



IPO WINES

COUNTRY

Spain

REGION

Castilla Y León

APPELLATION

Ribera Del Duero

SOIL TYPE

limestone, clay and sandy soils

VARIETAL(S)

5% Albillo

5% Bobal

5% Garnacha

95% Tempranillo

FARMING

Organic

WINEMAKER

Jorge Monzon Pascual



2018 Dominio del Águila Ribera del Duero "Reserva"

IMPORTED BY European Cellars (Eric Solomon)

ABOUT THE PRODUCER

As a young student of enology, Jorge Monzón traveled to Burgundy. Despite not speaking a word of French or having any recommendations, let alone experience, he convinced Domaine La Romanée-Conti to take him on as an intern. His eagerness and desire to learn led him to shadow maître de chai, Bernard Noblet, observing all the steps he took to create the famed wines of this historic Domaine. Returning to Ribera del Duero and his hometown of La Aguilera, Jorge worked a couple of years at Vega Sicilia, attempting to create a white wine to rival the estate's reds before becoming the technical director at Arzuaga-Navarro. While working for others, Jorge began purchasing old vineyards around La Aguilera – parcels in danger of being ripped up and replaced with more productive clones of Tempranillo as well as “fashionable” Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and Malbec. These undesirable vineyards were ancient, unproductive massale selections of Tempranillo mixed with a diverse range of other varieties, including a high proportion of white grapes – all “useless” in a region that prized extraction, production, and the everything new and shiny.

Jorge's years at DRC only focused his vision and conviction that *terruño* and tradition matter. His vineyards, some planted before phylloxera, or right after it struck, were planted exactly as they had been for centuries – predominantly Tempranillo with a wide genetic diversity alongside Albillo, Tempranillo Gris, Cariñena, Garnacha, Bobal, Bruñal and others so obscure that they haven't been identified yet. Ranging in age from 60-150+ years old, it is surprising that these vines survived at all considering the recent trends in Ribera del Duero.

With his wife, Isabel Rodero, Jorge founded Dominio del Águila in 2010, and they have expanded their vineyards to 66 hectares. Farming is certified organic and Isabel, an architect, supervised the renovation of three ancient cellars dating to the 15th century dug deep into the bedrock under the village. Natural yeast, whole cluster co-fermentations are the first step in the process with pigeage done by foot. After primary fermentation, the wines are placed in oak barrels for malo and aging. Their cold, subterranean cellars ensure that their wines' evolution proceeds slowly, allowing for the development of greater complexity and nuance.

WINE NOTES

Age of Vines: 85+ years. Farming: organic with biodynamic practices. Whole cluster natural yeast fermentation in stainless steel tanks, pigeage. Aging: 35 months in French oak barrels. The Reserva is a wine made from oldest vines near the village of Aguilera. Here the vineyards are mainly Tempranillo, but like old vines everywhere, there are many other varieties, red and white, mixed in. Rather than separate these varieties Jorge feels that a true representation of these sites is best captured by co-fermenting them. This cuvée sees the longest maceration before aging in barrel for nearly three years – half of that time waiting for the malolactic fermentation to finish! This slow élevage results in a wine with remarkable poise and complexity.

97 points, "2017 was a low-yielding year, so I also tasted the 2018 Reserva, their flagship red wine that wants to be a representation of the village of La Aguilera—fine, serious and elegant. It's 95% Tempranillo with the remaining grapes found interplanted in their oldest vineyards at an average of 880 meters in altitude on limestone, clay and sandy soils. All the clusters ferment together with indigenous yeasts in concrete, where they are foot trodden, and malolactic was carried out very slowly (11 months) in oak barrels where the wine matured for a total of 27 months. It has a somewhat shy nose but is very elegant. The wine was recently bottled, and that can make it a little closed and subtle, and it clearly

improves with air as it sits in the glass. It's still young, and the palate reveals lots of energy; the flavors are very pure and the wine precise and delineated. The tannins are very fine and provide for a chalky texture and an almost salty twist in the finish. This is very in line with the 2016. 15,250 bottle and 101 magnums produced. It was bottled in February 2021." - Wine Advocate