



ALVAR DE DIOS

Aciano

Toro is like the 1980s – big shoulder pads, teased hair, and flashy energy that seems to be chemically enhanced. It's a DO that, in most regards, is caught in a time warp, much like that mauve and teal bathroom you've meant to remodel. But, having built its reputation on a style of wine that is now decidedly out of fashion, Toro is long overdue for a breath of fresh air – or fresh wine in the case of Alvar de Dios.

Alvar was born and raised in the village of El Pego near the southern boundary of DO Toro. His family had tended vineyards in the village for generations, but Alvar didn't stay in Toro to learn his trade; instead, he fell in with a pair of vinous rebels working in the Sierra de Gredos – Fernando Garcia and Dani Landi. While working as the cellar master for Fernando at Bodega Marañoses, he began acquiring vineyards of his own in and around his native DO, splitting his time between the Gredos and Toro.

In 2009 Alvar purchased Vagüera, a tiny half-hectare plot of abandoned vines at an elevation of 950m just south of the legal border of Toro, growing outside of Toro. Having expanded, Alvar explores the newly established DO of Arribes. This region, officially recognized in 2007, offers granitic sand soils reminiscent of Gredos. Alvar assembles vineyards in Villadepera and Famoselle, creating Camino de los Arrieros, a village wine from 40-60-year-old vines. Near Villadepera, he discovers Las Vidres and Yavallo, 80-90-year-old vineyards producing unique expressions. Lastly, in Toro's northwestern part, Alvar crafts Tio Uco, a wine from 25-40-year-old Tempranillo vines grown on various soils, emphasizing organic farming and traditional winemaking techniques.

Aciano is a 3 ha, Tinta de Toro vineyard that Alvar de Dios inherited from his grandfather in the vicinity of El Pego in the southern part of DO Toro. The soils here are unique for the appellation, being entirely sandy. For this reason, these ungrafted vines, planted in 1919, have survived phylloxera and can produce an uncharacteristic style of wine for Toro – perfumed, lifted, and elegant rather than the more typical style of the DO. Aciano was the nickname for Alvar's grandfather, and this wine is named in his honor.

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Tierra de Castilla y León

SOIL

Sand

AGE OF VINES

95+

ELEVATION

700 meters

VARIETIES

Tempranillo

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, 60% whole cluster, 3-4 day pre-fermentation maceration, natural yeast fermentation in vat, daily soft pigeage, 20 day maceration

AGING

12-14 months in 300-600L French oak barrels, mostly neutral

ACCOLADES

94 – 2019 Aciano – Wine Advocate

92 – 2019 Aciano – James Suckling

94+ – 2018 Aciano – Wine Advocate

