo*, *lomo*, *morcon*, and *jamon*. The spices in these meats were very subtle, and the serving was huge.

The Rusticae-affiliated establishment boasts 7 guest rooms, each of which is a spacious, high-ceilinged affair with aged tile floors, air-conditioning, mini-bars, and televisions with extensive satellite programming options. Color themes and furnishings are particular to every room and each room offers views of medieval houses and alleys around this vertiginous town.

The restaurant is an elegant facility coordinated in shades of pale yellow and brown. Conscious of his international clientele and the changing styles of diet, hotel and restaurant manager Angel Gonzalez Muñoz has fashioned a menu that includes several fish dishes. The seafood that is served in the restaurant is freshly

For our main courses, we selected *Chuletillas de Lechal a la Piedra*, or grilled baby lamb cutlets, which arrived tender and pink, and *Dorada a la Espalda*, a salt-water fish served in sauce that was pleasantly pungent with flavors of brine and citrus.

With our meal, we enjoyed a fine 1999 *Pesquera* from Ribera del Duero. The ripe cherry fruit—hinting at darker and deeper flavors such as prune—lingered on our palates past each sip. Served in oversized goblets, this wine was enough to make us (having drunk several mediocre Spanish vintages in a row) believers again!

We concluded our meal with an apple tea into which

freshly-squeezed lemon juice was poured through a strainer lined with aromatic herbs.

The next day, after meandering through the medieval streets, we were keen to return to the table at our comfortable Posada Dos Orillas, and were not disappointed. This time, we enjoyed a platter of smoked fish—salmon, anchovies, capers—and *criadillas de tierra*, a vegetable that lies somewhere between a potato and an apple, unique to the region, served in an omelet.



Iberian pork done 5 ways:  
salchichon, chorizo, lomo, morcon, and jamon.

The fish *Lubina a la Espalda*, was properly cooked, and so was the grilled sole, *Lenguado a la Plancha*, which was professionally deboned at our tableside. We had a nice dry Chardonnay, the De Payva 1999 from Ribero de Guadiana, to accompany these dishes.

Mr. Gonzalez Muñoz also decanted a bottle of 1993 Viña Ardanza, from Rioja. The wine was fully mature, with the first burst of ripe currants quickly developing into spicier tastes of pepper and cinnamon.

The difference between a decent hotel and an outstanding one is seldom a question of how many amenities can be stuffed into a room. A truly good hotel is more often the result of an extraordinary attention to detail by its designers and managers, so as to offer a

multitude of special touches—minor when considered individually, but yielding an overwhelming impression of ease and of luxury when taken together. So it is at the Posada Dos Orillas. From the muted track lights embedded in each stone step to the bathroom radiators that double as towel-warmers, to the lights and armchairs that enliven even inaccessible loft spaces, nothing has been left to chance at this hotel. The service provided by hotel manager Mr. Gonzalez Muñoz and his capable assistant, Araceli Cano, only confirms the attention to quality given by the operators of this establishment.

This article was written by contributing editors to *Cognoscenti Magazine*.

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