

COMANDO G

El Tamboril



ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Tierra de Castilla y León

SOIL

Sand, sandstone

AGE OF VINES

60+

ELEVATION

1230 meters

VARIETIES

Garnacha Blanca, Garnacha Gris

FARMING

Practicing organic and biodynamic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, direct whole cluster pressing, natural yeast fermentation in a small oak vat

AGING

14 months in a concrete egg

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 Mentrída 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.

From a tiny vineyard of 0.2 hectares of mixed Garnacha Blanca and Garnacha Gris planted on sandy quartz and sandstone, El Tamboril is a remarkable example of how Spain has begun to redefine itself as capable of producing white wines that rival those of Germany and Burgundy. Hand-harvested and whole cluster pressed directly into a small oak vat for a natural yeast fermentation followed by 14 months in a concrete egg. 400-800 bottles made each vintage – due to elevation and the threat of frost.

ACCOLADES

98 – 2018 El Tamboril – Wine Advocate

96 – 2017 El Tamboril – Wine Advocate

95+ – 2016 El Tamboril – Wine Advocate

