

# VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

By John Gilman

*May-June 2014*

*Number Fifty-One*

- ❖ *Philip Togni- One of California's Original Trailblazers.* (pages 1-17)
- ❖ *Recently Tasted Spanish Wines, Including Boatloads of Old Rioja Notes.* (pages 18-79)
- ❖ *Emidio Pepe- Montepulciano's Maestro Celebrates Fifty Iconic Harvests.* (pages 80-98)
- ❖ *New Zealand's Gillman Vineyards- Superb St. Émilion Lookalikes in Matakana.* (pages 99-105)
- ❖ *The Annual Champagne Report- Augmented This Year By a Week in the Region.* (pages 106-200)

## *Coming Attractions*

- ❖ *The Annual Loire Valley Report.*
- ❖ *Château Cantemerle- The Southern Médoc's Well-Hidden Crown Jewel.*
- ❖ *The Beautiful, Classic Rioja Cuvées of C.V.N.E.- Best Known as Cuné.*
- ❖ *Domaine Henri Gouges- Traditionalism in Nuits St. Georges- Generational Change Proves That the More Things Change, The More They Stay the Same.*
- ❖ *The 2010 and 2011 Vintages in Piemonte.*
- ❖ *Looking Below the Surface at the 1961 and 1959 Bordeaux Vintages.*
- ❖ *Weingut Johann Joseph Prüm- Middle Mosel Magnificence of the Highest Order.*
- ❖ *Who Are The Traditionalists In Bordeaux? Ric Forman, 2013 Beaujolais, François Cotat, More Champagne and Sparkling Wines, Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret, The 1985 Clarets, Round Two of Kalin Cellars, Piemonte Vertical Reports, Cathy Corison, Château Ausone, Building a Well-Priced Cellar Today, Recently-Tasted Italian Wines, Re-Visiting the 1998 Red Burgundies and Château Musar.*

View From the Cellar is published bi-monthly by John Gilman, who is solely responsible for its content. Electronic subscriptions are available for \$120 per year (\$220 for two years), available at [www.viewfromthecellar.com](http://www.viewfromthecellar.com). Inquiries may also be emailed to [john@viewfromthecellar.com](mailto:john@viewfromthecellar.com). Copyright 2014 by John B. Gilman, all rights reserved. Content may be utilized by members of the wine trade and/or media as long as either [View From the Cellar](http://www.viewfromthecellar.com) or John Gilman are fully credited.



## José Pastor Selections

*“I was also fortunate to catch up with another of my favorite Spanish wine importer’s current lineup, **José Pastor**, who **has found some absolutely stellar estates** over the course of his short career in the importing business.”*

**John Gilman**  
View from the Cellar  
**Issue #51**  
2014



The Suriol Family

### **2010 Suriol Brut Nature Reserva**

The 2010 Suriol Brut Nature Reserva is made up of a blend of forty percent Macabeu and thirty percent each of Parellada and Xarel-lo, all from the Suriol family's own vineyards. The wine is excellent on both the nose and palate, offering up a bright and complex bouquet of tart orange, warm bread, salty soil tones, a bit of citrus peel, menthol and a dollop of wild fennel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and beautifully balanced, with a fine core of fruit, very elegant mousse, with beautifully integrated acids, lovely focus and a very long, poised and complex finish. This is lovely Cava from a seminal member of the Six Percent Club. 2014-2020+. 90.



### **2007 Suriol Castell de Grabuac “Castanyer” Brut Nature**

The Castell de Grabuac is owned by the Suriol family, who are clearly very important members of the “Six Percent Club”, as they only produce wines from their own twenty-five hectares of vines in the Alt Penedès, which they farm organically. Their 2007 Castello de Grabuac’s “Castanyer Suriol” bottling of Brut Nature is comprised of a mix of eighty percent Macabeu and twenty percent Xarel-lo and spends fifty months aging on its fine lees prior to disgorgement. The wine offers up a deep and very classy bouquet of tart pear, lemon, chalky soil tones, menthol and ocean breeze. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and complex, with beautiful balance, frothy mousse, fine focus and a very long, soil-driven and almost salty finish. This is dynamite Cava! 2014-2020+. 93.



Alberto Nanclares

**2011 Albariño “Dandelión”- Alberto Nanclares (Rías Baixas)**

This is one of the current releases from Alberto Nanclares, who is another of those artisanal producers in Rías Baixas who believe that Albariño demands some extended time aging in tank prior to bottling, if the wine is going to develop any depth and complexity. All his wines spend nearly two years on the lees prior to bottling. The Dandelión is Señor Nanclares’ entry level bottling, and it is excellent in 2011, offering up a bright and complex nose of pear, lime peel, ocean breeze, lovely minerality, citrus blossoms and a touch of lemongrass in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, fullish and shows good mid-palate depth, with lovely framing acids, excellent focus and grip and a long, complex finish. Good juice. 2014-2016. 90.



**2011 Albariño- Alberto Nanclares (Rías Baixas)**

The 2011 Albariño bottling from Alberto Nanclares is from his oldest vines, ranging from thirty years of age all the way up to the century mark. The bouquet is deeper and more youthful than the younger vine bottle of Dandelión, wafting from the glass in a deep and complex nose of tart pear, lime, plenty of saline soil tones, lemongrass, briny oceanic overtones (these vineyards all overlook the Atlantic Ocean), stony minerality and a faint whiff of menthol. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and really rock solid at the core, with bright acids, excellent focus and grip, lovely balance and a very long, complex and vibrant finish. This is still a young bottle of wine and more complexity is going to emerge with further bottle age. Great juice. 2014- 2020. 93+.



Luis Rodríguez

**2012 Viña de Martin “Os Pasás”- Luis Rodríguez Vázquez (Ribeiro)**

The Os Pasás from Luis Rodríguez is comprised of a blend of Treixadura, Albariño, Torrentés and Lado, with the latter three grapes blended in smaller amounts to take advantage of their higher natural acidity than the Treixadura. The 2012 is a lovely wine, wafting from the glass in an aromatic constellation of lime blossoms, tart orange, a touch of green olive, lovely, salty soil tones and gentle notes of beeswax in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and rock solid at the core, with fine focus and balance, lovely complexity and a long, intensely flavored finish. A lovely wine that is drinking beautifully today, but has the stuffing and balance to also age gracefully for several more years. 2014-2019. 90+.



**2009 Viña de Martin “Escolma”- Luis Rodríguez Vázquez (Ribeiro)**

The Escolma bottling from Señor Rodríguez is his old vine cuvée, which is also made from a blend of blend of Treixadura, Albariño, Torrentés and Lado, but with the vines ranging from twenty to more than forty years of age. The wine is fermented in stainless steel and then aged in a combination of new and old, large French oak barrels. The 2009 is truly stunning wine, at its apogee of maturity right now and soaring from the glass in a deep and very complex mix of lemon, clementine, a beautifully complex base of salty soil tones, wild fennel, citrus oil, just a whisper of buttery oak and a gentle topnote of acacia blossoms. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, round on the attack and rock solid at the core, with great focus and balance, lovely framing acids and a very, very long, crisp and complex finish. The old vines here give this wine a dimension that is really impressive. One of the best Ribeiro white wines I have ever had the pleasure to taste, the 2009 Escolma is at its apogee today, but will continue to cruise along for years to come. 2014-2020+. 94.

### **2011 A Torna dos Pasas- Luis Rodríguez Vázquez (Ribeiro)**

The A Torna dos Pasas from Luis Rodríguez is comprised of a blend of traditional Galician red grapes, with the cépages consisting of forty percent Brancellao, and twenty percent each of Caiño Redondo, Caiño Longo and Ferrol (not that I am familiar with any of these grapes!), with the vines grown on steep granite sites and the wine aged in old barrels. The 2011A Torna dos Pasas tips the scales at a cool 12.5 percent alcohol and offers up a vibrant nose of cherries, pomegranate, fresh thyme, gentle notes of woodsmoke, stony soil tones (one can really smell the granite) and a gentle topnote of chicory. On the palate the wine is fullish, tangy and sappy at the core, with lovely soil signature, moderate tannins and a long, slightly tarry finish. I really love the combination here of sappy fruit, strong soil signature and plenty of fresh herbs on both the nose and palate, which give the wine personality to burn. Really a terrific bottle that should be even better with a year or two of bottle age, as there is some good underlying structure here. Fine juice. 2014-2025+. 91.



### **2009 A Torna dos Pasas “Escolma”- Luis Rodríguez Vázquez (Ribeiro)**

The Escolma bottling of A Torna dos Pasas is made from a field blend of indigenous, old vine fruit on the steepest, south-facing section of his vineyards here in the town of Arnoia. It is a touch riper than the regular bottling, coming in at an even thirteen percent, and sees a bit of new wood during its twelve months in barrel. Señor Rodríguez also gives this wine three years of bottle age prior to releasing it, so that the 2009 is the new release of this reserve wine, which he only produces in top vintages. The 2009 offers up a deep and youthful bouquet of black cherries, a bit of spiced meats, stony soil tones, fresh herbs (again, lots of thyme in the mix), a bit of tree bark and a very gentle framing of cedary wood. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and focused, with a sappy core of fruit, excellent soil signature, ripe, beautifully integrated tannins, fine acids and a very long, complex and palate staining finish. This is very serious juice that will age for decades! 2014-2035+. 93+.



### **Envínate**

Envínate is a new winemaking joint-venture formed by four friends who met at oenological school at the University of Miguel Hernandez in Alicante. The four young winemakers, Roberto Santana, Alfonso Torrente, Laura Ramos and José Martínéz, after graduating from school in 2005, began their business as consultants, but have evolved into the winemaking team for several vineyard owners with fine parcels with whom they have now formed joint ventures in regions such as Extremadura, Ribeira Sacra and the Canary Islands. The team from Envínate works alongside of their vineyard-owning partners in the vines all through the season, and then turns their production into vinous treasures. Seeking to highlight the unique terroirs of each parcel of vines that they work with, they use no chemical treatments in the vineyards, harvest everything by hand, ferment solely with indigenous yeasts, eschew modern winemaking parlor tricks like extraction enzymes and the like and do all of their crushing by foot. The wines tend to also be on the low sulfur side of the equation, are not new oaky and are really tremendously complex and vibrant wines of great personality and breed. This was my first experience with any of the Envínate wines, and I was extremely impressed by what this team of young winemakers are turning out from a handful of regions along the Atlantic coast. What I like is each wine also lists the name of the farmer who the team works with in each region, but I have omitted these names in the titles of the wines to make them a bit less complicated. Rather than list each Envínate wine in its own geographical category, it made more sense to list them all together here, as they bear a strong family resemblance of excellence and uncompromising traditional styles. None of the wines is made in large quantities. These are truly spectacular wines and are worth a special search of the market to find! The wines of Envínate are represented here in the US by José Pastor.

**2012 Tinta Amarela “Parcela Valdemedel”- Envínate (Extremadura)**

Tinta Amarela is the local name for the Trincadeira grape, which is grown an hour away across the Portuguese frontier in Alentejo. The grape grown in the Parcela Valdemedel benefits from the north-facing orientation of the vineyard, the five hundred meter elevation and the fine base of limestone in the soil. The 2012 comes in at a cool 13.5 percent alcohol (for the scorching climate of Extremadura this is low octane!) and offers up a superbly complex nose of sweet dark berries, bitter chocolate, a bit of tree bark, fresh herb tones, a lovely soil signature and a bit of the grape’s signature oak leaf aromatics. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and sappy at the core, with a very soil-driven personality, moderate tannins, lovely focus and complexity and a very long, well-balanced and refined finish. Picture a cross of un-oaked Baudry Chinon and Volnay and you get an idea of the style of this outstanding wine. Great juice. 2014-2030+. 93+.



**2012 Táganan “Parcela Margalagua”- Envínate (Tenerife)**

Táganan is the local name for the vineyards on the northeastern side of the island of Tenerife. The vineyards here are planted on rocky volcanic soils with a mixture of old vines, the origins of which are not recorded, so this is the ultimate “field blend”. The 2012 Táganan is thirteen percent alcohol and offers up a fine and complex nose of black cherries, wild herbs, tree bark, a bit of bonfire and espresso. On the palate the wine is medium-full and very pinot noir-like in texture (though not in flavors), with fine intensity of flavor, impressive complexity, moderate tannins, excellent focus and lovely length and grip on the tangy finish that closes with a touch of acorn. Another terrific wine from the team at Envínate! 2014-2025+. 93.

**2012 Táganan Blanco “Parcela Amogoje”- Envínate (Tenerife)**

The 2012 Táganan Blanco “Parcela Amogoje” from Envínate is made from a field blend of hundred year-old, wild vines, growing on volcanic soils one hundred to two hundred meters above the Atlantic Ocean. The vines are untrained, running wild on the ground and are on their own, indigenous rootstocks, as phylloxera has never been know on the Canary Islands. The vineyard is owned by José Angel Alonso, and the wine is fermented in one year-old, five hundred liter oak barrels and aged one year on its fine lees prior to bottling. The 2012 is truly spectacular, soaring from the glass in a deep and complex mix of candied lime peel, pear, briny soil tones (very reminiscent of grand cru Chablis, only saltier, if this makes any sense), beeswax, lemon blossoms and just a whisper of vanillin oak from the one year-old demi-muid. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impeccably balanced, with the palate authority of aged Bâtard-Montrachet, lovely acids, great focus and grip and a very, very long and utterly refined finish. This is a brilliant wine that totally transcends anything I have ever tasted from the Canary Islands, and really is quite reminiscent of medium-aged grand cru Côte de Beaune, albeit, with completely different aromatic and flavor profiles. Stunning juice. 2014-2020+. 95.



**2012 Lousas “Parcela Camiño Novo”- Envínate (Ribeira Sacra)**

The name of the two bottlings from Ribeira Sacra that I tasted from Envínate, Lousas, is the local dialect for the slate soils in this section of the region, centered around the town of Amandi. The Parcela Camiño Novo, which is owned by Pablo González, is produced from seventy year-old vines and is a blend of ninety percent Mencía and ten percent Garnacha Tintorera. It is aged in old oak barrels prior to bottling. The Camiño Novo sits at an elevation of 430 meters above sea level, forming an amphitheater above the Sil River, and is one of the coolest sites in Ribeira Sacra. The 2012 is an outstanding wine, offering up a deep and classic bouquet of black cherries, pomegranate, slate, a touch of graphite, woodsmoke, fresh herbs and a gentle topnote of tree bark. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and marvelously complex, with a sappy core, a marvelous soil signature, moderate tannins and a long, tangy and very refined finish that is the absolute essence of Ribeira Sacra excellence. Superb juice. 2014- 2035. 93+.



**2012 Lousas “Parcela Seoane”- Envínate (Ribeira Sacra)**

The Parcela Seoane bottling from Envínate hails from a vineyard owned by Miguel Anxo, which faces southwest in its exposition and is planted with vines that are in excess of eighty years of age. The 2012 is an absolute classic, wafting from the glass in a complex and very pure aromatic constellation of black cherries, dark berries, espresso, marvelous soil tones (slate augmented by lead pencil nuances) and herb tones redolent of turmeric and marjoram. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely light on its feet, with an excellent core of fruit ripe, well-integrated tannins, fine focus and nascent complexity and a long, primary and superb finish. I love the synthesis here of sappy black fruit and very strong soil signature- all this beauty needs is a couple of years in the cellar to start to show some of its secondary layers of complexity. An excellent Ribeira Sacra. 2016-2035. 93+.



Pedro Rodríguez

### **2012 Mencía Guímaro (Ribeira Sacra)**

The 2012 Mencía from Guímaro is another in a long line of excellent wines from Pedro Rodríguez. The bouquet is a bright and vibrant constellation of red berries, pomegranate, woodsmoke, lovely soil tones, a touch of caramel, plenty of fresh herbs and an underpinning of slate. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and very well-balanced, with a fine core of fruit, lovely focus and bounce, modest tannins and a long, wide open and quite soil-driven finish. This vintage from Señor Rodríguez bears more than a passing resemblance to a top-notch Pinot d'Aunis from the Loire Valley, and is really a lovely wine for drinking over the next couple of decades. 2014-2025. 90.



### **2010 Mencía “Finca Meixemán” (Ribeira Sacra)**

The Finca Meixemán from Pedro Rodríguez hails from a parcel of seventy year old Mencía vines, is also foot-trodden and raised primarily in old oak barrels (though a couple might be newish). To my palate this is absolutely classic Ribeira Sacra Mencía, as opposed to the more exotically Chambolle-Musigny personality of the Finca Pombeiras, offering up a pure, complex and very classy nose of dark berries, pomegranate, graphite, a touch of bonfire, fresh herbs and a lovely base of slate soil tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and very refined in its balance, with a superb core, a lovely soil-driven personality, tangy acids, moderate tannins and a long, primary and very promising finish. This is going to be stunning juice, but it needs a few years in the cellar. 2019-2040. 94+.

### **2010 Mencía “Finca Capeliños” (Ribeira Sacra)**

The Finca Capeliños from Guímaro hails from ninety-five year-old Mencía vines and is handled exactly the same in the cellar as the other single vineyard wines here, foot-trodden, fermented with indigenous yeasts and aged in old, Burgundy barrels for twelve to fourteen months before bottling. The 2010 is spectacular and again, rather Burgundian in its aromatic profile, soaring from the glass in a blend of dark berries, black cherries, graphite, espresso, bonfires, a bit of venison and subtle notes of charred wood in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and utterly suave on the attack, with a beautiful core of fruit, great soil inflection, ripe tannins, tangy acids and a very, very long, complex and focused finish that closes with a medicinal tone that reminds me of old school Hermitage. It is beyond my capabilities to pick a favorite between these three stunning, single vineyard bottlings of Mencía! Great juice. 2018-2040. 94+.



### **2010 Mencía “Finca Pombeiras” (Ribeira Sacra)**

The single vineyard bottling of Finca Pombeiras bottling from Pedro Rodríguez is one hundred percent foot-trodden and a stunning bottle of Mencía. The bouquet is complex, pure and very refined in its exuberant blend of black cherries, dark berries, woodsmoke, gamebirds, mustard seed, beautifully refined soil tones and a bit of espresso. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, long and rock solid at the core, with great soil definition, ripe, well-integrated tannins, tangy acids and a very long, very complete and remarkably complex finish that closes with a classical note of graphite. This wine literally smells like a cooler vintage of Les Amoureuces (and I have drunk plenty of Chambolle in my day), though it is more classically Ribeira Sacra on the palate, and is an utterly stunning bottle of wine. It is certainly approachable today, but it is still pretty primary, and three or four years of bottle age would certainly not compromise its complexity! 2017-2040. 94+.



Grégory Pérez

**2012 Brezo Blanco- (Bierzo)**

The Brezo Blanco from Grégory Pérez is made of a blend of eighty percent Godello and twenty percent Doña Blanca, with the vine age ranging from thirty years all the way up to eighty years of age. The 2012 Brezo offers up a really superb nose of pear, kafir lime, ocean breeze, white flowers and a lovely base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with lovely mid-palate depth, sound framing acids, lovely focus and grip and a very long, ripe and complex finish. There is not a lot of cut here, but the wine is beautifully balanced and shows plenty of freshness and lovely backend vinosity. It will not make old bones, but for drinking over the next year or two, this is a lovely wine with plenty of stuffing and elegance. 2014-2015. 90.



**2012 Seis Octavos Tinto- Monasterio de Corias (Asturias)**

The 2012 Seis Octavos Tinto from Monasterio de Corias is produced from a blend of sixty percent Albarín Negro and forty percent Mencía, grown in this cool microclimate on slate soils. The wine tips the scales at a cool twelve percent alcohol and offers up bright and complex nose of pomegranate, tree bark, chicory, fresh herb tones graphite and charred wood. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and bouncy, with a good core, tangy acids, modest tannins and fine length and grip on the complex and gently tarry finish. This is really a lovey wine, with the weight of a cru Beaujolais and the flavors quite reminiscent of Ribeira Sacra. Fine juice. 2014-2020+. 88.

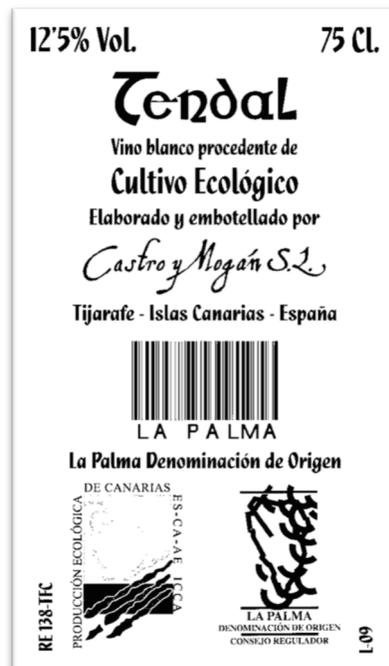




Constancio Ballesteros

**2012 Tendal Blanco Tradición- Constancio Ballesteros Magán (La Palma)**

Tendal Blanco Tradición is made from a blend of old vine Albillo (sixty to eighty years of age) and a bit of Listan Blanco, planted in high altitude, volcanic soils on the northern side of the island of La Palma. The wine is made by the husband and wife team of Nancy Castro and Constancio Ballesteros, who are both trained oenologists and returned in 1997 to Nancy's home island of La Palma and began to rehabilitate her family vineyards and set down roots on the island. It is made very naturally, with no extraction enzymes, artificial yeasts and only a modicum of SO<sub>2</sub>, fermented and aged in stainless steel until bottling. The 2012 Tendal Blanco offers up a lovely bouquet of green olive, tart peach, lovely wild herb tones, a touch of fern, hints of beeswax and citrus peel. On the palate the wine is medium-bodied, bright and well-balanced, with a fine core of fruit, fine framing acids and lovely length and grip on the complex and focused finish. I really like the savory elements here, which work beautifully at the table. 2014- 2016. 88.





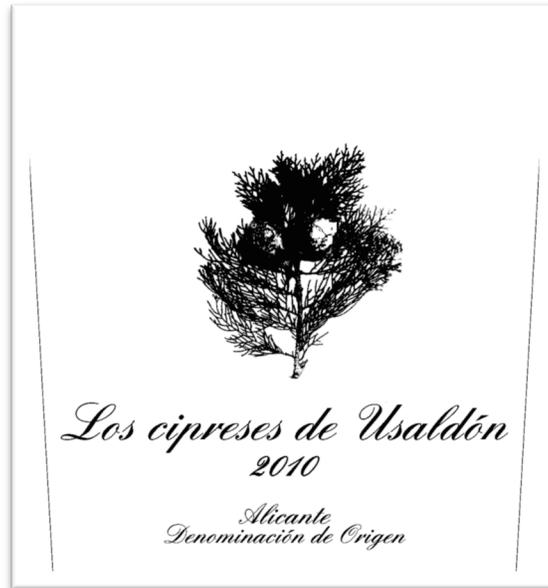
Rafa Bernabé

**2012 Ramblís del Arco- Rafa Bernabé (Alicante)**

The Ramblís del Arco from Rafa Bernabé is made entirely from the rare indigenous grape of Fourcayat grape, with the vines ranging from forty to more than eighty years or age. The wine is aged in a mixture of three and four wine French barrels and new Acacia wood barrels for six months. The parcels of Fourcayat vines that make up this bottling are at a fairly high elevation of approximately seven hundred and fifty meters above sea level, which helps cool down the vineyards a bit at night in this torrid region, and the wine retains lovely brightness and lightness of step as a result. The bouquet on the 2012 is a mixture of red and black cherries, tree bark, cola, lovely soil tones, woodsmoke and chicory. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit tarry on the backend, with a fine core, chewy tannins and excellent length and grip on the youthful and complex finish. This is fine juice, but I would be tempted to give it at least two or three years in the cellar to soften up a bit and blossom. It is fascinating wine (and the first Fourcayat I have ever tasted). 2017-2035. 90.

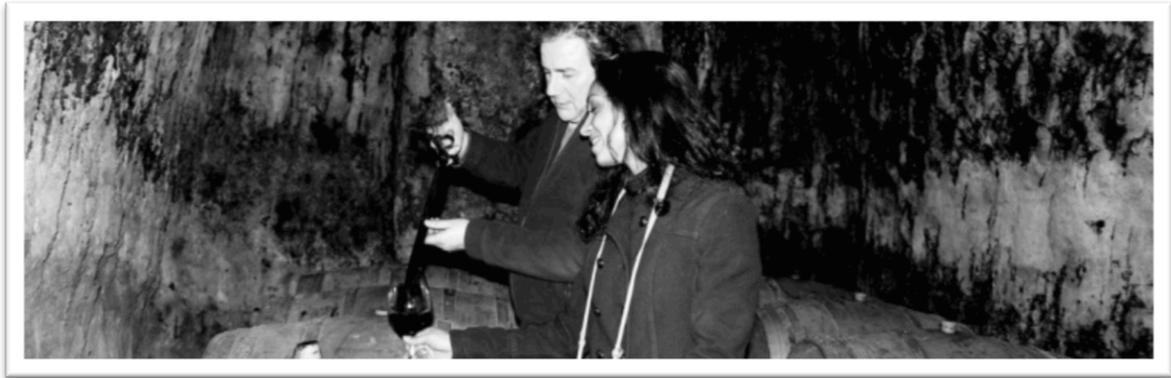
**2012 Monastrell “Ramblís”-Rafa Bernabé (Alicante)**

Señor Bernabé’s old vine bottling of Monastrell hails from sixty to seventy year-old vines planted on a fine plot of limestone, and the wine never sees any new wood, being raised for six months in one to four year-old barrels. The 2012 comes in at fourteen percent alcohol, which is pretty routine in the hot region of Alicante, but the wine shows nice precision and lift on the palate, rather than the typically jammy structural overtones of much Alicante wine. The bouquet is a deep and black fruity blend of dark berries, a bit of raisin, charred wood, coffee grounds, lovely soil undertow, tar and brambly herb tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and nicely soil-driven, with a fine core, firm, chewy tannins, very good balance and a long, primary and tarry finish that shows absolutely no signs of heat on the backend. This needs some bottle age, but it is going to be a very good wine, as it nicely brings together the robust style of Alicante with impressive soil signature and focus. Good juice. 2019-2035+. 88+.



**2012 Los Cipreses de Usaldón- Rafa Bernabé (Alicante)**

The Los Cipreses de Usaldón from Bodegas Bernabé Navarro is one of the lowest alcohol wines I have ever crossed paths with from Alicante, coming in at 12.5 percent alcohol and being crafted from the Garnacha Peluda grape variety. The grape is planted on limestone soils in the vineyard of Finca Usaldón, with the vines averaging fifty years of age. The 2012 was partially carbonically-macerated and aged in four year-old, five hundred liter barrels for six months prior to bottling. The 2012 is excellent, jumping from the glass in a bright and complex nose of pomegranate, bitter cherry, a potpourri of exotic herb tones, a lovely base of soil and a touch of cinnamon stick in the upper register. On the palate the wine is superbly light on its feet, with its medium-full format delivering a lovely core, excellent intensity of flavor, some firm tannins and a long, tangy and transparent finish that closes with a Barolo-like note of road tar. This could use a year or two in the cellar to soften up a bit on the backend and its apogee is probably six to eight years from now, but it is eminently drinkable today with grilled meats and really is an impressively complex and soil-driven wine. I have never tasted anything like it from Alicante! 2016-2030+. 92+.



Goyo Garcia Viadero

This region used to be one of my absolute favorites for red wines, but for a long time now, it has been a haven to the modernistas in Spain, with most wines that I cross paths with from Ribera del Duero routinely too ripe and too oaky for my tender palate. However, in preparation for this report, I was sent some samples from a relatively new producer in Ribera del Duero, Goyo Garcia Viadero, and I was absolutely blown away by what I tasted! Goyo Garcia Viadero only began producing his own wines in Ribera del Duero in 2003, looking to return to an older style of wines that were once prevalent in this region. He has three distinct parcels of vines to work with, planted to tempranillo and (in two of the vineyards) some white varieties, which he co-ferments to produce his red wines. This was very much the style in Ribera del Duero a couple of generations ago, and Goyo is looking to return to that era of unmanipulated wines here. The wines even come in Jean-Marie Fourrier shaped bottles, to further distinguish them from the pack in Ribera del Duero, and they are exceptional in quality. He tends to pick his wines based on acidity, trying to bring the grapes in while the acids are still at a reasonable level and the sugars have not soared out of control (most of his wines are 13.5 percent alcohol, which is decidedly “cool” by modern standards in Ribera del Duero), and he ages the wines for the most part in ancient oak barrels to minimize the wood influence in his wines. He also tends to practice a cellar regimen that minimizes the amount of SO<sub>2</sub> that he uses, and this is my only concern with the beautiful nature of his wines. I have scored his wines below as if they will age as long and gracefully as any other wines from the region, but I personally have not had very good luck with low sulfur bottlings from other producers, and it may well be that I have overestimated how long the wines will evolve in bottle. But, that said, Goyo Garcia Viadero is a very bright, new shining star in Ribera del Duero, and even if it turns out that his structured young wines only last six to eight years in the bottle, because of his minimal use of sulfur, they are still a very exciting new addition to a region that has been in serious need of a new addition for quite some time. I hope, if the wines do not prove to be as ageworthy as they should be in the coming years, that the estate will consider using a bit more SO<sub>2</sub> in their élevage of the wines, to ensure that these magical young wines reach a majestic old age!

### **2010 Finca el Peruco- Goyo Garcia Viadero**

Goyo Garcia Viadero's Finca el Peruco is planted to eighty-five percent Tempranillo and fifteen percent Albillo, with the vineyards in excess of eighty years of age and sitting at a thousand meters above sea level on a bed of clay and limestone. The wine is fermented in old foudres and then raised in even older barrels prior to bottling, with no added SO<sub>2</sub>. The 2010 Finca el Peruco comes in at a very reasonable 13.5 percent alcohol and offers up a pure and complex nose of mulberries, red plums, cocoa powder, vinesmoke, a lovely base of soil tones and a potpourri of spice tones that include saffron, nutmeg and cardamom. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and very transparent, with a lovely core of fruit, superb intensity of flavor, moderate, skin tannins and a very long, complex and light on its feet finish. An outstanding wine. 2018-2040. 93.



### **2009 Finca Valdeolmos- Goyo Garcia Viadero**

The 2009 Finca Valdeolmos farmed by Goyo Garcia Viadero is not quite as high in elevation as the Finca el Peruco, as the vineyard lies at about 850 meters above sea level. It too is planted to an old vine (more than eighty years of age) field mix of ninety percent Tempranillo and ten percent Albillo, which Señor Garcia of course ferments together. This too is a cool Ribera del Duero, coming in at 13.5 percent alcohol and offering up a superb aromatic constellation of red and black cherries, raw cocoa, fresh nutmeg, a touch of wild fennel (from the white grape Albillo?), beautifully complex soil tones and a bit of graphite in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and tangy, with a sappy core of fruit, excellent soil signature, a slight touch of volatile acidity and a very long, ripely tannic and very complex finish. This needs some time to really blossom, but it is going to be terrific. 2019-2040. 93+.

### **2009 Viñas de Anguix- Goyo Garcia Viadero**

The Viñas de Anguix is a bit of an outlier for Señor Garcia, as this vineyard is planted entirely to Tempranillo and is only fifty-six years of age. The wine is treated a bit differently in the cellar as result- still being fermented with indigenous yeasts in old foudres, but then being raised in French Barricas that are only four to five years old. The 2009 is again 13.5 percent alcohol and the wine is outstanding, with a much more “typical” Ribera del Duero bouquet of black cherries, red plums, cocoa powder, fresh nutmeg, lovely soil tones and a judicious touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and elegant, with a fine core of fruit, great focus and grip, ripe, well-integrated tannins and outstanding balance on the long, complex and very pure finish. This wine actually reminds me very strongly of the first wines I tasted from Ribera del Duero back in the early 1980s, and it takes me back to a time when I understood all the excitement about this region’s wines! Great juice. 2020-2040+. 94+.

