



MATIAS I TORRES

Diego Blanco

La Palma is the northwesternmost of the Canary Islands. It is dominated by the majestic Caldera de Taburiente, located in the north, and a spine of volcanic vents that form a steep ridge that runs from the caldera to the southern tip of La Palma. From the ocean floor to the peak of Roque de los Muchachos (2426m above sea level) the elevation of the massive volcano that forms La Palma is 7km. But La Palma is not done growing. Along with Pico Teide on Tenerife, they are the most active volcanoes in the Canaries with the last eruption on La Palma occurring in 1971. It is in this dramatic setting that Victoria Torres is preserving the legacy of her family's estate, which dates back to 1885 – one of the oldest in the Canary Islands.

As the 5th generation steward of her family's vineyards, Victoria took over from her father in 2010 after many years of working along side Juan Matías. The property has vineyard plots totaling just over 7 hectares and spread across the sub-zones of Hoyo de Mazo, Fuencaliente and Norte de la Palma. Being the most exposed of the Canary Islands, it receives higher rainfall in the winter and experiences warm, dry summers interrupted by alternating periods of wind and fog. As a result there are far more white varieties planted on La Palma than red, and this is reflected in the cuvées Victoria makes. Most of her vineyards are ungrafted, wind-blown, and 70-120 years old. When an old vine dies it is replaced by a shoot from a neighboring vine – a traditional practice called layering. Due to the isolation and sandy soils of La Palma, phylloxera has never been a problem. This method of vineyard preservation has maintained the genetic diversity of her vines.

Diego is one of the regional names for Vijariego Blanco – a variety most likely brought to the Canary Islands from Andalucía when they were settled in the 16th century. Confusingly, it doesn't appear to be a color mutation of Vijariego Negro. It is prized in the Canary Islands for ripening with high acidity at a modest potential alcohol, making it the primary grape for sparkling wines as well as distinctively fresh and vibrant still wines with tea and herbal nuances. Victoria Torres sources her Diego from a single 60 year-old vineyard trellised on low metal pergolas designed to keep the clusters of these sprawling vines off the sandy volcanic soil.

ORIGIN

Spain

APELLATION

La Palma

SOIL

Sandy volcanic

AGE OF VINES

60

ELEVATION

800-850 meters

VARIETIES

Vijariego Blanco - called Diego Blanco on La Palma

FARMING

Practicing organic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, 48 hour maceration on the skins, whole cluster pressing, natural yeast fermentation in stainless steel tanks

AGING

7 months in tank on the lees

ACCOLADES

92 – 2014 Diego Blanco – Wine Advocate

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ERIC SOLOMON
SELECTIONS