



RAFAEL PALACIOS

Sorte O Soro

As quaffable and enjoyable as Godello can be from Valdeorras, it rarely reaches the level of richness, balance and complexity as it does in the hands of Rafael Palacios. Having left his family's estate in Rioja in 2004, Rafa settled in the Val do Bibeí, a rugged, weathered and off the beaten path sub-zone of Valdeorras. Bordering Ribera Sacra, the Val do Bibeí is a tortured landscape of granitic, terraced slopes dotted with hard to reach and hard to farm vineyard plots. Whereas most of the rest of the DO is at lower elevation with limestone and schist soils, Rafa works exclusively with Godello planted on granitic soils at much higher elevations – so high that late Spring snow and frost are ever present dangers to his already low yields. Locally these plots are known as *sorte*, a word in the local dialect that refers to the practice of drawing lots to determine inheritance. Rafa has assembled 24.5 hectares of vines divided among 32 *sorte*. Some plots he owns outright, others are on long-term lease. The oldest vines, some nearing a century, are head pruned while the younger vines on more gentle slopes are trellised. The farming is minimalist since the sub-zone is blessed with free draining soils and warm, dry summers. All the vineyard work done by hand, including harvesting.

Sorte O Soro is the culmination of Rafa's pioneering work in the Val do Bibeí. Originating from a single 0.47 hectare plot of 40 year-old vines and farmed biodynamically, Sorte O Soro is the Les Clos or the Clos Ste Hune of Valdeorras. O Soro was the first vineyard Rafa acquired when he settled in Valdeorras as he immediately saw its potential, A natural yeast fermentation is followed by aging for 7 months in new 500 L French oak demi-muids. Luis Gutierrez when tasting the 2011 Sorte O Soro called it, "one of the most exciting whites currently produced in the country."

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Valdeorras

SOIL

Sandy granite

AGE OF VINES

40

ELEVATION

720 meters

VARIETIES

Godello

FARMING

Conversion to biodynamic (DEMETER)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, pneumatic pressing, natural yeast fermentation in new 500L French oak demi-muids

AGING

7 months in new 500L French oak demi-muids

ACCOLADES

97 – 2016 Sorte O Soro – Jeb Dunnuck

98 – 2016 Sorte O Soro – Wine Advocate

96 – 2015 Sorte O Soro – Wine Advocate

