



IPO WINES

COUNTRY

Spain

REGION

Castilla Y León

APPELLATION

Ribera Del Duero

SOIL TYPE

Sandy clay limestone, heavier clay, gravel

VARIETAL(S)

3% Garnacha
3% Bobal
95% Tempranillo

FARMING

Organic

WINEMAKER

Jorge Monzon Pascual



2022 Dominio del Águila Pícaro Tinto

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

The Tinto counterpart to the Pícaro Clarete is a co-fermented blend of Tempranillo with Albillo, Garnacha, and Bobal – fruit strictly selected from parcels chosen for their quality and response to vintage conditions. In warmer years, cooler sites are favored, and in cooler vintages, warmer sites are utilized. All these sites have soils of gravel and heavier clay, which in a dry climate like Ribera del Duero prevents vine stress and promotes an even and simultaneous ripening of both fruit and stems – vitally important for whole-cluster, natural fermentations.

Aging 19 months in oak barrels, non destemmed grapes, trodden with the feet, malolactic fermentation in oak barrels, not clarified, not fined.

Aromas of blackberry, blueberry and dark cherry, vanilla, sweet spice and chalky tannin. A fresher style of Ribera del Duero that aims for elegance over extraction.

94 points, "The 2022 Pícaro del Águila Tinto has similar parameters to the 2021 (14% alcohol), but the sensation is of higher ripeness. Surprisingly enough, it has a lower pH than the 2021 I tasted next to it; they used more white to give it freshness and more of the other varieties. It has chalky, dry tannins, reflecting the *terroir* more, which is remarkable for such a warm and dry year. This is more serious, and the 2021 is more approachable. A triumph over the vintage. 61,757 bottles and 1,979 magnums

produced. It was bottled in January 2024." - Wine Advocate