

Astrales Christina 2006



Winery: Bodegas Los Astrales

Region: Ribera del Duero D.O.

Grapes: 100% Tinto Fino (Tempranillo)

Winery: Bodega Los Astrales began work at the end of 2000 by the hands of the Romera de la Cruz family – a family with 3 generations of wine growers – who were grape suppliers for other wineries but now they bottle their own production with Eduardo Garcia as Technical Director. Eduardo is the enologist at Mauro, Maurodos (family estates) and partner at Leda and the Paixar. After he finished his studies in Bordeaux, he trained at Cos D’Estournel, Hubert Lignier and Ridge. Astrales owns 15 hectares located in Anguix (120 inhabitants) of which 9 are vineyards of 20 to 70 year old vines. During 2003 and 2004, they planted another 14 hectares of Tempranillo. Vines are grown in vaso form with shorter trunks than in most of Ribera del Duero helping to shield the vines from the wind which contributes to the accumulation of polyphenols and sugars. No chemicals are used

in the vineyard beyond sulphur and that only if absolutely necessary. The focus of the winery is to extract all of the character of old vine, head pruned, organically farmed Tinto Fino. The clay soils and cooler than average microclimate are key to producing wines with excellent balance, length, aromatic complexity and fresh acidity.

Wine: This special wine is only made in exceptional years. There are three major factors differentiating this wine versus the “regular” bottling of Astrales. First, the wine will be a selection of the strongest single vineyard each year, depending on vintage characteristics and winemaker Eduardo Garcia’s impressions; the 2005 and 2006 are both from the Fuentesanta vineyard. Second, all of the wine sees malolactic fermentation in oak barrels. Third, the wine is aged in only new French oak.

This wine is made from a selection of fruit from Pago de Fuentesanta. Pago de Fuentesanta is an 80 year old, hillside vineyard planted in vaso, with a southeastern exposure. All grapes were manually harvested into small boxes. Yields were miniscule; less than 1 ton/acre. The wine was fermented in 2,000 Kg tanks with native yeasts and saw 15 days contact with skins. The wine was then aged for 24 months in 100% New French oak barrels. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Reviews:

“A glass-coating opaque purple color, it gives up a superb aromatic array of toasty new oak, pencil lead, lavender, leather, incense, blueberry, and black cherry. Opulent, dense, and layered on the palate, this youthful effort is impeccably balanced and built for the long haul. Give it at least 8-10 years of additional cellaring and drink it from 2016 to 2036. Patience will be well rewarded.”

95 points *Wine Advocate* issue 183, June ‘09

“Sleek and polished, this red has plenty of structure and depth. Blackberry, espresso, floral and mineral flavors build through the fresh, long finish. Alluring, expressive and modern, yet stays true to its roots. Drink now through 2016.”

93 points *Wine Spectator* April 2010



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