



JOSE GIL

El Calado del Espino

Jose Gil grew up in San Vicente, where his family have been grape growers and winemakers for generations. His grandfather, father, and uncle own Bodegas Olmaza, a small 35-hectare estate famed for its vibrantly traditional “village” wine. Before modern or traditional Rioja, there was a simpler style of whole-cluster, co-fermented wines that were as naked and honest an expression of Rioja as one could find. So it should come as no surprise that when José Gil started his own project, he would follow in his ancestors’ footsteps.

Jose’s project began in 2011 with two parcels of vines and the purchase of an old cave on the outskirts of San Vicente. Generations of farmer-winemakers have used these caves to age their wines, and they’ve returned to fashion with younger winemakers today. His first vintage was 2013, but it wasn’t until 2016 that he felt he had discovered his vineyards’ nature and how best to nurture their expression in the cellar. In 2017 Vicky Fernández, his partner, joined the project, and they’ve been steadily increasing their production. To facilitate this growth, they’ve acquire additional vineyards and purchased winery in Briones where the wines are made before barreling and aging in their cellar in San Vicente.

Jose currently farms 5 hectares of vines located in the villages of San Vicente, Labastida, and Briones. Practices are manual and organic although he is not certified. The vines range in age from 5 to 130 years old with the majority Tempranillo, a small percentage of Viura. The oldest vineyard plots a co-planted with tiny percentages of other grape varieties which include Garnacha and Palomino. When the grapes reach the cellar after being harvested by hand, they are fermented either whole-cluster, or partially destemmed. All fermentations are by indigenous yeasts and extraction is gentle. After pressing the wines are racked into 225-300L French oak barrels and transported to the aging cellar in San Vicente.

El Calado del Espino is sourced from two old parcels of Viura, one in San Ginés, Labastida, and the other in El Bardallo, San Vicente. While from two separate villages, these two sites share a common soil – chalky limestone-rich clay. This not only explains the precision and linear structure of this seductive Rioja Blanco, but it also reflects the wisdom of the viñateros who planted and preserved these two parcels as uniquely suited for Rioja’s signature white variety.

ACCOLADES

94+ – 2022 El Calado del Espino – Wine Advocate

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Rioja

SOIL

Clay-limestone

AGE OF VINES

50–80

ELEVATION

500 meters

VARIETIES

Viura

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand-harvested, whole-cluster pressing into 500L French oak barrels and 54L demijohns, spontaneous fermentation

AGING

11 months in a combination of new and used French oak barrels & 54L glass demijohns

