

OLÉ & OBRIGADO

WINE & SPIRITS WITH HEART & SOUL

Goliardo Loureiro



Rodrigo Méndez of Forjas del Salnés (known locally as Rodri) is the 5th generation in a family that has grown and crafted quality wine for centuries. Today he is considered one of the greatest Albariño producers in the world, offering more than 15 small-batch bottlings from the micro-terroirs around the Val do Salnés, the most coastal subzone in DO Rías Baixas—an appellation that was established by his grandfather. In another homage to his family's legacy, Rodri is also leading the revitalization of several nearly extinct local red varieties.

Thanks to his rigorous approach and deep regional knowledge, Rodri's wines are pure expressions of the diverse Salnés terroirs. As a winemaker, he embraces historic techniques that highlight the personality of the different vineyard sites and his basic philosophies and commitment to organic and low-intervention production (native yeast fermentation, extended lees contact without batonnage, minimal sulfur) are consistent across all his wines. As a grower, Rodri has deep respect for his region's ancient vineyard sites trained in the traditional Parral (pergola) system; he takes a hands-on approach by insisting on longer hang times and manual harvest, all while practicing organic agriculture.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: The unique winemaking techniques and talents of lifelong viticulturalist, Rodri Mendez, make for a very interesting project. Rodri extracts single vineyard selections, old vines, coastal vines and red varieties in the subzone Val do Salnes. Wines are fresh with balanced acidity, and low in alcohol (12.5%). This is a red wine that undergoes a process of whole cluster fermentation in a 12-year-old foudre.

RATING HISTORY: 2018 92WA; 2017 92WA; 2016 92WA; 2015 91WA, 90 W&S, 2014 90WA



GRAPE: 100% Loureiro. Vines planted in 1972. Tended in sandy and granite soil at 5 m (16 ft) elevation

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Rías Baixas is tucked into the green rolling hills of the northwest corner of Spain, just above Portugal, hugging the deep blue Atlantic coastline. It is a breathtaking region overall, and the sub-region of Val do Salnes, the birthplace of Albariño, is no exception. Within the five unique subzones that fall under the D.O. Rías Baixas, Val do Salnes' prime location is the coolest and most fertile area of the D.O. on the Atlantic coast of Spain. In fact, there is more Albariño vines planted there than any of the other four sub-regions sharing its Rías Baixas name. The soil here is pure granite with top layers of rocks and alluvial soil, perfect for the fresh, Albariño expression. With average temperatures of approximately 60F (16C) between April and October, Rías Baixas is also one of the rainiest areas in Spain with median annual rain falling 63inches (1600mm). This can often cause difficulties in reaching optimum sugar levels during the last few, very vital, weeks before harvest, often resulting in vintage variation.

TASTING NOTES It has a fresh nose of brambly dark fruit, hints of black tea and undergrowth that are very well-defined. The palate is medium-bodied with bell pepper infusing the red fruit profile on the entry. There is a crisp seam of acidity that leads it to a harmonious, almost Chinon-like finish that could do with just a little more persistency. But that is a minor quibble for what is a very fine, pure Loureiro. Drink now-2018.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 12.5% / 2015: 12%

UPC CODE: 8437008409344

