

VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

By John Gilman

March-April 2017

Number Sixty-Eight

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José Pastor Selections

CELEBRATING GROWER-PRODUCED FINE IBERIAN WINES



“As José Pastor has emphatically proven with his lineup of top estates from less well-known regions, Spain remains a fertile hunting ground for traditionally made wines.”- **John Gilman**, *View From the Cellar*

Laura Lorenzo



Another virtually new producer to me in this article is Laura Lorenzo, whose wines I had never tasted before this superb round of samples, with the exception of a lone wine from her last January. Laura is a native of Galicia, having been born and raised in the town of Allariz in the province of Ourense. She started studying oenology at the age of sixteen and after procuring her degree, she worked at a winery in Ribeira Sacra, as well as apprenticing with Eben Sadie in South Africa (many will argue this is the finest winery in the entire country) and Achaval Ferrer in Argentina. Returning to her roots in Ribeira Sacra, she was the head winemaker at Dominio de Bibei for a decade, before starting her own project, Daterra Viticultores in 2014. Naturally, she started her own winery in her beloved Ribeira Sacra, buying or renting parcels of old vines in several villages in the regions of Quiroga-Bibei and Amandi. Her winemaking is very non-interventionist, with indigenous yeast fermentations and aging in older casks. I was absolutely smitten by the superb quality and marvelous transparency of each and every wine that I tasted from her for this report and felt she deserved to be singled out in the introduction as a result. Yet another rising star in Ribeira Sacra!

2015 Alto de Olaia- Laura Lorenzo

The Alto de Olaia bottling from Laura Lorenzo is composed entirely of Godello, planted on granite, gravel and sandy soils. The vineyard is twenty-five to thirty years of age and the wine is barrel-fermented with indigenous yeasts in a combination of Spanish chestnut and French oak barrels, with the wines spending nine months elevage in the casks prior to bottling. The 2015 Alto de Olaia is outstanding, soaring from the glass in a complex and exotic aromatic combination of tangerine, lemon, wild fennel, gorgeous minerality, dried flowers and summer musk. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and electric, with a great core, superb backend mineral drive, bright acids and laser-like focus on the complex and seamless finish. There is an element of wildness here that would set any “natural wine” lover’s hear pounding, but coupled to a structural stability that is flat out exemplary and very rare to find in the genre! 2017-2030. **93+**.



2015 Portela do Vento- Laura Lorenzo

Quiroga-Bibei is the most southeasterly of the five major sub-zones of Ribeira Sacra, with the dominant stone in these steep hillsides granite, rather than slate. Laura Lorenzo is a very talented young winemaker, who has worked at wineries as far abroad as the superb Eben Sadie in South Africa and was most recently the head winemaker at Dominio de Bibei for a decade in Ribeira Sacra. 2015 Portela do Vento is composed of a blend of ninety percent Mencía and ten percent Garnacha Tintorera (Alicante Bouschet) and offers up a superb bouquet of sweet dark berries, pomegranate, graphite, granitic minerality and a touch of espresso. On the palate the wine is fullish, pure and beautifully light on its feet, with a fine core, excellent complexity and a long, poised and gently tannic finish. This is really a lovely bottle that is already drinking with style and grace and will only get better with a bit of bottle age. 2017-2035. **90+**.

2015 Casas de Enriba- Laura Lorenzo

The Casas de Enriba bottling from Laura Lorenzo hails from vineyards to the east of her home base of Val do Bibei, in the neighboring DO of Valdeorras. This is a blend of eighty percent Mencía and twenty percent of the white wine grape of Godello, as Laura likes the acidity that the Godello brings to the bottling in hot vintages like 2015. The wine is fermented with natural yeasts in stainless steel and raised in older, neutral casks prior to bottling. The 2015 Casas de Enriba is excellent, delivering a fine aromatic mélange of pomegranate, dark berries, coffee grounds, complex soil tones, a touch of wild fennel, bonfire and a whisper of botanicals in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure and complex, with a full-bodied, seamless format, excellent mid-palate depth, modest tannins and fine focus and grip on the long, poised and utterly refined finish. This is a terrific bottle! 2017-2035+. **92.**



2014 Azos de Pobo- Laura Lorenzo (Quiroga-Bibe)

The Azos de Pobo from Laura Lorenzo is made up of a field blend of ancient vines, ranging from eight to one hundred and twenty years of age. The blend is half Grand Negro and Garnacha Tintorera, with the balance including (probably) Mencía, Mouraton, Merenzao and other grapes. The grapes are destemmed and foot-trodden, barrel-fermented and then raised in older French casks. The 2014 Azos de Pobo is a superb young wine, wafting from the glass in a precise and classy constellation of sweet dark berries, espresso, beautifully complex soil tones, a touch of Alicante Bouschet's autumnal leafiness, chicory and woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with a fine, sappy core, lovely soil signature, suave, well-integrated tannins and outstanding length and grip on the focused and complex finish. This is a beautifully crafted wine that has just a hint of wildness on the backend today and which augurs very, very well for its future complexity. It is drinkable out of the blocks, but it is still primary and really deserves some bottle age to allow its secondary layers of complexity to emerge. 2021- 2045+. **93.**

4 Monos Viticultores



A new producer to me that also really stood out in the recent round of samples was 4 Monos Viticultores, who also work with old vines in a handful of vineyards up in the mountains of the Sierra de Gredos, eighty kilometers west of Madrid. 4 Monos is the brainchild of winemakers Javier Garcia and Laura Robles, as well as wine lover David Velasco and vineyard owner David Moreno. The four partners started with the 2009 vintage and their current releases were all outstanding, with old vines, low octane and a gentle touch in the cellars all adding up to vibrant, energetic and soil- infused wines of great character and complexity. I cannot recommend them highly enough!

2015 Blanco- 4 Monos Viticultores - Sierra de Gredos

The basic Blanco bottling from 4 Monos is a blend of sixty percent Albillo, twenty-five percent Moscatel and fifteen percent unknown grapes of the old school, “field blend” tradition. The wine is fermented in a combination of stainless and barrel and aged in older casks for six months prior to bottling. The 2015 Blanco delivers lovely veracity on the nose, wafting from the glass in a mix of pear, lemon peel, dried flowers, wild fennel and lovely minerality. On the palate the wine is pure, full and complex, with superb mid-palate depth, lovely transparency, bright, zesty acids and outstanding length and grip on the snappy finish. This is light on its feet and yet absolutely loaded with intensity! Great juice. 2017-2030. **93.**

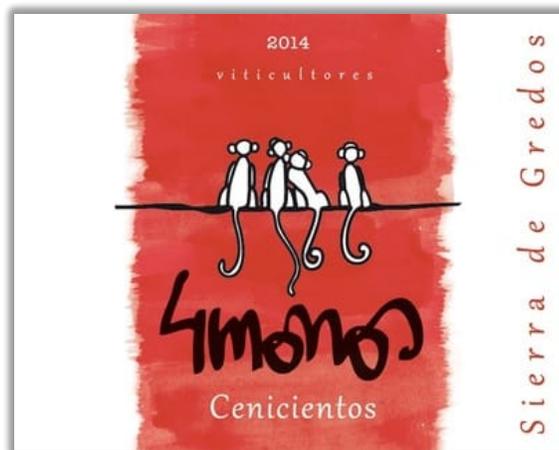


2015 Tinto- 4 Monos Viticultores - Sierra de Gredos

The blended Tinto from 4 Monos is composed of a mix of eighty-five percent Garnacha, eight percent Cariñena and seven percent Morenillo. The wine is fermented with fifty percent whole clusters with indigenous yeasts and is raised in a combination of three, four and five hundred liter, old barrels for nine months prior to bottling. The 2015 Tinto offers up a bright and complex bouquet of cherries, red currants, lovely minerality, a touch of garrigue, gentle smokiness and clove-like spice tones in the upper register. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, bouncy and very transparent, with impressive lightness of step, excellent focus and complexity, moderate tannins and a long, tangy and very impressive finish. This wine is very, very tasty today, but will be even better with a few years’ worth of bottle age. 2017-2035. **92.**

2014 “Cenicientos”- 4 Monos Viticultores - Sierra de Gredos

The Cenicientos bottling from 4 Monos takes its name from the village where these old vines are located, high up in the Sierra de Gredos mountains west of Madrid. The wine is a blend of ninety-five percent old vine Garnacha and five percent a mix of Cariñena and Garnacha Blanca. All of these bush vines range from fifty to one hundred years of age and are planted on sandy topsoils over a bed of gneiss and pink granite. The wine is fermented with wild yeasts, whole clusters and has a cuvaison of at least a month before being racked into three and five hundred liter, old casks for its twelve months of élevage. The wine is beautiful on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet offering up a very transparent blend of raspberries, a touch of blood orange, garrigue, beautiful soil tones, just a touch of pepper and notes of cloves and sandalwood in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and rock solid at the core, with plenty of stony minerality, moderate, ripe tannins, tangy acids and excellent length and grip on the nascently complex, very nicely balanced finish. Like old school Chateauneuf du Pape with a lighter step and even more interesting terroir! 2017-2045. **93.**



2014 La Danza del Viento “Molino Quemado” 4 Monos Viticultores - Sierra de Gredos

The Molino Quemado bottling from 4 Monos is produced from seventy-five year-old Garnacha vines planted in rocky, granitic soils. The wine is fermented with eighty percent whole clusters with indigenous yeasts and aged in older, three and five hundred liter barrels. The bouquet of the 2014 Molino Quemado is excellent, offering superb transparency in its mélange of raspberries, cherries, garrigue, spiced meats and a profound base of granite minerality. On the palate the wine is full, spicy and soil-driven, with a lovely core of fruit, excellent complexity, moderate tannins and a long, tangy and beautifully balanced young finish. This is a big boy at fully 14.5 percent octane, but it shows superb purity and absolutely no signs of backend heat! Gorgeous Garnacha! 2022-2055. **92.**

2014 La Danza del Viento “La Isilla” - 4 Monos Viticultores - Sierra de Gredos

The 2014 “la Isilla” from 4 Monos Viticultores hails from a very, very old vineyard that is nearly all Garnacha, with just a bit of Cariñena blended in. The vines are over ninety years of age and the parcel was abandoned for many years, with the team at 4 Monos having spent several years resuscitating the vineyard, with 2014 the first year that they have been able to make a wine from the crop. The wine is fermented entirely with whole clusters, indigenous yeasts and spend a year in three hundred liter casks prior to bottling. The 2014 la Isilla offers up a bright and complex bouquet of raspberries, a touch of red currant, lovely minerality, a touch of garrigue and a topnote of wild fennel. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and spicy, with lovely soil inflection, a fine core of fruit, ripe, moderate tannins and excellent focus and grip on the long and complex finish. This needs some time in the cellar to soften further, but it will be absolutely outstanding and a very elegant example of Garnacha when it is ready to drink! 2021-2045+. **92+**.



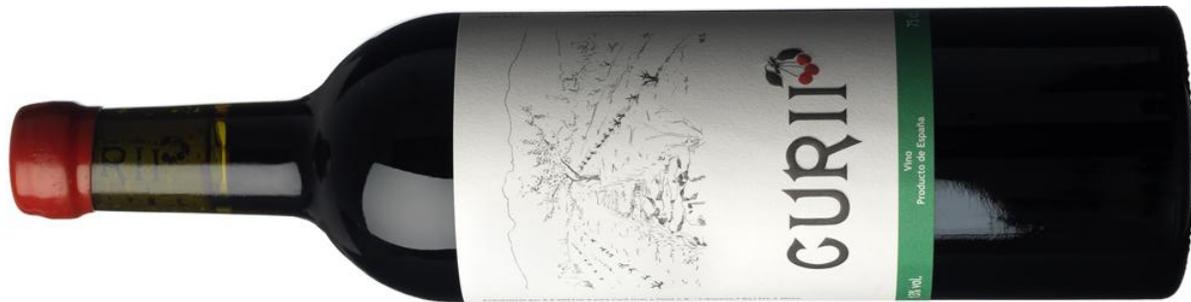
2014 “Car”- 4 Monos Viticultores - Sierra de Gredos

As readers may recall from last year, the “Car” bottling is the Cariñena from 4 Monos, which is a label started by four friends who met a few years ago hiking in the Sierra de Gredos mountains west of Madrid, where they now produce wines. These are thirty year-old bush vines grown in sandy topsoils over a base of granite at elevations from six hundred to twelve hundred meters above sea level. The Cariñena is fermented with whole clusters, indigenous yeasts and raised in old casks for fifteen months prior to bottling. The 2014 Car is a tad riper than the 2013 version, coming in a half point higher at 12.5 percent octane and offers up a beautiful bouquet of black cherries, dark berries, wild fennel, sarsaparilla and a fine base of stony soil tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and tangy, with excellent balance, a fine core and a very long, transparent and modestly tannic finish. This is already very easy to drink, but it will be even better with a few years’ worth of bottle age. An excellent bottle! 2017-2035+. **93**.

Alberto & Violeta



Another new estate to me that should be singled out for praise from this round of samples was the winery of Alberto Redrado and Violeta Gutiérrez in the Alicante mountains, which they call Curi. Alberto Redrado is the wine director and co-owner of the Michelin two-starred restaurant of l'Escaleta in Alicante, and Violeta Gutiérrez is the daughter of one of the top wine producers in the region, Felipe Gutiérrez de la Vega, whose personal specialty is dessert wines. The young couple produces an old vine Garnacha that is absolutely out of this world and will completely change perceptions of what is possible in the torrid region of Alicante.



2013 Curii Tinto- Alberto & Violeta

The Curii Tinto is an old vine bottling of Garnacha produced up in the mountains of Alicante. The vineyards are all on limestone and the wine is fermented with fifty percent whole clusters and given an old school, leisurely elevage of one year in old French barriques and an additional year in even older, American oak foudre prior to bottling. The 2013 Curii is a stunningly beautiful wine on the nose, offering up an aromatic constellation of raspberries, red currants, eucalyptus, a touch of orange peel, lovely soil tones and a topnote of sandalwood. On the palate the wine is deep, ripe, full-bodied and beautifully balanced, with superb depth at the core, lovely complexity, fine focus and a very, very long, moderately tannic and tangy finish. This reminds me of some great, old school California wines from the sixties or seventies, made from a cross of some unknown, old vine field blend and Heitz Martha's Vineyard. It is loaded with personality out of the blocks and also shows the potential for very positive evolution with extended bottle age and I would be inclined to tuck it away in the cellar for a couple of years. This is 14.5 percent octane and yet is fresh, vibrant and seamlessly balanced! 2019-2040. **93+**.

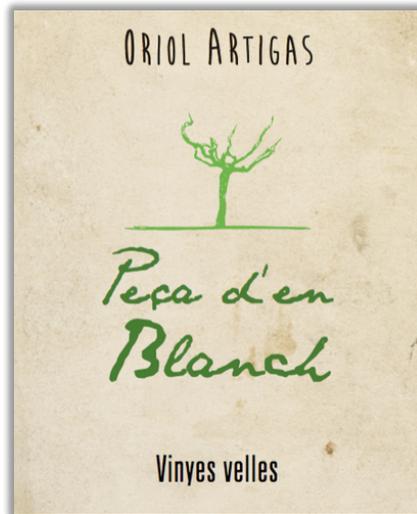
Oriol Artigas



Alella is one of the smallest D.O.s in Spain, as this region lies only fifteen kilometers north of Barcelona on the Mediterranean coast and most of its vineyard lands have been swallowed up by folks searching for weekend beach houses. Oriol Artigas came to winemaking as a second career (after a short time as a laboratory-based scientist) and started out his commercial operation only in 2011, after several years working for other bodegas in Cataluña.

2015 La Rumbera- Oriol Artigas (Alella)

The La Rumbera bottling from Oriol Artigas is made of a blend of eighty percent Pansa Blanca and twenty percent Garnaxta Blanca. Twenty percent of the cuvée is barrel-fermented, with the remainder fermented in stainless steel and then the wines are blended and spend six months elevage on their fine lees in stainless. The 2015 version offers up a wild and complex bouquet of quince, gentle leesy tones, salty soil, citrus peel, dried flowers and a bit of smokiness in the upper register. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and racy, with a good core, fine soil signature and impressive length and grip on the vibrant and youthful finish. There is a bit of “natural wine” unpredictability on the nose here, but this wine is rock solid structurally and reminds me a bit of a low fat example of Laurent Ponsot’s Monts Luisants Blanc, with a tracer of ocean breeze running through the heart of the wine. This is good now and will be even better with a bit of bottle age! 2017-2025+. **91.**

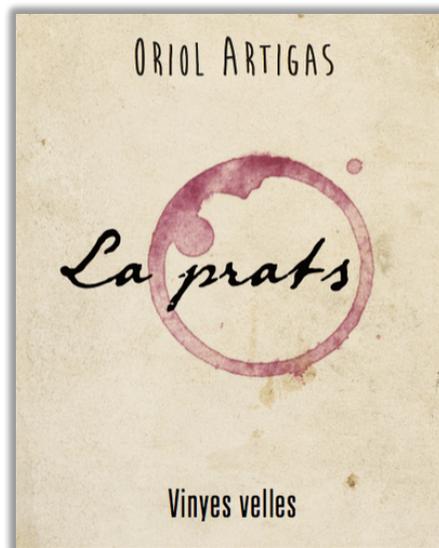


2015 Peça d'en Blanch “Vinyes Velles”- Oriol Artigas (Alella)

The Peça d'en Blanch “Vinyes Velles” cuve from Oriol Artigas is made from a field blend of Pansa Blanca and Pansa Rosado (no, I have no experience with these grapes beyond Señor Artigas’ wines!) that is fermented with indigenous yeasts in stainless and then raised in older vats for ten months prior to bottling. The 2015 Peça d'en Blanch shows a bit of influence from the Pansa Rosado grapes, as this has a golden peach tinge to the color, but offers up a bright and complex bouquet of tangerine, quince, briny overtones, a stony base of minerality, a touch of pecan, orange peel and a topnote of beeswax. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and long, long, long, with a fine core, excellent transparency and a complex, snappy finish. Picture a cross between an aged Chablis and the Jura, with a bit of briny Muscadet thrown in on the side! This is complex, complete and utterly individual in style. 2017-2025+. **93.**

2015 La Prats- Oriol Artigas (Alella)

His La Prats bottling is a single vineyard wine that is planted to a wild scrum of old, indigenous grape varieties (there could be as many as fifty different grapes planted here- some more than one hundred years of age!) that he chooses to just ferment all together. The combination of both red and white varieties results in a lovely Rosat (after twelve hours skin contact), with the 2015 offering up an exotic and complex bouquet of quince, rhubarb, nutskin, salty minerality and straw. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, crisp and slightly reductive, with a lovely core, great backend mineral drive, snappy acids and excellent focus and grip on the long and complex finish. There is a wildness to this wine that draws one to it like a moth to a flame! Great and utterly unique juice! 2017-2025. **92.**



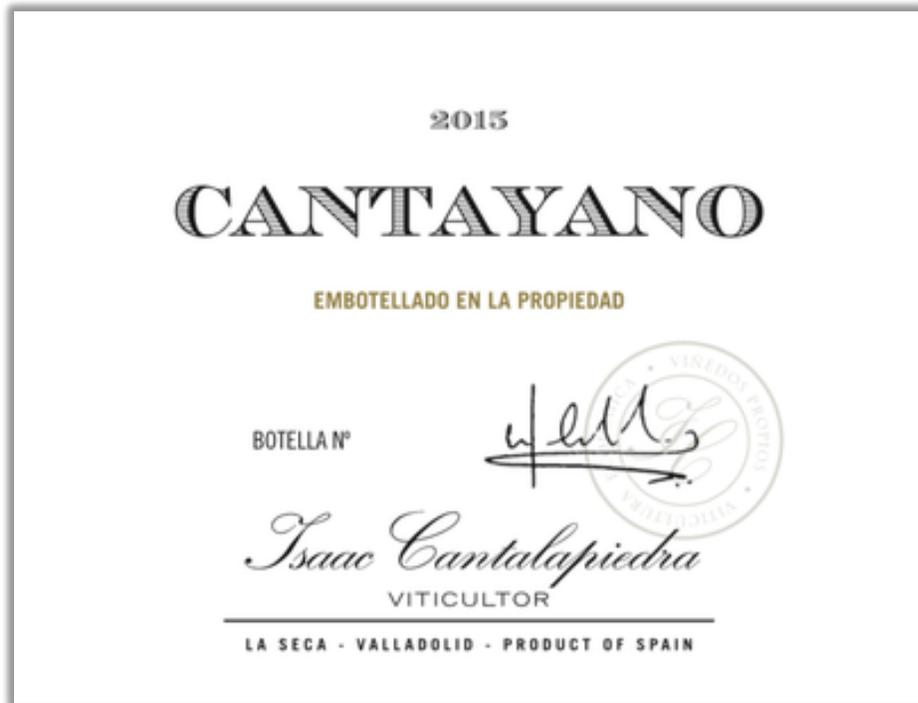
2015 Peça d'en Blanch Negre- Oriol Artigas (Alella)

The Peça d'en Blanch Negre bottling from Oriol Artigas is a blend of Garnacha and Pansa Blanca, made with very old vines and fermented with indigenous yeasts in stainless steel tanks. The wine is aged for ten months in old French casks prior to bottling without fining or filtration. The 2015 Peça d'en Blanch Negre is quite a bit deeper in color than the Mas Pelisser and delivers an excellent bouquet of dark berries, botanicals, wild rosemary, gorgeous soil tones, a touch of ocean breeze (the vines are less than a half mile in from the ocean) and a touch of cola in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, complex and very transparent, with tangy acids, moderate, well-integrated tannins and outstanding length and grip on the focused finish. There is a nice touch of backend bitterness that recalls Emidio Pepe's Montepulciano. Fine juice that is quite tasty already, but will be ever better with a bit of cellaring. 2017-2035. **92.**

Issac Cantalapiedra



Isaac Cantalapiedra and his son, winemaker Manuel, cultivate twenty hectares of vines in and just outside of the borders of Rueda- hence the Castilla y León DO on this bottle, despite the fact that seven hectares of their Verdejo vineyards are in the heart of Rueda.



2015 Verdejo “Cantayano”- Isaac Cantalapiedra

Isaac Cantalapiedra and his son, winemaker Manuel, cultivate twenty hectares of vines in and just outside of the borders of Rueda- hence the Castilla y León DO on this bottle, despite the fact that seven hectares of their Verdejo vineyards are in the heart of Rueda. This wine is crafted with natural yeast fermentation, with ninety percent fermented in stainless steel and ten percent in older French casks, with the wine spending eight months nurturing on its fine lees prior to bottling. The 2015 Cantayano delivers a deep, complex bouquet loaded with personality, reveling in scents of pear, peach stone, wild fennel, incipient notes of beeswax, salty soil tones and a nice herbal touch of lemongrass in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, focused and very full-bodied for Verdejo, with a rock solid core, excellent soil signature, bright acids and outstanding length and grip on the vibrant and still quite youthful finish. This is a dynamite bottle of Verdejo that should continue to improve over the next five to seven years in the bottle and may well last longer than that! 2017-2025+. **93+**.

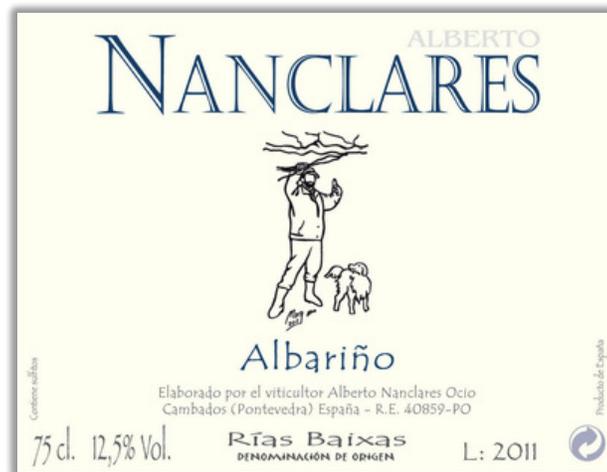
Nanclares y Prieto



©Randall Restiano, Wine Director of Eli Zabar NYC

2015 Albariño “Dandelión”- Alberto Nanclares (Cambados- Rías Baixas)

The Dandelión bottling of Albariño from Alberto Nanclares is his village wine, made from a blend of different vineyards (aged thirty to sixty years old) scattered around Cambados. The wine is fermented with indigenous yeasts and spends a year on its fine lees prior to bottling. The 2015 Dandelión offers up a superb bouquet of lemon, sea salts, granitic minerality, a touch of Chablis-like straw and a topnote of dried flowers. On the palate the wine is crisp, full-bodied and nascently complex, with a fine core, great backend mineral drive and a long, racy and perfectly balanced finish. This is high class Albariño that is built for the cellar and just starting its journey. It will be drinking even better a few years down the road today, and it is quite delicious at the present time! 2017-2030. **91+**.



2015 Albariño- Alberto Nanclares (Cambados- Rías Baixas)

The eponymous bottling of Albariño from Alberto Nanclares is also produced from vines ranging from thirty to sixty years of age, but there are only five parcels utilized for this cuvée, all located in the same small parish. The wine is raised differently than the Dandelión, as half the cuvée is fermented in stainless and half in two thousand liter, old foudre, with the time spent on the fine lees for this bottling more than a year. The 2015 Nanclares bottling offers up a superb aromatic blend of fresh lime, tart pear, ocean breeze, complex, salty soil tones, gentle smokiness and a topnote of lemongrass. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and zesty, with a lovely core, fine focus and grip and outstanding backend energy on the still youthful and very, very long finish. The time spent in old foudre gives the wine a rounder palate impression than in the Dandelión, without sacrificing any of the cut and race of classical Albariño. 2018-2030. **92+**.

2015 Albariño “Paraje Mina”- Alberto Nanclares (Cambados- Rías Baixas)

The Paraje Mina bottling from Alberto Nanclares is one that I had not tasted previously, so perhaps this is a new single vineyard Albariño from this fine, fine winemaker. In any event, the 2015 is barrel-fermented in seven year-old, five hundred liter casks and is outstanding on both the nose and palate, with the bouquet soaring from the glass in a blaze of fresh lime, tart pineapple, beautiful, salty minerality, a touch of menthol and just a whisper of leesiness. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and complex, with a lovely briny minerality, excellent focus and grip, zesty acids and outstanding balance on the very, very long and classy finish. Despite its having been barrel-fermented, it shows absolutely no signs of wood. This is a quintessential middleweight that is light on its feet, but resonates with vibrancy and breed. 2017-2025. **92.**



2015 Albariño “Cinerea”- Alberto Nanclares (Cambados- Rías Baixas)

The Cinerea bottling from Alberto Nanclares is a single vineyard that lies in the village of Finca Mina in the Val de Salnés, with granitic soils and is planted to thirty year-old vines. The wine is fermented in stainless steel and aged in two to three year-old French casks for nine months on its fine lees, prior to bottling. The 2015 is the first vintage of Cinerea that I have tasted from Señor Nanclares and it is brilliant, delivering a complex and vibrant bouquet of sweet grapefruit, fresh pineapple, stony minerality, dried flowers, gentle leesy tones and a very discreet touch of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, nicely ripe and full, with a super core, excellent complexity and a very long, very refined and zesty finish. The sojourn in cask has given this wine a rounder palate impression than most Albariños, but the wine still has plenty of acidity, length and grip and is absolutely a pleasure to drink...I love this wine as another distinct, but exceptional expression of Albariño! 2017-2025+. **93+.**

2015 Albariño “Soverribas”- Alberto Nanclares (Cambados- Rías Baixas)

The Soverribas bottling hails from a single small vineyard in the village of Meaño, planted on clay and granite, and this cuvée is fermented and raised in a twenty-two hundred liter, ten year-old foudre, with indigenous yeast fermentation and a full year on its fine lees prior to bottling. The 2015 Soverribas is the deepest and most complex of these three excellent Albariños from Señor Nanclares, offering up a fine bouquet of bread fruit, tart pear, complex soil tones, gentle leesiness, a touch of fresh almond, ocean breeze and a touch of orange peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, zesty and beautifully complex, with a great core, fine focus and grip and a very long, perfectly balanced and very intensely flavored finish. This is extremely easy to drink today, but it is still a puppy and a handful of years in the cellar are going to work their magic and produce a reference point bottle of Albariño! Can I order my clams now? 2017-2035. **94.**



2015 Albariño “Coccinella” - Alberto Nanclares (Cambados- Rías Baixas)

In my experience, Coccinella is the very greatest of the great lineup of Albariño from Alberto Nanclares and the 2015 is absolutely stellar. As readers may recall, this is produced from one hundred year-old vines planted in sandy soils that have allowed the vines to be on their own rootstocks, as phylloxera cannot get a hold in the sand here. The wine is fermented with indigenous yeasts in old, four hundred liter casks and spend a year aging on its fine lees prior to bottling. The bouquet is pure, complex and classy, offering up scents of fresh lime, green apple, beautiful soil tones, spring flowers, gentle notes of menthol, a touch of ocean breeze and just a whisper of vanillin oak from the older casks. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with a great core of old vine fruit, superb minerality, bright acids and outstanding length and grip on the vibrant and perfectly balanced finish. Great Albariño! 2017-2030. **95.**



2015 Tinto Rústico “Miñato da Raña”- Alberto Nanclares (Ribeira Sacra)

As I wondered last year, I am not sure why the label does not state that this is a wine from Ribeira Sacra, hypothesizing that it is because Señor Nanclares' cellar lie in the town of Cambados in Rías Baixas? The Miñato de Raña “Tinto Rústico” is composed from a blend of sixty percent Mencía, thirty percent Garnacha and ten percent unknown grapes, sourced from steep, terraced granite vineyards on the Miño River. The 2015 version is just superb, as the fine ripeness of the vintage has really worked here, with the deep and sappy bouquet offering up scents of sweet dark berries, pomegranate, graphite, espresso, superb minerality and coffee grounds. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and nascently complex, with great depth in the mid-palate, moderate, ripe tannins, good acids and great backend soil signature on the very, very long and classy finish. This is even a step up from the outstanding 2014 version! 2020-2050+. **94.**

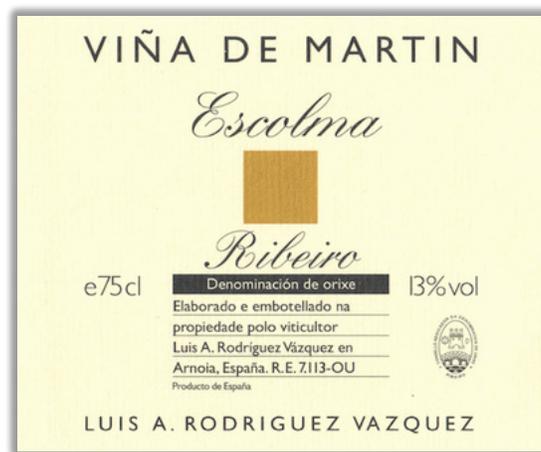
Luis Anxo Rodriguez Vazquez



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2014 Viña de Martin “Os Pasás”- Luis Rodríguez Vazquez

The Os Pasás bottling from Luis Rodríguez is composed primarily of Treixadura, with supporting roles played in the blend by Albariño, Lado and Torrentés. The wine is fermented with wild yeasts in stainless steel and spend ten months aging on its fine lees. The 2014 Os Pasás is a beautiful wine on both the nose and palate, with the complex bouquet wafting from the glass in a mix of melon, peach, incipient notes of beeswax, flinty minerality and a topnote of lemon blossoms. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and minerally, with a fine core of fruit, impeccable focus and balance and a very long, classy finish. This is one of the entry level wines from Señor Rodríguez, but is also seriously complex and delicious! 2017-2025. **91.**



2011 Viña de Martin “Escolma”- Luis Rodríguez Vazquez

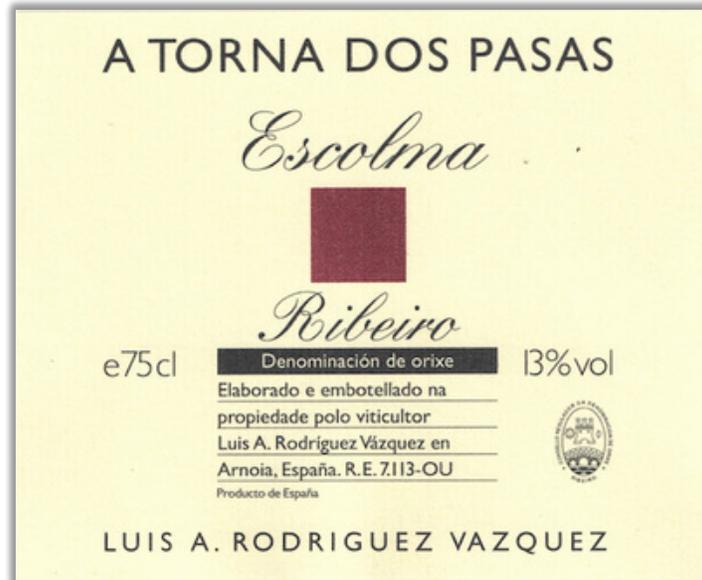
The 2011 Escolma from Luis Rodríguez is excellent and at six years of age it is nicely into its plateau of maturity and drinking with exceptional generosity and breed. The bouquet offers up a fine mélange of pear, a touch of pineapple, beeswax, salty soil tones, just a touch of vanillin oak, candied lemon peel and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is pure, complex and full, with superb depth at the core, fine soil signature, bright, zesty acids and impeccable balance on the long, focused and vibrant finish. This is primarily composed of very old vine Treixadura, with a bit of Albariño, Torrentés and Lado also planted in the vineyard here. Fine, fine juice! 2017-2025+. **94.**

2013 A Teixeira- Luis Rodríguez Vazquez

As readers may recall, this primarily Treixadura bottling now includes a bit of Albariño and Godello...which is fermented and aged in foudres for a year prior to bottling. Like all of Luis Rodríguez's wines, it is fermented with natural yeasts. The 2013 A Teixeira is a cool customer, coming in at 12.5 percent octane and offering up a complex and vibrant bouquet of lemon, pear, incipient notes of beeswax, a beautiful base of soil, a hint of the butter to come and a delicate topnote of acacia blossoms. On the palate the wine is pure, crisp and full, with a fine core, excellent focus and grip, a youthful girdle of acidity and outstanding length and grip on the detailed and vibrant finish. This is still a young wine and could do with a bit more bottle age to really blossom, but it is already pretty easy to finish the bottle! I know the comparison does not make a lot of sense, but this reminds me strongly of the old Château Montelena chardonnays of the late 1970s and early 1980s! A lovely bottle. 2017-2030. **92+**.

2014 Eidos Ermos- Luis Rodríguez Vazquez

The Eidos Ermos bottling from Luis Rodríguez is a young vine blend of Ribeiro's indigenous varieties of Souson, Caiño, Brancellao and Ferrol, with Señor Rodríguez having planted these vineyards himself with selection massale cuttings from some of the old vines he farms in the region. The wine is fermented in stainless steel with indigenous yeasts and raised in a fifty-fifty combination of very old French casks and stainless tanks. The 2014 Eidos Ermos comes in at a cool twelve percent octane and jumps from the glass like a lightning bolt, offering up a complex blend of black cherries, pomegranate, a touch of coffee grounds, chicory, bonfire, grilled meats and a topnote of fresh herbs. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with a lovely core, great soil signature and impeccable focus and grip on the long, modestly tannic and vibrant finish. I really like the Montepulciano-like botanicals and just a hint of backend bitterness here that recalls the wines of Emidio Pepe a bit, albeit this is far less ripe in 2014 than any vintage of Emidio Pepe's that I have tasted. Folks that are put off by moderately ripe wines may find this a touch lean, but I absolutely love it and it really shines at the table! To my palate it tastes a bit like a low octane blend of Gevrey-Chambertin and Bandol. 2017-2035. **90**.



2011 A Torna dos Pasás “Escolma”- Luis Rodríguez Vazquez

The 2011 A Torna dos Pasás “Escolma” from Luis Rodríguez is pure magic, with the wine delivering a superbly complex and wide open bouquet of black cherries, sweet dark berries, cigar ash, beautiful minerality, a touch of balsam bough, dark chocolate, just a whisper of cedar and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, very pure and light on its feet, with a superb core of fruit, stunning backend energy and grip, ripe, suave tannins and a very long, complex and utterly refined finish. Readers may recall that this is a field blend of Caiño, Brancellao and Ferrol, from Señor Rodríguez’s oldest, lowest-yielding vines on his steep, granitic slopes. The wine is barrel-fermented and sees just a touch of new wood during its twelve months of elevage and then spends fully three years in the cellar after bottling prior to release. This is a more than worthy follow-up to the brilliant 2010 Escolma that I tasted last year. As I said a year ago, this is simply one of Spain’s greatest red wines! 2017-2045. **94+**.

Pedro Rodriguez



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2015 Mencía- Adega Guímaro (Amandi- Ribeira Sacra)

The 2015 Mencía from Adega Guímaro is an excellent wine, offering up a pure and complex bouquet of pomegranate, chicory, graphite, complex slate soil tones, a touch of blood orange and tree bark. On the palate the wine is pure, medium-full and transparent, with lovely focus and grip, good mid-palate depth and impressive intensity of flavor on the long, complex, tangy and modestly tannic finish. This is a fine, classic and light on its feet example of Amandi Mencía in the making and this is very, very impressive for an entry level bottling from Señor Rodríguez! 2017-2045. **92.**



2014 Mencía “Finca Meixemán”- Adega Guímaro (Amandi- Ribeira Sacra)

The Finca Meixemán bottling from Pedro Rodríguez is produced from seventy-five year- old Mencía vines, with the fruit foot-trodden and raised in old oak barrels. The 2014 vintage of this fine single vineyard wine is stunning, with great nascent complexity already in evidence on both the nose and palate. The beautiful bouquet offers up a wild and classy blend of mulberry, pomegranate, graphite, a bit of bonfire, a beautifully complex base of slate minerality, balsam bough and chicory. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and tangy, with a sappy core, great soil signature, suave tannins and outstanding focus and grip and beautiful balance on the very long and nascently complex finish. This is a beautiful example of Ribeira Sacra- deep, complex and still light on its feet, with simply gorgeous complexity. It is very easy to drink already, but it is still a puppy and will be far better five to ten years down the road, as the wine has enormous potential! 2017-2050+. **94+.**

2013 Mencía “Finca Capeliños”- Guímaro (Amandi- Ribeira Sacra)

Finca Capeliños is the oldest parcel of vines that the Rodríguez family owns, as these are ninety-five year-old vines in this sixty ares parcel that lies down towards the bottom of the slope, near the Sil River. The wine includes forty percent whole clusters, is foot-trodden and again, raised in older French barrels. The 2013 is blossoming beautifully since I last saw a bottle a year and a half ago, offering up a deep and sappy nose of blackberries, cassis, tree bark, a bit of grilled meat, cigar smoke, a very complex base of soil tones, graphite and a gentle touch of herbs in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, focused and beautifully balanced, with its full-bodied format impressively light on its feet, with modest tannins, a sappy core, tangy acids and simply outstanding length and grip on the complex finish. This is really starting to drink with verve, but it will age long and gracefully and there is absolutely no rush to start opening bottles anytime soon! A great bottle of Mencía! 2017-2040. **95.**



2014 Mencía “Finca Pombeiras”- Guímaro (Amandi- Ribeira Sacra)

The Finca Pombeiras is a small, half hectare parcel of seventy-plus year-old vines that sits up high on the terraces above the Sil River. The very talented proprietor, Pedro Rodríguez uses all whole clusters for this bottling, which is foot-trodden and raised in old, five hundred liter casks. The 2014 Finca Pombeiras is truly outstanding, offering up a deep and very complex nose of sweet cassis, pomegranate, grilled meats, graphite, slate, espresso and a topnote of bonfire. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and complex, with a lovely core, great soil signature, modest tannins, vibrant acids and superb length and grip on the poised, tangy and light on its feet finish. This is every bit as fine as the stunning 2013 version! It is approachable today, but to really capture all of the magic here, one should give it at least a handful of years in the cellar- not that it is going to be an easy thing to keep one’s hands off of bottles of this beautiful wine! 2020-2050. **95.**

Raul Suarez





2013 Mencía- Divina Clementia (Amandi- Ribeira Sacra)

The 2013 Mencía from Divina Clementia is only the second wine produced from this new, boutique estate in Ribeira Sacra. The vines for this bottling hail from two small plots of vines, ranging from sixty to eighty years of age. As 2012 was the very first vintage produced here, the wine was a bit marked by its new wood (as one needs to buy casks to make wine!), but this is emphatically not the case with the 2013, which is superb and utterly classical in style. The bouquet is deep, complex and very classy, offering up scents of dark berries, pomegranate, fresh herb tones, slate, graphite, woodsmoke and a touch of nutskin. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, pure and impeccably balanced, with a lovely core, great soil signature, outstanding focus and grip and a very long, suavely-tannic and vibrant finish. This is already drinking with great style and breed, but will continue to improve for several decades. Congratulations to Raul Suarez and his team for turning out a stunning bottle of Mencía in only the second vintage here! 2017-2045+. **93+**.

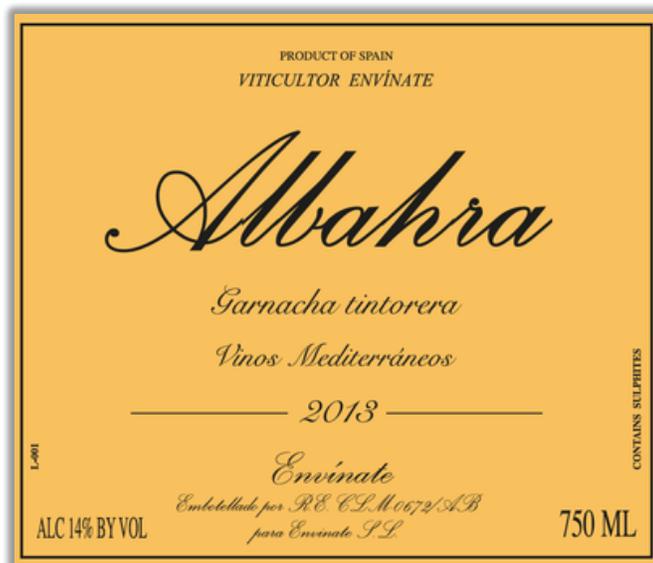
Envínate



As I noted in the article in issue 67, this second part of Spanish coverage is anything but an afterthought, as it includes notes on yet another of my absolute, long-time favorite Spanish producers, Envínate, whose wines range across several D.O.s and are always of impeccable quality. The new releases of old vine bottlings from this dynamic young team of winemakers is outstanding across the board and will delight fans of their wines- for those of you who have not yet had a chance to try any wines from Envínate, time is a wasting!

2014 Albahra Garnacha Tintorera- Envínate (Almansa)

The 2014 Albahra from Envínate is a touch riper than the 2015 version, but every bit as pure and precise, with some secondary layers of complexity beginning to stir on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is simply superb, wafting from the glass in a complex mélange of black cherries, cola, dark soil tones, a bit of spiced meats, cloves, hints of garrigue, Alicante Bouschet leafiness and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is pure, full and focused, with excellent transparency, bright acids, fine focus and grip and a very long, vibrant and moderately tannic finish. This wine is still a few years away from blossoming, but its quality is exceptional and one would be hard-pressed to find many other wines at this superb quality level at such a bargain price! Great juice. 2020-2050. **94.**



2015 Albahra Garnacha Tintorera- Envínate (Almansa)

The Albahra bottling from Envínate is composed entirely of thirty year-old Garnacha Tintorera (or Alicante Bouschet). Fifty percent whole clusters, indigenous yeasts and elevage in old casks are the cellar formula for this outstanding wine. The 2015 Albahra comes in at 13.5 percent octane and offers up a youthfully complex bouquet of black raspberries, lovely spice tones, black cherries, salty soil tones, woodsmoke, a touch of currant leaf, lavender and hints of citrus blossoms in the upper register. On the palate the wine is focused, full-bodied and broad-shouldered, but with better transparency than I recall from the 2013 version a year ago. The core has plenty of stuffing, the tannins are ripe and gently chewy and the finish is long, nascently complex and very well-balanced, closing with plenty of grip and energy. This is a young wine, but it is going to be excellent, and though it may not be qualitatively a big step up from the 2013 version, I like the style better this year. An absolute steal! 2020-2050. **94.**

2015 Lousas “Viñas de Aldea”- Envínate (Ribeira Sacra)

The 2015 Viñas de Aldea (their blended Ribeira Sacra bottling, from several different parcels, all of which are at least sixty years of age) from Envínate is outstanding, offering up a deep and nascently complex bouquet of dark berries, espresso, graphite, a touch of tree bark, fresh herbs, young Hermitage-like medicinal tones, plenty of smokiness and a superb base of slate minerality. On the palate the wine is deep, tightly-knit and rock solid at the core, with a full-bodied format, moderate, ripe tannins, bright acids and excellent mineral drive on the long, focused finish. This is a beautiful bottle in the making, but it will need some bottle age to blossom and is destined for a long life. 2020-2055. **92+**.

2015 Lousas “Parcela Camiño Novo” – Envínate (Amandi-Ribeira Sacra)

As readers may recall, the Parcela Camiño Novo is planted with vines that are more than seventy years of age and are a field blend of approximately ninety percent Mencía and ten percent Garnacha Tintorera. This is a beautifully situated vineyard, perched high above the Sil River and is owned by Pablo González, and the 2015 is vinified by both the team at Envínate and Miguel Anxo. The 2015 Parcela Camiño Novo is a great young bottle of Ribeira Sacra, delivering a complex aromatic constellation of pomegranate, sweet dark berries, tree bark, dark soil tones, graphite, a touch of grilled meats and a gently medicinal topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with a fine core of fruit, superb soil signature, ripe, well- integrated tannins and a long, soil-driven and perfectly balanced finish. Superb juice in the making, but give it a bit of time in the cellar to blossom. 2021-2060. **94**.

2015 Lousas “Parcela Seoane”- Envínate (Amandi-Ribeira Sacra)

Envínate’s 2015 Mencía Lousas “Parcela Seoane” is young, deep, tight and very promising. The bouquet from this very old vine cuvée is bottomless, but still very primary, offering up scents of cassis, hints of the pomegranate to come with bottle age, tree bark, graphite, espresso, slate minerality, a touch of cola, gentle botanicals and a topnote of woodsmoke. On the palate the wine is deep, transparent and full-bodied, with firm, ripe tannins, excellent focus and grip, tangy acids and great length on the nascently complex finish. This will probably eclipse the 2014 version in the fullness of time, but it will be several years before this superb wine starts to drink with any of its secondary layers of complexity showing! 2023-2060+. **95**.

2014 Lousas “Parcela Camiño Novo”- Envínate (Amandi-Ribeira Sacra)

The 2014 Parcela Camiño Novo from Envínate is every bit as fine as the 2015 version, albeit, clearly based in a different growing season. These seventy-plus year-old vines have turned out a beautiful wine in 2014, offering up a complex and very refined bouquet of cassis, chicory, just a touch of pomegranate, woodsmoke, a beautiful base of slate minerality, graphite, gentle botanicals and coffee grounds. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very intensely flavored, with a rock solid core, great transparency, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, nascently complex and tangy finish. This does not have the puppy fat fruit of the 2015, but it is every bit as deep and its potential is at least as superb! 2021-2055+. **94.**



2014 Lousas “Parcela Seoane”- Envínate (Amandi-Ribeira Sacra)

The 2014 Mencía Lousas “Parcela Seoane” from Envínate is made from even older vines, with all of these over eighty years of age and perhaps even older, planted on pure slate in the Doade heart of Amandi. The 2014 version is brilliant, soaring from the glass in a youthfully complex mix of pomegranate, sweet dark berries, slate minerality, a touch of licorice, tree bark, graphite and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, soil-driven and full-bodied, with beautiful focus and delineation, a lovely core of fruit, stunning complexity and a very, very long, poised and focused finish. This is brilliant wine that is approachable today, due to seamless balance, but really is still a young wine and will be a legend in the fullness of time. 2020-2060. **95+.**

2014 Táganan Blanco- Envínate (Tenerife)

The 2014 Táganan Blanco is again fairly reductive when first opened (this was also the case with the 2013 iteration), but with some coaxing offers up a fine aromatic blend of pear, salty minerality, a touch of quince, the gentle nuttiness of Malvasía and orange peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and youthful, with a lovely core, superb soil signature, great focus and grip and a very long, youthfully complex finish. I have mentioned in the past that there is a textural similarity here to the wines of Jean-François Coche and this is once again evident in the 2014. This is utterly unique and truly lovely wine! 2017-2030+. **93.**



2014 Táganan “Parcela Amogoje” Blanco- Envínate (Tenerife)

The Parcela Amogoje Blanco from Envínate is a wild, old field blend that includes grapes such as Albillo Criollo, Marmajuelo, Malvasia and several others, though no one is quite sure what is really planted here, as the vines are well over one hundred years of age. The 2014 Parcela Amogoje delivers a simply superb bouquet of pear, apple, iodine, hazelnuts, salty soil tones, dried flowers, hints of candied lemon peel and a topnote of citrus peel. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and seamlessly balanced, with great acids, a fine core, laser-like focus and a very, very long, complex and vibrant finish. This is stunning wine! 2017-2030+. **95.**

2014 Táganan Tinto- Envínate (Tenerife)

What I like about the wines from Envínate (besides their absolutely stellar quality) is that they always credit on their labels the vineyard owners who they assist in farming and purchase the grapes from to make their wines, with their Táganan Tinto bottling hailing from old vines owned by the Sosa and De La Rosa families. As I mentioned in the note on the 2015 version of this bottling, no one knows anymore what varieties are in these very old vineyards, but they certainly produce great wine! The 2014 offers up a deep and very classy bouquet of cassis, desiccated black cherries, bonfire, a touch of garrigue, dark volcanic soil tones, chicory and the first vestiges of the botanicals to come with further bottle age. On the palate the wine is medium- full, pure and intensely flavored, with a lovely core, excellent transparency, modest tannins, tangy acids and great focus and grip on the very long and complex finish. This is simply a stunning middleweight! 2017-2040+. **94.**



2015 Táganan “Parcela Margalagua” Tinto- Envínate (Tenerife)

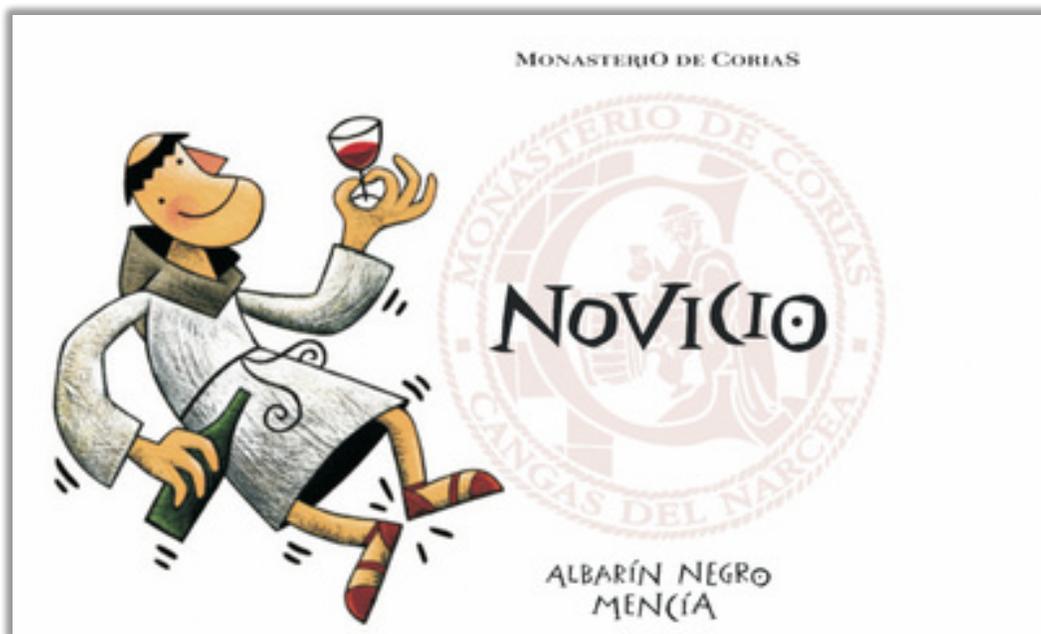
The 2015 Táganan “Parcela Margalagua” from Envínate is a beautiful wine that fully does justice to the potential of these centenarian vines. As I have mentioned in past notes on this wine, this is a field blend that includes Listán Negro and Negramoll, amongst a fairly large number of other grape varieties. The 2015 Parcela Margalagua is outstanding (somehow I missed tasting the 2014 version!), offering up a deep, complex and beautifully focused bouquet of desiccated dark berries, chicory, discreet botanicals, a complex base of volcanic soil, a touch of pepper, a hint of tree bark and a topnote of red curry. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, pure and very, very transparent, with a lovely core, bright acids, modest, beautifully integrated tannins, laser-like focus and superb length and grip on the seamless and nascently complex finish. This is a beautiful bottle of wine in the making. 2017-2045+. **94+.**

Monasterio de Corias



2015 “Viña Grandiella”- Monasterio de Corias (Cangas- Asturias)

The Viña Grandiella bottling from Monasterio de Corias is made from fifty-plus year-old Albarín Blanco vines grown on slate hillside vineyards. The wine is fermented in stainless steel and aged for a few months on its fine lees prior to bottling. The 2015 “Viña Grandiella” offers up a fine and gently perfumed nose of casaba melon, pear, a touch of green olive, lime blossoms, slate and a touch of citrus peel in the upper register. On the palate the wine is bright, vibrant and full, with a good core, lovely slate mineral drive, zesty acids and lovely focus and grip on the complex, authoritative and very nicely balanced finish. A lovely bottle. 2017-2025+. **90.**

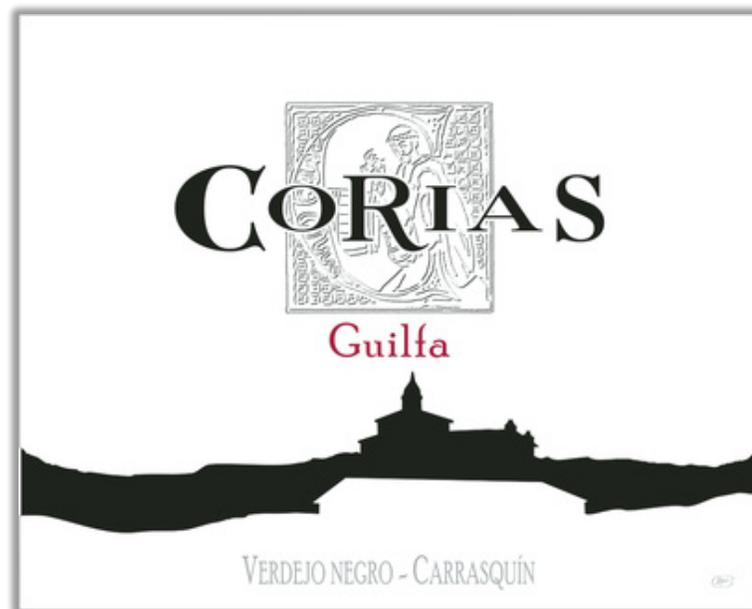


2015 “Novicio”- Monasterio de Corias (Cangas- Asturias)

The 2015 “Novicio” from Monasterio de Corias is a low octane (twelve percent) and zesty red that offers up plenty of personality on both the nose and palate. The bouquet jumps from the glass in a mix of red berries, pomegranate, fresh herb tones, slate and graphite. On the palate the wine is medium-bodied, bright and tangy, with respectable depth at the core, fine intensity of flavor and a long, bouncy and succulent finish. This is really well-balanced, and though it is not the most complex of wines, it is eminently quaffable and a pleasure in the glass. 2017-2025+. **88.**

2012 Finca los Frailes- Monasterio de Corias (Cangas- Asturias)

The 2012 Finca los Frailes from Monasterio de Corias has blossomed nicely over the last year and now offers up a beautifully complex nose of black cherries, pomegranate, dark chocolate, a bit of bonfire, graphite, lovely spice tones, a hint of red curry and a fine base of soil. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, transparent and light on its feet, with a good core, modest tannins, tangy acids and a nice touch of bitterness on the long and complex finish. This terrific wine is a blend of Mencía, Albarín Negro, Carrasquin and Verdejo Tinto (the first and last the only two varieties I have ever heard of in this mix outside of this fine wine!), and they work together beautifully! 2017-2030+. **92.**



2012 Corias “Guilfa”- Monasterio de Corias (Cangas- Asturias)

As I mentioned last year, the Guilfa bottling from Monasterio de Corias is an old vine cuvée made up from an eighty year-old vineyard planted to two of the indigenous grapes of the region: sixty percent Carrasquín and forty percent Verdejo Negro. The wine is raised in a fifty- fifty blend of new and one wine casks. The 2012 Guilfa is a touch riper than the superb 2010 version, tipping the scales at 13.5 percent and offering up a superb bouquet of cassis, chicory, slate minerality, a touch of coffee grounds, woodsmoke and a very discreet topnote of botanicals. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very elegant on the attack, with a fine core of fruit, good soil signature, moderate tannins and fine length and grip on the well-balanced finish. The slightly lower octane 2010 version seemed a touch more transparent out of the blocks than the 2012 version, but this is a fine bottle in the making. 2019-2035+. **92.**

Suriol





2015 Donzella- Suriol (Penedès)

The Donzella bottling is composed entirely of Xarel-lo, which is fermented in concrete vats with indigenous yeasts and goes through full malolactic. The 2015 Donzella comes in at a cool twelve percent octane and offers up a bright and complex nose of lemon, tart pear, chalky soil tones, a nice touch of fresh almond and a topnote of spring flowers. On the palate the wine is medium-full, crisp and complex, with a lovely core, fine soil signature and a long, classy and wide open finish. The acids are not particularly high here, so the wine will probably want drinking in the next few years, but there is a ton of pleasure to be had here over that timeframe! 2017-2020. **90.**

Akutain



2015 Rioja Cosecha- Bodegas Akutain (Rioja Alta)

The 2015 Cosecha from Bodegas Akutain is the first vintage of this entry level bottling that the estate has ever produced. The wine does not see any oak, being fermented and raised in fiberglass vats for a few months prior to bottling. It is predominantly Tempranillo, with a bit of Garnacha included and the 2015 is a lovely young wine made for early drinking, but which also has the stuffing and chassis to age nicely over the mid-term as well. The bouquet is a stylish mix of black cherries, Rioja spice tones, cigar wrapper and a nice base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and juicy, with a good solid core, fine focus and grip and a long, tangy and gently tannic finish. Think classic Rioja aromatics and flavors and the crunchy bounce of young Beaujolais! A lovely combination and a superb value. 2017-2027+. **88.**



2014 Rioja Crianza- Bodegas Akutain (Rioja Alta)

The 2014 Crianza from the Peñagaricano family, who founded Bodegas Akutain in 1975, is an outstanding example of this level of Rioja. The wine is fermented with indigenous yeasts and aged for nearly two years in older American oak casks and another year in bottle prior to release (by the way the aging requirements for Crianza are a single year in oak and one year in bottle). The 2014 Crianza is an absolute classic on both the nose and palate, wafting from the glass in a superb blend of red and black cherries, a touch of fresh nutmeg, cloves, a beautiful base of soil, cigar smoke and a nice touch of toasted coconut American oak. On the palate the wine is full, pure and already velvety on the attack, with a fine core, excellent focus and balance, modest tannins and a long, tangy and complex finish. This is a beautiful wine. 2017-2040. **91+.**

2006 Rioja Reserva- Bodegas Akutain (Rioja Alta)

The 2006 Reserva from Bodegas Akutain has started to blossom nicely in the year since I last saw a bottle, with the wine offering up lovely complexity on both the nose and palate. The bouquet is deep, complex and shows a nice touch of spiciness from its small percentage of Garnacha in the cépages, delivering a fine blend of red and black cherries, a touch of spices meats, hints of garrigue, a superb base of soil, fresh bay, the first whiff of the nutskin to come and coconutty old American oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and starting to get a bit velvety on the attack, with a fine core, impeccable balance, modest tannins and a long, tangy and focused finish. This is really fine juice, and as tasty as it is today, I would opt for giving it just a few more years in the cellar to allow it to really get velvety and wide open. This is terrific Rioja! 2017-2040. **93.**



2004 Rioja Gran Reserva- Bodegas Akutain (Rioja Alta)

The 2004 Rioja Gran Reserva from Bodegas Akutain has continued to blossom over the course of the fifteen months since I last drank a bottle and this remains one of the most beautiful bottles of classically-styled, old school Rioja in the market today. The wine soars from the glass in a blaze of cherries, red plums, Rioja spice tones, toasted coconut, cigar smoke, a fine base of soil and a distinctive topnote of cloves. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and still a tad chewy on the backend, with a beautiful core of fruit, marvelous transparency, moderate tannins and a very long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. Great juice that will age for decades and decades. 2017-2050+. **94.**

Goyo Garcia Viadero



2013 Cobero Tinto- Goyo Garcia Viadero

The Cobero bottling, as readers may recall, is a blend of seventy percent old vine Mencía and thirty percent even older vine Palomino, which he co-ferments and raised in old barrels. The 2013 version is outstanding, delivering a deep, complex and classy bouquet of cassis, tree bark, superb soil tones, chicory, a touch of grilled meat, graphite and a whisper of cedar in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with beautiful transparency, tangy acids and a very long, focused and modestly tannic finish. The Palomino here probably kicks the alcohol level up a bit (the wine is 13.5 percent octane), as well as giving it really zesty acidity. This is a very unique and outstanding bottle. 2020-2045+. **92.**



2014 “Finca Cascorrales”- Garcia Georgieva (Ribera del Duero)

The Graciano “Finca Cascorrales” is made by both Goyo Garcia and his lovely wife, Diana Semova Georgieva. The wine is fermented with indigenous yeasts and spend a year in older French casks prior to bottling. The 2014 version is outstanding, wafting from the glass in a vibrant aromatic constellation of black cherries, a touch of cranberry, pepper, charred wood, dark soil tones, coffee bean, a lovely base of soil and a gently savory topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and tangy, with an excellent core, impeccable focus and balance, moderate tannins and a very long, poised and nascently complex finish. Fine juice in the making. 2020-2045+. **93.**

2012 “Finca el Peruco”- Goyo Garcia Viadero (Ribera del Duero)

As readers may recall, the Finca el Peruco bottling from Goyo Garcia hails from a vineyard more than eighty years of age, planted at a thousand meters above sea level on a fine base of clay and limestone and includes fifteen percent of Albillo planted with the Tempranillo. The 2012 version is a stunning young wine, delivering depth and breed in its still fairly youthful bouquet of black cherries, plums, cigar smoke, limestone soils, a touch of citrus zest and a very discreet base of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full and vibrant, with a sappy core of fruit, stunning minerality (particularly for Ribera del Duero), ripe, seamless tannins and superb length and grip on the tangy, complex and utterly stunning finish. All this superb wine needs is time in the cellar! 2023-2060. **94+**.

2011 Tinto “Finca Viñas de Arcilla”- Goyo Garcia Viadero (Ribera del Duero)

As readers may recall, the Finca Viñas de Arcilla is the only one hundred percent Tempranillo bottling from Goyo Garcia, with the vineyard here having a bit more clay than in the other parcels and giving the wine a bit more plushness as a result. The 2011 delivers outstanding breed on the nose, with scents of cassis, black cherries, cigar wrapper, gentle spice tones, a fine base of soil, violets and a hint of cedar wafting from the glass. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and a bit more structured out of the blocks than the other single vineyard wines, with a rock solid core, fine soil inflection, firm, ripe tannins and excellent length and grip on the focused and very well-balanced finish. Though the Finca Viñas de Arcilla does not contain any Albillo, the acidity here is still excellent and rather remarkable for the region! 2023-2060. **93**.

2011 Finca Valdeolmos- Goyo Garcia Viadero (Ribera del Duero)

The 2011 Finca Valdeolmos from Goyo Garcia is an absolutely stunning young wine, coming in at 13.5 percent octane, which is quite low for this drought vintage in Ribera del Duero. The wine is bright and complex on the nose, jumping from the glass in a complex blend of black cherries, plums, cigar smoke, a fine base of chalky soil tones, violets, just a hint of cedar and a topnote of gentle spice tones. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, complex and very transparent for young Ribera del Duero, with a lovely core of fruit, good acids and fine focus and grip on the very long, soil-driven and suavely tannic finish. This could do with a few years in the cellar to start to show some of its secondary layers of complexity, but the wine is so beautifully balanced that it is already quite easy and enjoyable to be opening bottles now! A beautiful wine in the making! 2021-2060+. **94**.



2010 Reserva Especial “G.G.V.”- Goyo Garcia Viadero (Ribera del Duero)

The Reserva Especial bottling from Goyo Garcia is aged fully five years in older French casks prior to bottling and is a very rare wine- in fact, this is the first time I have ever tasted it or even heard of its existence! I am not sure from which vineyard the Reserva Especial hails, but the wine is flat out brilliant, soaring from the glass in a refined and vibrant blaze of black plums, sweet Cuban cigars, black cherries, coffee bean, beautifully complex soil tones, incipient nuttiness, touch of lavender, gentle cedar and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and utterly seamless, with great depth in the mid-palate, bright acids, modest tannins and superb length and grip on the impeccably well-balanced finish. This has decades of life still ahead of it, but at age seven, the wine is already very, very easy to drink! It reminds me a bit of the 1975 Vega Sicilia Único when that wine was younger, but obviously with some Albillo in the cuvée to add bounce and brightness. A brilliant wine! 2017-2060. **96**

Felipe Gutiérrez de la Vega



2016 Viña Ulises - Gutiérrez de la Vega (Alicante)

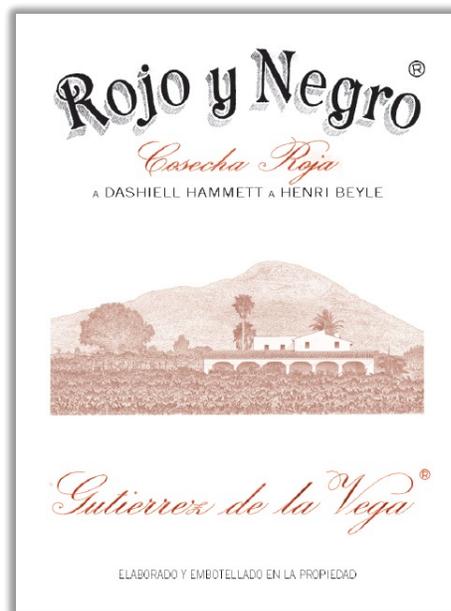
The 2016 Viña Ulises from Gutiérrez de la Vega is composed of a blend of sixty percent Giró and forty percent Monastrell. The wine is impressively low in octane for this region, coming in at 13.5 percent alcohol and delivers a fine bouquet of dark berries, black cherries, dark soil tones, a touch of Monastrell's autumnal leafiness, charred wood and espresso. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very soil-driven in personality (particularly for Alicante!), with a fine core, moderate, well-integrated tannins and impressive length and grip on the complex, tangy and quite light on its feet finish. Fine juice that is going to blossom beautifully with some aging, but is already very easy on the palate! This wine is named in tribute to James Joyce. 2017- 2035. **91+.**



©Mark Lindzy

2010 Rojo y Negro- Gutiérrez de la Vega (Alicante)

The 2010 Rojo y Negro from Gutiérrez de la Vega in a single varietal bottling of Giró (Garnacha) made from forty year-old vines. This wine is also raised in one-third new French casks for fourteen months prior to bottling, as is the Principe de Salinas cuvée. The 2010 Rojo y Negro is a touch lower in octane than the above wine, coming in at 13.5 percent alcohol and offers up a fine nose of black raspberries, garrigue, a touch of chocolate, roasted meats, a fine base of salty soil tones and a touch of licorice in the upper register. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and complex, with plenty of depth and muscle, ripe tannins and fine length and grip on the roasted finish. This is classically Alicante in style and very, very well done in the traditionally more powerful style of the region. Fine juice. 2017-2035+. **90.**

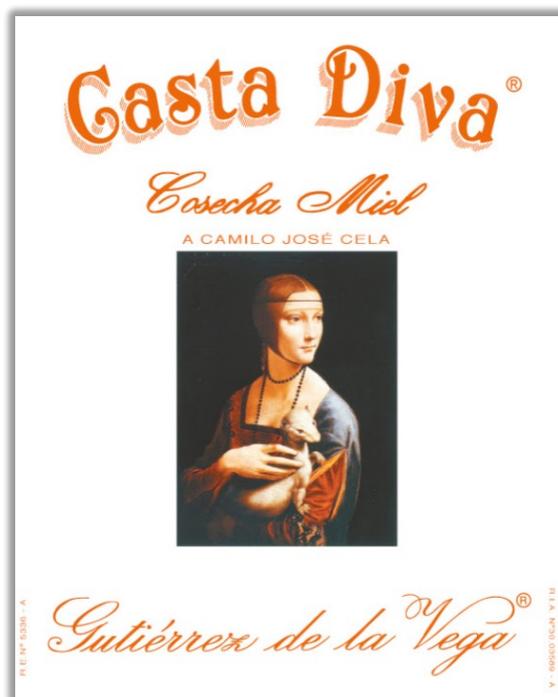


2012 Imagine- Gutiérrez de la Vega (Alicante)

The 2012 Imagine cuvée (dedicated to John Lennon) from Gutiérrez de la Vega is... Giró and comes in at an even fourteen percent alcohol, which is not too bad at all for the very warm region of Alicante. The bouquet of the 2012 is deep and complex, wafting from the glass in a fine blend of black cherries, chicory, a lovely base of soil, dried black raspberries, a touch of garrigue and a topnote of cola. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, ripe and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, lovely soil signature, moderate tannins and a long, complex and gently chewy finish. Even at five years of age this wine is still a bit on the young side and needs another three or four years in the cellar to fully blossom, but it will be an excellent wine when it is ready to drink! 2020-2045. **91+.**

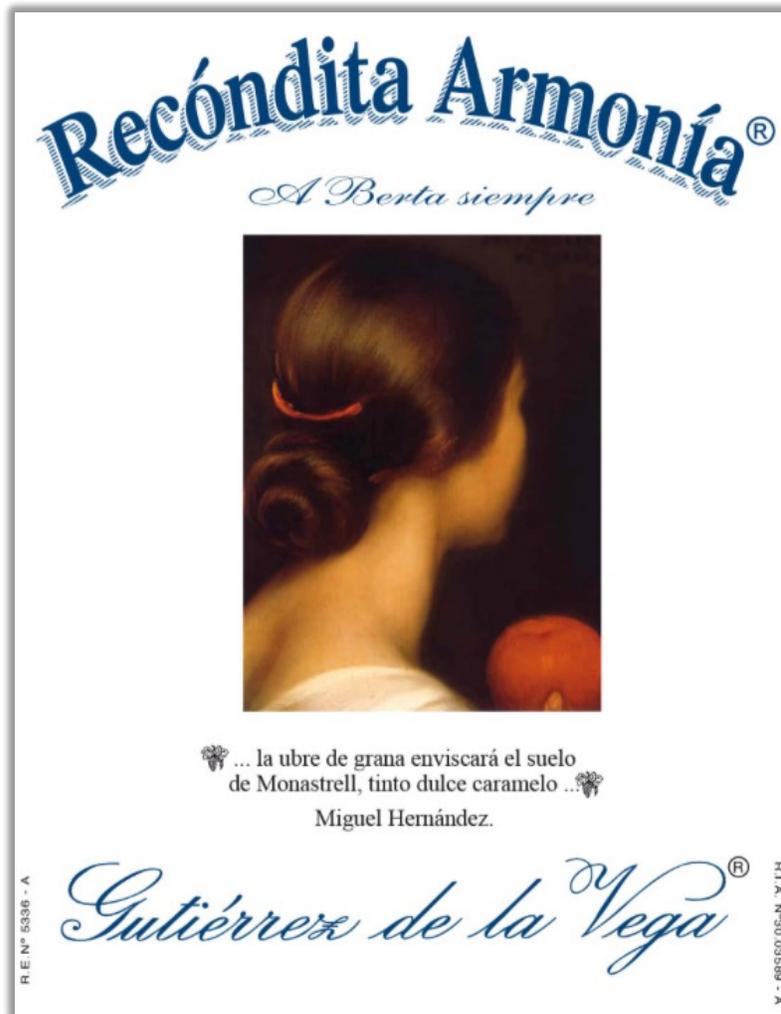
2013 “Casta Diva Cosecha Miel”- Gutiérrez de la Vega (Alicante)

The 2013 Moscatel Dulce “Casta Diva Cosecha Miel” from Gutiérrez de la Vega is barrel fermented in French casks and aged for thirteen months prior to bottling, so it does not see anywhere near the same aging as the 2002 solera version below. Nevertheless, this is a lovely wine, jumping from the glass in a vibrant blend of apricot, nectarine, honey, orange peel and soil tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, bright and beautifully balanced, with lovely acids to carry the sweetness here, fine focus and a very long, impressively light on its feet and bouncy finish. This is a beautiful wine! 2017-2035. **92+**.



2002 “Casta Diva Reserva Real”- Gutiérrez de la Vega (Alicante)

The Moscatel Dulce from Gutiérrez de la Vega is made in a solera system and was aged for nine years in barrel prior to bottling. The 2002 version is a beautiful golden orange color and offers up a complex bouquet of marinated orange peel, apricot, incipient tea leaves, a touch of cigar wrapper, lavender and honey. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, crisp and beautifully balanced, with a fine core, bright acids and outstanding length and grip on the very complex and zesty finish. This is fourteen percent octane, but carries it very well indeed. Very hard juice to spit! 2017-2035. **93**.



1987 “Recóndita Armonía”- Gutiérrez de la Vega (Alicante)

The 1987 “Recóndita Armonía” from Gutiérrez de la Vega is an absolutely brilliant wine, offering up a deep, spicy and complex nose of sultana raisins, candied orange peel, an exotic note of fresh peppermint, lovely soil tones, a touch of lavender, dried eucalyptus and barley sugar. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, sweet and beautifully balanced, with bottomless depth at the core, really good acids for its fourteen percent octane, exquisite balance and focus and a very, very long and complex finish. This is like an old Port in some aspects (though it is not fortified), but with all these exotic spice tones soaring from the glass in a completely unique and captivating style. No wonder Felipe Gutiérrez de la Vega is a legend in Alicante for his dessert wines! 2017-2040. **95.**