

Viña Real Barrel-Fermented Blanco 'Monopole' 2000

Mainly the Viura grape, sometimes with a touch of Malvasia (this is quite hard to ripen, apparently). There's some skin contact, and new American oak is used. Very expressive oaky nose which is very smooth and creamy, with some vanilla notes. Fresh, dry savoury palate with lemony.

WINEMAKING PROCESS CHARACTERISTICS:

Made entirely from white Viura, hand harvested at optimum ripeness. A cool skin maceration produces excellent aromatic extraction and after pressing the must is allowed to fall bright naturally at then fermentation is carried out at cool, controlled temperatures in stainless steel tanks, to retain its aromatic freshness.

TASTING NOTE:

Bright straw yellow with hints of green. Fine citrus and floral aromas, some grapefruit and orange blossom. Fine and elegant on the palate with ripe citrus and mango and a balanced acidity, creating a long fresh, appealing finish.

WINE MAKING AREAS OF LA RIOJA:

RIOJA ALTA (HIGHLAND RIOJA)

It is the biggest area, with almost 21.000 hectares of vineyards, representing 43% of the Appellation. From Logroño (350 m) to Villalba (600 m), here are the highest fields above the sea level. It is also cooler and moister than the other La Rioja areas. It has clay-limestone, ferrous clay and alluvial soils. The best quality grapes grow on the first ones, especially from Cenicero to Haro, and on the mountains that protect the area from Northeast winds. It has remarkable vintages in good years. Its wines have a higher acidic grade, and they also enjoy the greatest ageing potential.

RIOJA ALAVESA

These lands, protected by Cantabrian Sierra, on the North side of Ebro River, have about 10.000 ha of vineyards, amounting to 20 per cent of the Appellation. It is an area with magnificent wines, protected from cold North winds and with a good sun exposure. These are clay-limestone lands, in terraces with small yards that require an artisan tilling of the vines.

RIOJA BAJA (LOWLAND RIOJA)

This area makes 37 percent of La Rioja production, with about 18.000 ha of vineyards. It is a dry and hot area, with a higher Mediterranean influence in its climate. Wines here have a high alcoholic content and low acidic level. Both limestone and alluvial soils produce harsh, tough wines when grapes are not harvested fast enough to avoid an excessive maturing. They have always been "coupage" wines, used in rainy years with low-alcoholic content wines in other La Rioja areas.

Tetilla Labeled "Denominación de Origen Protegida" (D.O.P.)

The word "tetilla" (meaning nipple) clearly defines the traditional shape of this cheese, that is, a flattened pear-shaped cone with a small nipple on the top. This is the most characteristic cheese from Galicia, easily recognized by its shape and smooth, fine, yellow straw-colored rind. The soft paste, thick and smooth with few air pockets, is very creamy on the palate. The flavor is clean and smooth.

A predominantly farming culture, Galicia is the Spanish autonomous region with the highest production of cow's milk. In each corner of the region, one can find cheese-makers producing Galician Tetilla cheese.

Tetilla cheese is also called Queso de Perilla, Queso de Teta, Queso de Teta de Vaca, o Queso Gallego de Teta, all referring to its characteristic shape. The cheeses are then left to air in a fresh and slightly humid room for at least one week. Alternatively the cheeses may be scalded in hot salted water to obtain a closed, clean, waxy rind. The cheese inside is closed, compact, of a ivory-white or pale-yellow color. The cut is smooth, creamy, even spreadable. The taste is buttery, but not salty, and melts easily in the mouth