



## ART BULLS *for* CHARITY

*Osborne's Charge Against Hunger*

### History of the Osborne Bull

Nike's Swoosh. Target's bulls eye. McDonald's golden arches. Osborne's Bull. Everyone knows them, and everyone knows the products they stand for, but only one has become a country's icon: The Osborne Bull. Once an advertising symbol, El Toro de Osborne, has transcended its original purpose to become a national icon of Spain. But the road it traveled has not always been a smooth one.

The Osborne company of El Puerto de Santa María, Spain is a family-owned business now overseen by the sixth generation, which has been producing fine Spanish wines and spirits since 1772. Osborne crafts a variety of fine products including fine still wines Osborne Solaz and Dominio de Malpica (*Tierra de Castilla*), Bodegas Montecillo (*Rioja*), Señorío del Cid (*Ribera del Duero*); world renowned fortified wines (*Osborne Sherry and Port*); and spirits such as Osborne Brandy de Jerez and Anis del Mono liqueur.

First appearing in 1957, the Osborne Bull has come to symbolize the people and culture of Spain. Originally, however, "El Toro" was conceived as an advertisement for the Osborne company's Veterano brandy. The prototype for the very first bull was drawn in 1956 by commercial artist Manolo Prieto. A simple black and white image sketched onto graph paper, the power of the figure lay primarily in its metaphor. Dignified, proud, powerful -- the bull remains the ultimate embodiment of the values of the Spanish people.

By the end of 1957, sixteen Osborne "bullboards" had been installed throughout Spain's highway system with new installations continuing each year. The original bull was painted with "Veterano" on its side. As the bull became an integral part of the Osborne company, the "bullboards" slogan was changed to "Osborne Sherry & Brandy", expanding the bull's role to become a representation of the company as a whole.



*The Symbol of Osborne.  
An Icon of Spain.*

Then things began to change for the bull. In 1962 Spanish highway laws changed requiring all advertising to be move 400 feet away from all public roadways. Osborne complied by moving back but increased the size of the “bullboard” from 26 ft. to 46 ft., so that they might command attention at such a distance.

Since the bull’s inception, the Tejada family, relatives of original bull artist Manolo Prieto, have produced and erected these four-story metal beasts for the Osborne family. Unlike the many advertising slogans and images inducted into the pop culture hall of fame, the bull has made an indelible impression on Spain’s landscape and the mindset of its people. Identifying with its virtues, Spaniards adopted the bull as the people’s icon, their pillar of strength and their symbol of fortitude.

Between 1988 and 1997, legislation abolishing highway advertising threatened to remove the Osborne Bull, sparking widespread attention from the media and a concerned public. Cultural associations, artists, politicians, journalists and leading figures from every sphere pleaded for the bulls’ pardon. Motivated by this widespread passion for the bull, hundreds of municipalities even offered their own land as a sanctuary for the bulls displaced by the decree.

Committed to preserving the herd, Spain’s citizens demanded that the Osborne Bull remain a part of their country’s landscape. In December of 1997, Spain’s Supreme Court astonishingly granted the “bullboards” amnesty, declaring the roadside silhouettes part of the cultural and artistic heritage of the Spanish people and countryside.

Today over ninety Osborne Bulls stand proud in Spain. Fifty years old in 2006, the bull remains the symbol of Osborne and an icon of Spain.

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