



CASA CASTILLO

Las Gravas

José Maria is a third generation owner and operator of Casa Castillo a farm that began as a rosemary plantation but one that has evolved into the preeminent estate in the DO of Jumilla. While the smell of rosemary still lingers in the air, the pale, rocky soils surrounding his house and cellar are now planted with vines, olive and almond orchards separated by indigenous and highly aromatic herbs. When José Maria's grandfather purchased Casa Castillo in 1941 there was already a winery, cellar and some scattered vineyards on the property dating to the 1870s, established by French refugees fleeing the plight of phylloxera in their native land. In 1985 José and his father began to replant the vineyards and expand them with the goal of making wine on the property. In 1991 they bottled their first commercial vintage.

José Maria has converted his estate to certified organic farming and his entire harvest is manual and brought promptly to the cellar for sorting and fermentation. Fermentations are in stainless steel tanks or underground concrete vats. Pigeage is done by foot and whole clusters are increasingly used – up to 50% in the Pie Franco. Aging follows in concrete, foudre and 500L French oak demi-muids. All this effort is made to restrain the natural exuberance of his principal variety, Monastrell, to showcase its potential even in the warmest climate to make wines that are both dense and nuanced.

Not surprising Las Gravas comes from a profoundly rocky, single vineyard of the same name. You'd also be hard-pressed to call it soil since before you can get to anything resembling dirt you have to go through a foot of stones. Here Jose Maria and his father planted Monastrell, and Garnacha, each of which contributes to the final blend of Las Gravas. While the other cuvées from the estate show the unique expression of site and variety, Las Gravas is a broader lesson in terroir and the varieties that thrive here. Las Gravas is harvested by hand and fermented in underground stone tanks with manual pigeage. Once primary fermentation is complete the wine is aged in 5000L foudres and 500L French oak demi-muids for 16 months. In most vintages only 20% of the barrels are new.

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Jumilla

SOIL

Clay limestone, sand, gravel

AGE OF VINES

10-40

ELEVATION

750 meters

VARIETIES

Monastrell, Garnacha

FARMING

Certified organic (CAERM)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, partial whole cluster, natural yeast fermentation in stone lagars, manual pigeage

AGING

16 months in 5000L foudres and 500L French oak demi-muids (20% new)

ACCOLADES

96 – 2022 Las Gravas – Wine Advocate

98 – 2021 Las Gravas – Wine Advocate

98 – 2020 Las Gravas – Wine Advocate

