



ALVAR DE DIOS

Camino de los Arrieros

Toro is like the 1980s – big shoulder pads, teased hair, and flashy energy that seems to be chemically enhanced. It's a DO that, in most regards, is caught in a time warp, much like that mauve and teal bathroom you've meant to remodel. But, having built its reputation on a style of wine that is now decidedly out of fashion, Toro is long overdue for a breath of fresh air – or fresh wine in the case of Alvar de Dios.

Alvar was born and raised in the village of El Pego near the southern boundary of DO Toro. His family had tended vineyards in the village for generations, but Alvar didn't stay in Toro to learn his trade; instead, he fell in with a pair of vinous rebels working in the Sierra de Gredos – Fernando Garcia and Dani Landi. While working as the cellar master for Fernando at Bodega Marañones, he began acquiring vineyards of his own in and around his native DO, splitting his time between the Gredos and Toro.

In 2009 Alvar purchased Vagüera, a tiny half-hectare plot of abandoned vines at an elevation of 950m just south of the legal border of Toro, growing outside of Toro. Having expanded, Alvar explores the newly established DO of Arribes. This region, officially recognized in 2007, offers granitic sand soils reminiscent of Gredos. Alvar assembles vineyards in Villadepera and Feroselle, creating Camino de los Arrieros, a village wine from 40-60-year-old vines. Near Villadepera, he discovers Las Vidres and Yavallo, 80-90-year-old vineyards producing unique expressions. Lastly, in Toro's northwestern part, Alvar crafts Tio Uco, a wine from 25-40-year-old Tempranillo vines grown on various soils, emphasizing organic farming and traditional winemaking techniques.

DO Arribes is a little-known appellation located on the extreme western edge of Spain along its border with Portugal. Here, Alvar de Dios 36 small parcels of vines totaling 5 hectares, most of which are used to create Camino de los Arrieros. A blend of Rufete, Juan García, Trincadeira Preta, Merenzao, and some other stray varieties mixed in the vineyards all planted on sandy red slate soils, Camino is harvested by hand, fermented whole cluster by indigenous yeasts in 1000L French oak vats with pigeage by foot.

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Tierra de Castilla y León

SOIL

Sand, red slate

AGE OF VINES

40-100

ELEVATION

750 meters

VARIETIES

Rufete, Juan García, Trincadeira Preta, Merenzao, Mandón, others...

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, whole cluster, natural yeast fermentation in 1000L French oak vats, pigeage

AGING

6 months in 500L French oak barrels and 1000L French oak foudres

ACCOLADES

93 – 2020 Camino de los Arrieros – Wine Advocate

92 – 2019 Camino de los Arrieros – James Suckling

94 – 2019 Camino de los Arrieros – Wine Advocate

