



The International
Wine Review

iwinereview.com

No.
83

NOVEMBER/
DECEMBER 2020

AVAILABLE ONLINE ONLY

PRICE \$25

Rías Baixas: Albariño and More

Albariño Growing on Pergola

Table of Contents

Introduction
Acknowledgements
A Short History of Rías Baixas
Albariño: The Grape
Climate and Geography
Viticulture
Winemaking
The Wines
Food & Wine in Rías Baixas
Winery Profiles & Tasting Notes
Annex I Principal Grape Varieties

Introduction

The wines of Rías Baixas are perhaps Spain's finest white wines. Primarily sourced from the Albariño grape, the wines are widely recognized for their special aromas and flavors and their crisp acidity. Until relatively recently, Albariño was unknown outside Galicia, but since its introduction to the rest of the world in the early 1990s, the wine has rapidly grown in popularity. Today, about one-third of the Rías Baixas production is exported abroad. About 110 of the DO's 178 wineries export to 70 different countries, and unlike many other wine regions all exported wines are bottled. Sales in America and elsewhere have grown—the US is the single largest importer, representing 33 percent of total wine exports.

Acknowledgements. We owe a debt of gratitude to many for helping us write this report. The Consejo Regulador of Rías Baixas was very supportive in providing information and in helping us communicate with wineries. Special thanks go to the President, Juan Gil de Araujo, and marketing specialist Rosa Martínez. Thanks also go to all the wineries that provided samples and technical information. A special thanks goes to the Martín Códax winery and, especially, viticulturist Miguel Tubio, for providing information on research and practices in viticulture. We also thank the American public relations firm Colangelo for facilitating the collection and delivery of samples of Rías Baixas wines. Finally, we thank Andrew Holod for his many contributions to this report.

Our goal in this report is to provide readers with an in-depth look at the wines of Rías Baixas. We begin the report with a brief history of the region and the Albariño grape. Next we look at where Albariño is grown in the Rías Baixas region of Galicia. Bordered by the Atlantic to the west and the Miño River and Portugal to the south, the Rías Baixas section of the Spanish coast has numerous fjord-like estuaries (called Rías) that allow the cold Atlantic tidal waters to run deep inland, creating the coolest and wettest growing region of Spain. The estuaries and coastal Atlantic are also the source of a rich supply of seafood, which pairs beautifully with the crisp Albariño and its mineral-saline character. We explore some of the local dishes and how they complement the wines.

While all of Rías Baixas is heavily influenced by the cold waters of the Atlantic, there are distinct differences in climate and soils with the region that gives different expressions to the grape and the wine. The wines vary depending on the subzone, but winemaking also makes a difference, and we examine differing practices among the region's winemakers. For this report, we tasted almost 100 wines, most of which are exported to the US. In the final section of the report we provide profiles of the producers and evaluate their wines.

The i-winereview.com is published by the International Wine Review, LLC. Our office is located at 6625 Old Chesterbrook Road, McLean, VA 22101. Our email is: info@iwinereview.com Rates for individual online subscriptions are \$89 annually. Commercial online subscriptions for wine companies and member of the wine trade are \$149 annually. Subscriptions include exclusive access to all online resources of i-winereview.com. Contact us about eligibility and rates. Subscriptions may be purchased online at www.i-winereview.com Individual reports are also available for \$25. Reproduction of the material contained herein, including copying, without written permission is prohibited by law. Media, wine importers, distributors and retailers may use brief portions of this material in its original form if attributed to the International Wine Review.