



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Latino Winemakers Oral History Project Collection

NMAH.AC.1516

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2022

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Latino Winemakers Oral History Project Collection
Date:	2011-2019
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1516
Creator:	National Museum of American History (U.S.) Johnson, Paula, Curator (Interviewer) Loza, Mireya (Interviewer) Velasquez, Steve (Interviewer)
Extent:	7.71 Gigabytes (9 .mp3 files, 13 .wav files, 19 .pdf files)
Language:	English , Spanish; Castilian .
Summary:	Collection documents Mexican American winemakers through oral history interviews and transcripts.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection made for the National Museum of American History.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

American Wine Documentation Project, NMAH.AC.0817

Preferred Citation

Latino Winemakers Oral History Project Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Access and use of born digital audio materials available in the Archives Center reading room.

Conditions Governing Use

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Historical

The history of winemaking in California cannot be told without recognizing the significant contributions of Mexican and Mexican American workers, who planted, nurtured and harvested the wine grapes. In recent decades, some have become successful wine makers and owners, applying technical expertise as well as knowledge gained through years of experience and mentorship under established winemakers. The Sonoma, Napa and Lake Country districts now include numerous Latino-owned wine estates.

Content Description

Born-digital audio interviews and transcripts with Mexican American winemakers.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged into one series, alphabetically by interviewee name.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Bracero Program
- Entrepreneurship
- Labor
- Latinas
- Latinos
- Latinx
- Mexican American business enterprises
- Migrant workers
- Wine and wine making
- Wine industry

Cultures:

- Latinos
- Latinx

Types of Materials:

- Born digital
- Oral history
- Transcripts

Names:

- Bazán, Mario
- Brambila, Gustavo , 1953-
- Castillo Llamas, Alejandro
- Ceja, Juanita

Ceja, Pedro
García , Placido
Herrera, Rolando
Hurtado, Aurelio
Llamas , Rosa
Llamas, Esther
Maldonado, Hugo
Maldonado, José Guadalupe
Morán Ceja, Amelia
Portillo, Lorenzo
Preciado, Salvador
Robledo, Everardo
Robledo, Vanessa
Segura, Rosaura
Torres, Edgar

Container Listing

Born-Digital Interviews, 2011 - 2019

Language: English, Spanish; Castilian.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0005 | <p>Mario Bazan, 2011-10-23
63.36 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 0:34:36 ; mp3)
Digital Content: Bazan, Mario
Language: Spanish; Castilian.
Notes: Originally from Oaxaca, Mexico, Mario Bazan moved to California and worked at several wineries, like Mondavi Opus One. In this interview, he talks about his reasons for migrating, migrant housing, current changes in labor practices, and starting his own business.</p> |
| Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0008 | <p>Gustavo Brambila, 2016-04-12
1,186.68 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:57:34; wav)
Digital Content: Brambila, Gustavo
Language: English.
Notes: Gustavo discusses his parents' migration from Mexico and his father's experiences as a bracero. Gustavo grew up in St. Helena and Napa Valley. He talks about his experiences in high school, attending UC Davis, and working with Mike Ggrich at Chateau Montelena, and later helping set up Ggrich Hills Cellar. Gustavo also reflects on setting up his winery and tasting as well as the changing roles of Latinos in the wine business.</p> |
| Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0001_01;
Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0001_02 | <p>Amelia Moran Ceja, 2011-10-21, 2011-10-24
29.43 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0001_01 is: 0:32:09; mp3)
88.55 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0001_02 is 1:36:43; mp3)
Digital Content: Moran Ceja, Amelia
Digital Content: Moran Ceja, Amelia
Language: English.
Notes: In the first interview, Amelia speaks about her early life in Mexico, coming to California, her grade school and high school experience, and foodways. She mentions her father's work, working at Mondavi, and meeting Cesar Chavez.

The second interview continues Amelia's discussions about her father, working with Andy Becktoffer, working with the UFW, and the influx of Mexican workers in Napa Valley. She recalls her father meeting André Tchelistcheff and working with the Mexican American Vintners Association. Amelia also speaks about founding her vineyard, changes in the industry, and her approach to marketing with food and wine.</p> |

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0006 Juanita Ceja, 2011-10-24
45.44 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 0:49:38; mp3)
[Digital Content: Ceja, Juanita](#)
Language: Spanish; Castilian.
Notes: Juanita speaks about her life in Mexico and her parents, the journey to California, and the challenges she experienced during the first weeks in Napa Valley: housing, work, her young children, and her faith.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0002 Pedro Ceja, 2011-10-21
137.14 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:14:54; mp3)
[Digital Content: Ceja, Pedro](#)
Language: English.
Notes: Pedro speaks about his life in Mexico, being a young entrepreneur, and his father's bracero experience. He also discusses his early life in California, returning from the Silicon Valley, and starting a business.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0009 Placido Garcia, 2016-04-13
131.74 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:11:57; mp3)
[Digital Content: García Hernández, Placido](#)
Language: Spanish; Castilian.
Notes: In his interview, Placido speaks about being a migrant worker on the East Coast and working at Christian Brothers. He discusses his efforts to improve the lives of the Mexican community in Napa through his organizing with Cesar Chavez and setting up Clinica OLE. Placido also helped create the Virgin of Guadalupe shrine at Chateau Montelena. Other topics he discusses include his musical interests, the radio station, and his work with city government.

Please note that wind noise affects portions of interview. This audio file was remastered in Sound Forge to reduce the wind noise.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0013 Rolando Herrera, 2017-01-25
595.32 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:57:57; wav)
[Digital Content: Herrera, Rolando](#)
Language: English.
Notes: Rolando talks about growing up in Mexico and Napa; he returned to Mexico but came back to Napa to finish high school with his brother. Rolando worked at Masa and Mustard's Grill in San Francisco while going to school. He later worked at Stag's Leap and was encouraged by Warren to continue in the wine business. Rolando ends his interview with discussions about starting his own winery and the Robledo family. His interview also mentions his father's migration as a bracero and his work at Schramsberg.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0011 Aurelio Hurtado, 2016-04-19
1,194.74 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:58:22; wav)
[Digital Content: Hurtado-Reyes, Aurelio](#)
Language: English.
Notes: Aurelio begins his interview discussing his life in Jerez, Mexico, his reasons for migrating to the United States, and his father's life in Mexico. He speaks about going to college and his brothers who

migrated as braceros. Aurelio lived in Los Angeles and later made his way to Napa Valley where he worked at Krug Winery. He was involved with the Mexican community in, and around, Napa. Through his work with the Comité Mexicano de Beneficiencia, he shifted to community activism, organizing, and was one of the founding members of the California Human Development Corporation and Clínica OLE.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0014_01;

Alejandro "Alex" Castillo Llamas, 2017-03-08
24.04 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0014_01: 0:02:23;
wav)

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0014_02;

282.24 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0014_02: 0:27:58 ;
wav)

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0014_03

423.03 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0014_03: 0:41:55;
wav)

[Digital Content: Llamas, Alejandro](#)

Language: English.

Notes: Alejandro (also known as Alex) talks about growing up as a child of migrant laborers in places like Mexico, Coachella, and Oregon. He talks extensively about his parents' work at Mondavi, Pine Ridge, Atlas Peak, and Stagecoach. Alex's interest in food and wine led to jobs at French Laundry and Per Se. He discusses his approach to originally sourcing grapes and learning from Matt Taylor. Finally, he speaks about his branding iron that the NMAH collected.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0015

Rosa Llamas and Esther Llamas, 2017-03-08
380.42 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 0:37:41; wav)

[Digital Content: Llamas DeGonzález, Rosa and Esther Llamas](#)

Language: Spanish; Castilian.

Notes: Esther's interview begins with discussions about moving to California and trying to find housing for her and her family. She later was hired as a cook for vineyard workers housed at Camp Colorado and talks about cooking and camp life. Esther's daughter, Rosa, accompanied her during the interview and together, they talk about the Mexican community in Napa: the stores, theaters, and radio stations.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0012

Hugo Maldonado and Jose Guadalupe Maldonado, 2017-01-24
822.44 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:21:29; wav)

[Digital Content: Maldonado, Hugo and Jose Guadalupe Maldonado](#)

Language: Spanish; Castilian.

Notes: The interview begins with Jose speaking about his life in Mexico and migrating to the United States, following his family who came as braceros. He speaks about getting job at Christian Brothers, and meeting the Robledos, Placido Garcia, and others in the community. Jose also discusses his experience with worker housing, organizing for the UFW, moving from CB to Sterling and Newton, and the local Mexican community at the time. The interview then moves on to Hugo who speaks about life in St. Helena: going to school, work, and college. Jose and Hugo both share about their experiences buying land for the vineyard and making the cave for the winery.

Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0004 Lorenzo Portillo, 2011-10-23
36.57 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 0:19:58; mp3)
[Digital Content: Portillo, Lorenzo](#)
Language: Spanish; Castilian.
Notes: In his interview, Lorenzo speaks about life in Mexico and working as migrant farm worker on the West Coast. He also talks about his experience at wineries such as Buena Vista, Chateau St. Jean, Sterling Winery, and his work with Mario Bazan.

Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0010_01; Salvador Preciado, 2016-04-13
594.37 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0010_01: 0:58:53; wav)
Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0010_02
10.27 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0010_02: 0:01:01; wav)
[Digital Content: Preciado, Salvador](#)
Language: Spanish; Castilian.
Notes: Salvador speaks about coming to California from Jalisco, Mexico and working at the plant nursery run by Frank Emmolo. He discusses his experience with budding and grafting, learning about plants, and starting his own budding business. Salvador also briefly worked at Kaiser Steel before returning to the plant business. He reflects on teaching others about business and traveling the world.

Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0003 Everardo Robledo, 2011-10-22
50.19 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 0:27:25; mp3)
[Digital Content: Robledo, Everardo](#)
Language: English.
Notes: In his interview, Everardo talks about his family, siblings, and his father and grandfather who migrated from Mexico. He also discusses his high school experience, working for the vineyard management company, working at the winery and vineyard (including buyers of grapes), and his wine philosophy.

Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0007 Vanessa Robledo, 2012-05-16
61.89 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:07:36; mp3)
[Digital Content: Robledo, Vanessa](#)
Language: English.
Notes: Vanessa talks about her life growing up in Sonoma with her family, uncles, and grandfather (who was a bracero). Her father bought land for vineyards, which helped Vanessa learned about vines and the labor changes in Napa. She also discusses how she took charge of the Robledo Winery at an early age, learning how to run a winery, marketing, food, and changing attitudes about wine.

Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0016_01; Rosaura Segura, 2018-08-01
324.35 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0016_01: 0:32:08; wav)
Item NMAH-AC1516-BDA0016_02
712.94 Megabytes (Total Running Time for NMAH-AC1516-BDA0016_02: 1:10:38; wav)
[Digital Content: Segura, Rosaura](#)
Language: English.

Notes: Rosaura begins the interview discussing her parents and life in Mexico. Her father and uncles came as braceros and her father worked for Beringer and Charles Krug. She talks about her impressions of Napa when she arrived as a young child, the growth of the Mexican community in the 70s and 80s, and housing that was built. She attended high school and got a job at Sutter Home. When IRCA came, she helped as an interpreter and then moved on to helping with work permits and other immigration paperwork. Rosaura also talks about buying land and selling grapes, starting Encanto Vineyards in 2006, the Mexican American Vintners Association, running her own vineyard, and labor issues.

Item NMAH-AC1516-
BDA0017

Edgar Torres, 2019-07-16
697.08 Megabytes (Total Running Time: 1:09:04; wav)
[Digital Content: Torres Rios, Edgar Javier](#)

Language: English.

Notes: In this interview, Edgar explains his reason for naming the winery Bodega de Edgar, talks about his parents (his father was a dishwasher), and how the family ended up in the Paso Robles area. He talks about going from construction to restaurant work to his interest in food and wine. Edgar also speaks about wine makers, the industry attitude in Paso Robles, and learning the business: buying his fruit and barrels, getting a break from the Dusi family. He ends with a discussion about his wines, labels, his wine philosophy, and giving back to the community.

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