



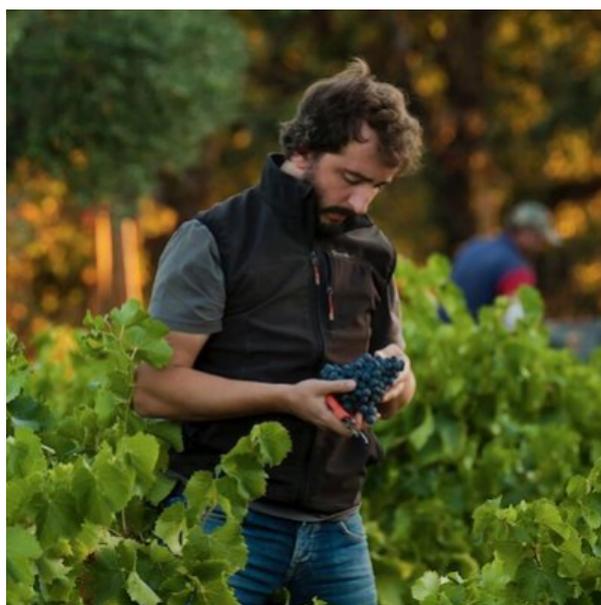
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Dani Landi goes it alone

Dani Landi is not a new name for close followers of JancisRobinson.com. It appears in multiple articles about Spain or about his UK importer Indigo Wine and was responsible for wines of the week in 2009, 2012 and 2015. His first vintage was 2007, when he worked for the family firm Bodega Jiménez-Landi. In 2012 he left to establish his own label, logically but slightly confusingly called Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi.

I recently had a chance to catch up with Dani Landi and taste the fruits of his labours and was very impressed by what I tasted. His Gredos Garnachas don't seem that easy to find with UK retailers, unfortunately, but perhaps US importer Eric Solomon is able to share them out among some of his American retailer customers.

Landi's theatre of operations is the now-fashionable and complex Gredos Mountains south west of Madrid. Luis Gutiérrez wrote this survey of the area in 2012. His successor as our Spanish specialist Ferran Centelles followed this up with his 2016 survey of Gredos' Pinot-like Garnacha. My friend Victor de la Serna, Spanish journalist and wine writer, calls the region the Priorat of Castilla.



Landi sees parallels with Etna for the ruggedness of the landscape, the age of the bush vines and the character of the wines: 'these are the two Mediterranean areas with the greatest potential for freshness'. But the topography of the Gredos Mountains is quite different from the volcanic cone of Etna. The Sierra de Gredos looks like a sort of conch shell, a little like the Carpathians, made up of the Tiétar Valley in the south (Mediterranean climate plus a bit of rain); Alberche Valley in the east (Mediterranean climate, warmish with slightly higher yields than elsewhere – though still low); and the rugged, cooler Alto Alberche Valley in the west. Dani Landi's winery is in Cadalso.

Viticulture was developed here by monks in the twelfth century and Gredos wine established quite a reputation with the court in Madrid. Things went well until a railway was built linking the much cheaper wines of La Mancha to Madrid.



The region is characterised by hills, old Garnacha bush vines often worked by horses, big granite rocks and, despite the fact that Gredos has been increasingly recognised by trend-conscious wine drinkers in the last 10 to 15 years, most grapes are still taken to a local village co-op.

This is apparently Spain's third rainiest region after Galicia and the far north, but summers can be very hot. Landi explained that he actively seeks out north- and east-facing vineyards in those that he buys from. Vineyard elevations in the region can be as high as 1,200 m (3,940 ft), where rainfall is highest, though he buys from some at 800 m, and there are Gredos vineyards as low as 500 m. So far he owns only El Reventón and rents the other vineyards. Apparently the local smallholders are reluctant to sell. (The region is within easy reach of Madrid, which may have an effect on land prices.)

Pedro Parra of Chile has been here to study the soils (of course he has!) and apparently found Gredos granite less decomposed than in Hermitage and Valdeorras because of the high elevation.

Landi's wines are all 100% Garnacha/Grenache, from vines that average 80 years old. He draws on some young vines because the area, which was almost abandoned not that long ago, was replanted, but plans to substitute his mass selection of Garnacha, and some Listán Prieto (which originated in this area and then went to the Canaries, South America as País and Criolla Chica, and California as Mission). He constantly drops names such as Rayas and Roulot – so clearly has his models. I was particularly impressed by the fact that there was no heat on the end of his particularly terroir-driven wines.



Other significant producers of wine in the Gredos Mountains include Telmo Rodriguez in Cerebros, Bernabeleva and Marañones (whose full-bodied white Albillo was a *wine of the week*). Landi himself has two operations here, not just the one whose wines are described below but also Comando G, a joint venture between Dani and winemaker Fernando Garcia of Marañones.

There is further opportunity for confusion in that, as we have *reported previously*, there is no over-arching denomination for the area. Officially, the wines qualify variously for one of three DOs – Méntrida, Vinos de Madrid and, since 2017, Cebreros (a new DO for an area that previously qualified only as Vino de la Tierra de Castilla y León) – depending on which province the vineyard lies in. As Landi pointed out, the name Gredos has been used for wine only recently, and although some wine producers put Sierra de Gredos on the label, this is technically illegal.

Landi, who describes the winemaking method for his annual production of 20,000 bottles as artisanal, with long, cool macerations, clearly sees Burgundy as a model and attempts to segment his offerings as:

Vino de Pueblo – village wine level

Vino de Paraje – premier cru level

Vino de Parcela (single-vineyard wine) – grand cru level

All wines described below are Vinos de Parcela except for the first one, whose 2013 vintage was a wine of the week.

2015 was the warmest vintage ever. Most people picked in late August but Landi and his team waited until September when the vines and grapes were rehydrated by rain, and cooler nights helped too. The **2014** vintage was much more typical, although wet weather during harvest resulted in widespread rot. The **2013** growing season was unusually cold and harvest was a full six weeks later than usual. Poor weather at flowering seriously affected the quantity of Garnacha/Grenache harvested throughout Europe.

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Las Uvas de la Ira Sierra de Gredos 2015 Méntrida**
Village wine (Vino del Pueblo on the label) from the village of El Real de San Vicente. 750 m elevation and sandy surface with silt on granite.

Lifted and very fresh and racy. Not so much sweet but with lots of chalky chew on the end. Hint of strawberry. 14.5% Drink 2018-2023 **16.5**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Cantos del Diablo Sierra de Gredos 2015 Méntrida**
'Vino de Parcela' on the label, ie single vineyard, grand cru equivalent. From a 0.3 ha plot in same village – El Real de San Vicente. South part of Valle del Tiétar. 900 m elevation, north facing on granite. Just 2,000 bottles made.

Pale and rather mineral nose. Very juicy and rose-petal flavoured. Chewy, sandy end. Hint of coffee grounds. 14.5% Drink 2018-2024 **17**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, El Reventón Cebreros Sierra de Gredos 2015**
Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León
Vino de Parcela (single vineyard, grand cru). East part of Valle del Tiétar in the village of Cebreros. One hectare, 950 m elevation, east-facing schist, iron-red slate and quartz. Hard rocks.

Pale crimson. Real mass on the front palate with some rich strawberry notes. Hint of coffee again. Lots dancing on the palate. Grows on the end. 14.5% Drink 2019-2025 **17**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Las Iruelas Sierra de Gredos 2015**
Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León
'Vino de Parcela', single vineyard in the village of El Tiemblo in the Valle del Tiétar. 1.5 ha facing directly east. Steep with more sand and quartz in the layers. Viewed as the top of his range.

Meaty nose. Lots of freshness and sweetness. This seems a little more like Châteauneuf until the end when the chewy tannins blow on to the palate. Rather broad and luscious. Lots of grip on the end after such a friendly start. 14.5% Drink 2019-2024 **17+**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Cantos del Diablo Sierra de Gredos 2013 Méntrida**
The name of the vineyard means stones or songs of the devil. Just 360 bottles and 12 magnums filled.

Light and fresh and transparent with a certain pepperiness. Real lift and freshness. Very delicate and tense. Very appetising. 14.5% Drink 2018-2023 **17**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, El Reventón Cebreros Sierra de Gredos 2013**
Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León

East part of the Valle del Tiétar, on slate/schist.

Very pale crimson. Meaty nose. Solid, grapefruit-skin flavours and lots to chew, really lots of grit. And potential. 14.5% Drink 2019-2025 **17.5**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Las Iruelas Sierra de Gredos 2013**
Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León

Three different soils identified. Village of El Tiemblo.

Very pale crimson. Red fruits on the nose and some dried spiciness. Sweet start and very round start but then tightens up. Big and bold. Slightly dry on the finish. Distinctive style. 14.5% Drink 2019-2025 **17**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, El Reventón Cebreros Sierra de Gredos 2012**
Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León

East part of the valley on slate/schist.

Pale crimson. Meaty nose, very Grenache. Ready and round and rich. Some savoury, black-olive notes with rich undertow. Long and fans out on the end. Very impressive. Quite different in character from 2013. 14.5% Drink 2017-2024 **17.5**

- **Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Las Iruelas Sierra de Gredos 2012**
Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León

First vintage of this plot (2011 was the first vintage overall). On 28 July they had hail – lots of leaves disappeared. Just 400 bottles filled.

Very pale ruby indeed. Looks very evolved. Very lifted – so ethereal! Hint of cumin on the nose but very broad and jewel-like. Some dryness on the end. Juicy. Real combination of breadth and perfume. 14.5% Drink 2018-2025 **17.5**