LLAURADOR WINES
JOSÈ PASTOR SELECTIONS

# CASA BALAGUER

## TRAGALARGO TINTO

## ORIGIN

Alicante, Spain

## VARIETIES

100% Monastrell

## VINEYARD

These vines were planted in 2006 in Paraje Castante in Villena close to the winery at 600m elevation, grown on chalky, stony, sandy soils.

## VINIFICATION METHOD

The grapes were hand-harvested and 30% underwent whole-cluster carbonic fermentation in stainless steel tanks, the rest of the grapes were destemmed but not crushed. A small portion of the juice was bled off after 48 hours and the remainder fermented on skins for 7 days with daily light pump-overs before pressing to tank to rejoin the bled-off juice. The wine completes primary and malolactic fermentation and is raised in tank for an additional 6-8 months, before getting a light filtration and 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."