

Descarte 2019 (Red Wine)



This Bodega, situated in the famous village of San Roman de Hornija, was founded in 2000 by winemaker Victoria Benavides. The winery is named after the former owner of the vineyard, Elias Mora. The philosophy of the winery revolves around combining a respect for tradition and modern technology. Victoria focuses exclusively on Tinta de Toro the native clone of Tempranillo which has been grown locally, with no exposure to phylloxera, for over 2000 years. The wines are only ever in contact with natural products; oak, glass, natural cork. Finally she seeks to respect vintage conditions knowing that each year will offer different qualities in the finished wine.

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| Appellation | Toro D.O. |
| Grapes | 100% Tinta de Toro, from a single, 40-year-old, north-oriented vineyard |
| Altitude/Soil | 2,600 feet above sea level / clay and limestone rich soils |
| Farming Methods | Sustainable |
| Harvest | Hand harvested into small boxes |
| Production | Fermentation takes place with native yeast/microbes in stainless steel tanks |
| Aging | Aged 12 months in French oak barrels |
| UPC/SCC/PackSize | 855012000527 / 18550120008275 / 6 |

Reviews:

"This bodega run by Victoria Benavides is among my favorites in all of Spain, producing amazingly consistent wines every year—yet also bottlings that are distinct from one another stylistically (not so easy). The keys to this wine are its north-facing growing site (resulting in less direct sun exposure and less rapid ripening) and harvesting for freshness rather than abundant sugars in the fruit (which of course are converted to alcohol during fermentation). This still weighs in at 15% alcohol by volume, so we're still talking about Toro here rather than Beaujolais in terms of physical density and flavor impact, to be sure. However, we're also talking about Toro that shows gracefulness as well as she-er power, which again is not so easy. Currently at 5.5 years since the fruit was on the vine, this has settled into a well-integrated stage in its development, with the wood not seeming distinct from the fruit and producing a push-and -pull between the two. The texture is now quite soft, as the tannins have settled into the fruity sweetness at the core of the wine, rather than seeming like an "additive" in the way that un-integrated oak can seem. The end result is a wine of precise proportions and inner harmony, with years of additional aromatic complexity ahead of it, but nothing harsh at all to preclude immediate enjoyment with a meal of, say, roasted rack of lamb. If my score is off, it is off on the low side. Very highly recommended".

94 points Wine Review Online; Michael Franz - Issue: April 9, 2025

"Inky in the glass, the 2019 Descarte offers concentrated chocolate and dark currant flavors alongside a seamless mouthful and wonderful verve. Finishing long with huckleberry and black cherry compote, roasted figs, with worn leather and dark chocolate shaving notes, this is sensational wine that will age gracefully. Sourced from 40 year old Toro vines. Drink 2023-2035"

93 points OwenBargreen.com; Owen Bargreen - October, 2023

"A rich red in a round and graceful, supple frame, this shows concentrated flavors of coulis'd blackberry and boy- senberry fruit, green olive, minerally stone and smoke, with cigar box and toast accents. Features firm tannins that provide good tension and focus, while the chewy finish is lingering and well-spiced. Best from 2025 through 2034. 833 cases made, 200 cases imported."

93 points Wine Spectator; Alison Napjus – Issue Dec. 15, 2023

"Blackberry, blueberry, boysenberry, oh my. A whole panoply of fruit wafts out of the glass, expertly framed by a noticeable percentage of oak. The palate is both massive and fresh, indicating that this wine still has a long way to go. For those seeking fuller-bodied expressions for the cellar, this one deserves your attention".

93 points Wine Enthusiast; Cellar Selection B. B; November, 2025

"The Descarte bottling from Elías Mora is one of his "younger vine" cuvées, as they tempranillo vines are only forty years of age. The wine is aged in French oak barrels for one year, with the casks a mix of new and used wood. The 2019 Descarte is another broad-shouldered wine, tipping the scales at fifteen percent alcohol and offering up a deep and complex nose of black cherries, sweet dark berries, cigar wrapper, coffee bean, a fine base of soil, coffee bean and smoky new oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, ripe and focused, with fine depth at the core, good soil undertow and grip, firm, buried tannins and a long, well balanced and still quite primary finish. This wine carries its alcohol very well indeed and really shows little signs of backend heat. It will need plenty of cellaring to blossom, but will be a fine drink once it has had time to drop some tannin".

92+ points View from the Cellar; John Gilman – Issue109; Jan-Feb. 2024

