

Product code: 1721

ABEL MENDOZA, GRACIANO GRANO A GRANO, DOCA RIOJA, SPAIN, 2016



Producer Profile

Modest and passionate about his vineyards, Abel and his wife Maite have been making understated wines in San Vicente since 1988.

Lying in the shadow of the Sierra Cantabria, Abel has vineyards in the finest parts of the Alavesa. His knowledge and understanding of the soils is enthralling and to taste in his cellar can be an education on the effects different soils have in different years. He wants only to express the fruit and the soil and unlike many Riojans, he leaves it more or less at that. He does not want to stamp the wines with any particular style or mark of his own other than his respect for the very natural quality of the grapes and for the magical places that they were grown.

Viticulture

For two generations Abel Mendoza's family has been farming vineyards in Rioja which are scattered throughout the commune of San Vicente de la Sonsierra (towards the border of Rioja Alta and Alavesa). More than anything in the world, Abel cares for his vineyards, each plot cared for independently and harvest done entirely by hand. The grapes planted are all indigenous including malvasia (a variety widely planted in Rioja in the 18th century), viura, tempranillo and graciano.

Winemaking

Fermentation in small stainless steel tanks and after the wine goes into new French oak barrels for malolactic fermentation where it matures for a total of 18 months until bottled.

Tasting Note

Cherry in colour with purple overtones. A perfect balance between primary and secondary aromas, red fruits and fruits in syrup, with elements of citrus, floral, balsamic, vanilla. In the mouth it is fresh with a honey like sensation. There is a spicy background with a hint of balsamic. Persistent wine, meaty and fresh, with a singular complexity which is very pleasant and fresh.

Food Matching

Meat stews, game, Ibérico ham.

Awards

Robert Parker 96 Points

The cool 2016 vintage produced a 2016 Graciano Grano A Grano with a low pH and high acidity, but the grapes were perfectly ripe. This is a peppery and spicy Graciano, a grape that likes a warm year. It matured in new French oak barrels, and perhaps the number of 225-liter barrels was higher (they are using more and more 500-liter barrels), as it seems to have marked the wine a little. This wine has the hallmark of the best 2016 reds, expressive, aromatic and open, quite showy. The palate is medium to full-bodied, and the flavors are focused, with the crushed black peppercorns making a glorious comeback on the palate. This should develop nicely in bottle. Another superb Graciano. 2,235 bottles were filled in May 2018. LG, 96 Points, June 2019.

Technical Details

Varieties:

Graciano 100%

ABV: 14%

Closure: Natural cork

Colour: Red

Style: Still wine

Case Size: 6 x 75cl

Oak Treatment

Time: 18 Months

Type: French

% wine oaked: 100

% new oak: 100