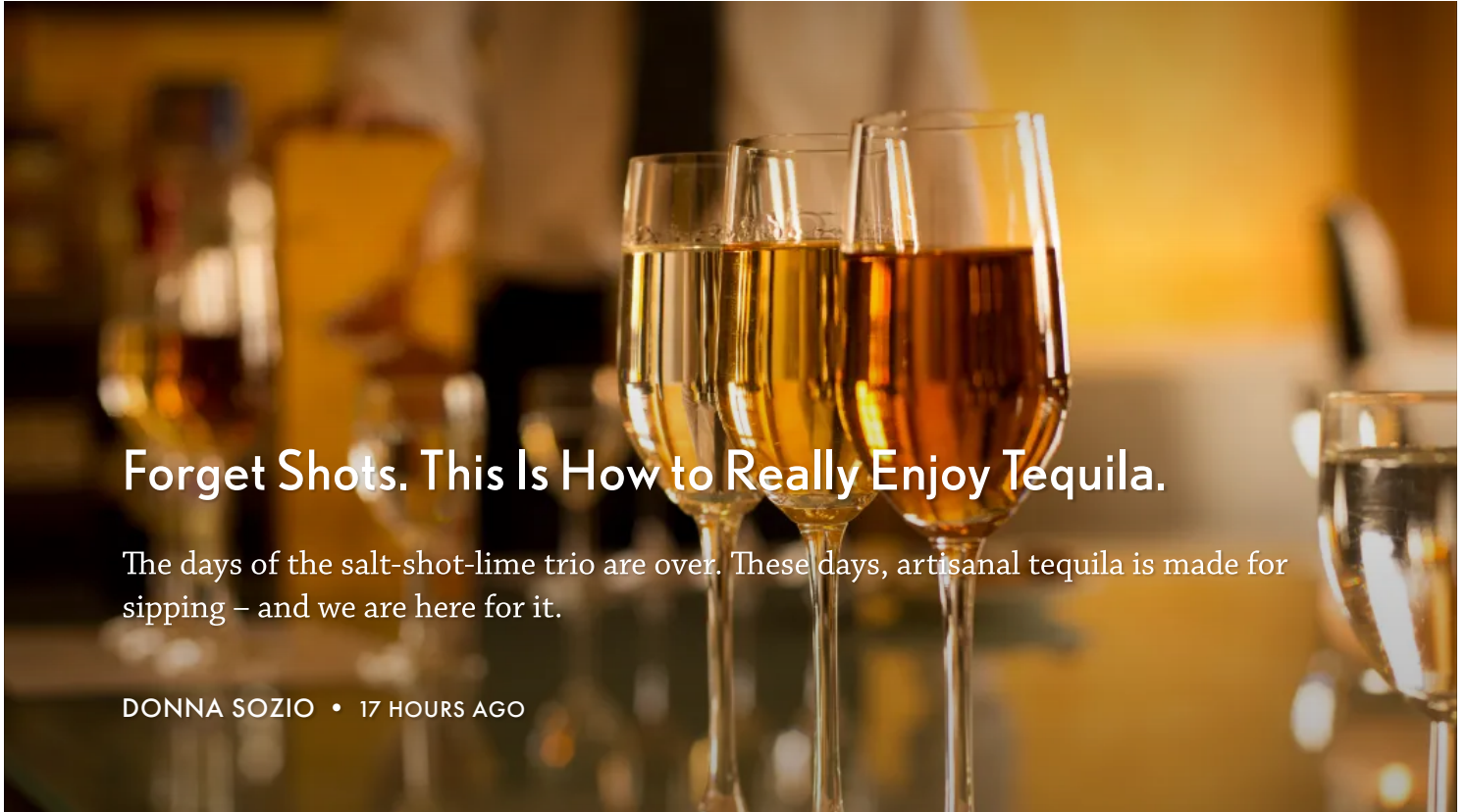




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Forget Shots. This Is How to Really Enjoy Tequila.

The days of the salt-shot-lime trio are over. These days, artisanal tequila is made for sipping – and we are here for it.

DONNA SOZIO • 17 HOURS AGO

La Rojeea

**Affiliate disclosure.*

Tequila is having its moment – and we're not talking about that instant of panic between the salt and the lime. A distilled spirit like cognac or whiskey, tequila is meant to be savored – not shot. After all, agave in Latin means noble, and tequila has long been revered as a cultural heritage in Mexico.

Most Mexicans say that a sip of tequila is the closest thing to a kiss.

Like wine is to France, tequila is to Mexico. The soil where agave plants are grown influences its tasting notes, from grassy and earthy to fresh minerality and even sweetness. It's no wonder tequila has an appellation of origin, and to bring out aromatics and flavor characteristics, tequila even has its own [RIEDEL glass](#) that is similar to a champagne flute.

According to award-winning mixologist Juan Coronado, who works for [Mijenta](#), a carbon-neutral artisanal tequila, most Mexicans say that a sip of tequila is the closest thing to a kiss.

With a huge increase in global demand¹ and rising prices from celebrity-endorsed brands, here's how to celebrate and savor Mexico's proud cultural tradition.

Tequila Is Part of Mexico's Cultural Heritage

For those on the trail of the most authentic tequila, visit its source: the magical town of Tequila in Jalisco, Mexico. A quick 45-minute drive from Guadalajara, Tequila is a charming historical village complete with cobbled streets and steeped in legend and folklore.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the town dates back well beyond 1530. Picturesque rows of cloud-like blue-green agave plants rise in the distance along volcanic fields, creating a dreamlike landscape. The birthplace of tequila, you'll find hundreds of award-winning small-batch brands, not all of which are exported.

Mundo Cuervo offers a variety of tequila-centric experiences, from visiting agave fields with a jimador – a traditional farmer tasked with harvesting the cactus – to barrel tasting and a professional guided tasting experience. Here, you'll discover the five classifications of tequila: blanco (silver) and joven (gold) are the youngest varieties that are minimally aged. Aged varieties, meanwhile, range from reposado to añejo, aged between a year and three. Extra añejo is under barrel a minimum of three years. After the tasting, you're invited to blend your own tequila and take it home in a hand-blown glass keepsake bottle.

Stay in the heart of Tequila's old town at Hotel Solar de las Ánimas, next to the church of Santiago Apostol. Its charming architecture is typical of 17th- and 18th-century Mexico, and the rooftop views of the Tequila Volcano and agave fields are mesmerizing.

More Magical Tequila Experiences

Even if you don't make it to Tequila, many Mexican hotels nevertheless offer extraordinary tequila tasting experiences. The Fairmont Mayakoba in Quintana Roo just launched a Tequila Cruise on a private electric boat for up to four people. Sail through the crystal clear blue-green waters of a freshwater lagoon as a Tequila Master takes you through a blind tequila tasting paired with traditional Mexican cuisine. While weaving through the limestone jungle waterways, the Tequila Master trades spotlights with the boat captain, highlighting the wildlife of the lagoon.

Vallarta Tequila Tastings in the historic tropical city of Puerto Vallarta offers sommelier-styled artisanal tequila tasting in authentic locations in the old town. Not your average tequila, artisanal varieties including smoky dark añejos and exclusive extra añejos, deep-diving into tequila's different flavor profiles. Pairings with handmade chocolates are also available, perfectly combining two essential elements of Mexican terroir.

Tequila Tasting a Bit Closer to Home

Even without journeying outside of the U.S., you can pay a visit to Jose Cuervo's touring Pop Up Agave Bar.

It's no secret that the process of making tequila produces approximately 1 million tons of used agave fibers per year, which would ordinarily go to waste. Jose Cuervo's Agave Project is on a mission to change that.

The first-ever bar made from upcycled agave debuted in Los Angeles and will be touring major cities nationwide all year long. Committed to making tequila sustainable, the Agave Project transforms what used to be an agave byproduct into fashionable barware including glassware, coasters, and [biodegradable straws](#), not to mention hats and other clothing. And that's just the beginning. The Agave Bar shows tequila lovers just how giving and the agave plant truly is.