

Paixar 2008



Winery: Bodegas y Vinedos Paixar

Region: Bierzo D.O.

Grapes: 100% Mencia

Winery: This is the joint venture of Alejandro Luna, Eduardo and Alberto Garcia focused on the production of a unique expression of Mencia. It started with the acquisition and leasing of tiny parcels of vineyards in the village of Dragonte (population 60) in the Bierzo region. The name Paixar comes from local oral tradition where Paixares are high old plantings of vines surrounded by chestnut and oak trees. Vines are planted directly in weathered slate of different colors and are 80+ years old; typically producing about one pound of fruit per vine. The low-vigor, old vines produce fruit with particularly concentrated aromas and powerful, fine tannins. The vineyards are between 2,500 and 3,000 feet above sea level, a key factor in the slow and even ripening of the grapes. Due to the altitude, harvest is typically 15 days later than the rest of Bierzo.

Wine: Hand-harvested into small boxes, cluster sorted, cold pre-fermentation maceration, native yeast fermentation. This wine was aged for 16 months in new French oak barrels and bottled without any filtration.

Reviews:

“If you’ve still not experienced the remarkable quality that top vintners can coax from the Mencia grape in the remote, rugged region of Bierzo in northwestern Spain, this would be the bottle to try. Even at this young age it is remarkably complex, which is in turn attributable to its outstanding proportionality in the sense that no particular element overshadows the others. It shows subtle floral aromas akin to those one might find in Barbaresco or Côte-Rôtie, followed by fruit notes that run red as well as black, recalling cherries, plums and blackberries. Oak influence is apparent but subtle, with toasty, spicy notes and a bit of grip from wood tannin in the finish, but the fruit easily counterbalances the oak. As if this were not enough, the wine shows an almost palpable minerality recalling wet slate and graphite. Finally, the wine’s texture is almost as interesting as its aromas and flavors, seeming soft thanks to the ripeness of the fruit, but also focused on account of ample acidity and very fine grained tannin. This is in a league with the world’s very best red wines, and in that context it remains very fairly priced--for the moment.”

97 points *Wine Review Online* June 28, 2011 - Michael Franz



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