LLAURADOR WINES
JOSÈ PASTOR SELECTIONS

# CASA BALAGUER

## TRAGALARGO BLANCO

## ORIGIN

Alicante, Spain

## VARIETIES

50% Moscatel de Alexandria, 50% Malvasía

## VINEYARDS

The 20-50-year old own-rooted Moscatel vines are grown in pure sandy soils within the Parque Natural de La Mata in Torrevieja close to the Mediterranean at sea level, and the 25-year old Malvasía vineyard is on pink marl soils at the Paraje Cascante in Villena close to the winery at 550m elevation.

## VINIFICATION METHOD

The grapes were hand-harvested and fermented separately, both destemmed and macerated whole-berry in stainless steel tanks and clay tinajas, the Malvasía on skins for 1 week and the Moscatel for 3-4 weeks. The wine was then gently pneumatic pressed, combined and raised in stainless steel tank on fine lees for 6-8 months. The finished wine was lightly filtered and given a small dose of SO2 before bottling.

## PRODUCER PROFILE

Originally established in 1750, the Casa Balaguer estate is located on the high plains of Villena, Alicante. Formerly home to Bodegas Bernabé Navarro (a JPS import many years back), Marta Ribera and Andrés Carull are the estate's current owners and caretakers. The couple both trained in enology at the University of Valencia, spending time working at various wineries, and eventually catching the natural wine bug while working in Bordeaux in the late aughts. Born and raised in Villena and a third-generation winegrower, Marta knew of Casa Balaguer and, seeking a project of their own, jumped at the chance to farm and make wine at this historic estate. Since taking over from the retiring Rafa Bernabé, Marta and Andrés have done enormous work on their 40 hectare estate (30 dedicated to vineyards, plus olive & almond trees, cereals and forest) grafting over the French varieties to many near-extinct indigenous grape varieties and taking the farming to organic and then most recently Demeter certification. Embracing the *mar y montaña* mentality of eastern Spain, they work in two areas – the continental-influenced Villena (montaña) and the Mediterranean sea-influenced Parque Natural La Mata (mar) where they manage 8ha of vines – to produce around 100,000 bottles yearly in a resolutely low intervention style, only utilizing a bit of added SO2 or light filtration when needed. In their words, "a personal project dedicated to producing stripped-back, honest wines that truthfully express our countryside, heritage and people. Vibrant wines from living vines."