



COMANDO G

Las Iruelas

A short distance away from Madrid, the rugged, weathered peaks of the Sierra de Gredos serve as a refreshingly cool retreat from the heat and bustle of the capital. Ancient hilltop towns and cottages dot the tortured landscape of alpine meadows, tumbled boulders, and thick scrub brush. Clustered around this rugged range are several DOs, most notably Mentrida and Viños de Madrid, best known for producing reliably inexpensive and simple country wines to slake the capital's thirst. But viticulture in Spain is ancient and tenacious, so the adventurous can also find scattered vineyards situated in the most inaccessible places, including rockfalls and natural amphitheaters high up in the most remote parts of the backcountry.

Daniel Landi and Fernando Garcia, friends since college, found themselves working in the area centered around the Sierra de Gredos: Daniel at his family's estate, Bodegas Jimenez-Landi, and Fernando at Bodega Marañones. Drawn to the mountains and rumors of small, nearly inaccessible vineyard plots located high in the Sierra de Gredos, over time, they began purchasing and leasing the best sites they could find, creating their own project, Comando G in 2008. Along with the pioneers of the Priorat, Daniel and Fernando are redefining what was previously viewed as a workhorse variety, Garnacha, into something that can rival the elegance and finesse of Pinot in Burgundy or Syrah in the northern Rhône.

The vineyards that Daniel and Fernando have assembled are all farmed biodynamically. These vines range from 50 to 80 years old and are planted on sandy soils weathered from granite, slate, and quartz. A combination of high altitude, freely draining soils, and a mild and fairly humid micro-climate – for central Spain – guarantees a long growing season and a modest alcohol level in the finished wines. The resultant wines are startlingly pale, extraordinarily aromatic, and intensely flavorful. Each site is harvested by hand, usually in October, fermented by indigenous yeasts in open-top French oak casks, then aged in a combination of 500-700L French oak barrels, foudre, and clay amphorae.

Las Iruelas is a muscular Garnacha from a plot of 60+-year-old, head-pruned vines planted at an elevation of over 1000 meters above sea level. A mixed and sandy terroir of granite, slate, schist, and quartz with patches of clay, this is the most complex soil that Dani & Fer work in the Sierra de Gredos. With beguiling floral aromas that are reminiscent of the Northern Rhône, Las Iruelas shares the same delicate fruit and delineated mineral structure characteristic of the Gredos but pitched deeper and more somber in tone.

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Tierra de Castilla y León

SOIL

Sandy granite, schist, quartz and clay

AGE OF VINES

60+

ELEVATION

1000 meters

VARIETIES

Garnacha

FARMING

In conversion to organic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, natural yeast fermentation in open vats, whole cluster, pigeage

AGING

16 months in 500L French oak barrels, vegan

ACCOLADES

98 – 2021 Las Iruelas – Wine Advocate

98 – 2021 Las Iruelas – James Suckling

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