

Astrales Christina 2008



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: 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; this 2008 is sourced from the Fuentesanta vineyard, pictured at left. 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 seleccion of fruit from Pago de Fuentesanta. Pago de Fuentesanta is an 80 year old, hillside vineyard planted en 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 14 days contact with skins. After fermentation the wine was raked to oak barrels and underwent a natural malolactic fermentation. The wine was then aged for 23 months in 100% New French oak barrels. Bottled unfiltered.

Reviews:

“The 2008 Astrales Christina is sourced from a single vineyard, went through malolactic fermentation in barrel, and was aged for 23 months in new French oak before bottling without filtration. Deeper in color than its multi-vineyard sibling, it also delivers a more complex bouquet of balsamic, sandalwood, exotic spices, truffle, and assorted black fruits. More structured than the Astrales, this beautifully proportioned red will benefit from 6-8 years of additional cellaring and offer a drinking window extending from 2017 to 2033.”

94+ points *Wine Advocate* issue 195 June 2011



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