

Leirana Areas de Arra



Rodrigo Méndez of Forjas del Salnés, known locally as Rodri, represents the fifth generation of a family with centuries of winemaking heritage. Widely regarded as one of the world's greatest Albariño producers, he crafts over 15 small-batch bottlings from the micro-terroirs of Val do Salnés, the most coastal subzone of DO Rías Baixas—an appellation founded by his grandfather. Rodri also honors his family's legacy by leading the revival of nearly extinct local red varietals.

His wines are pure reflections of Salnés' diverse terroirs, achieved through historic techniques and a commitment to organic, low-intervention methods, including native yeast fermentation, extended lees contact without bâtonnage, and minimal sulfur use. As a grower, he deeply respects the region's ancient vineyards, trained in the traditional Parral (pergola) system, and takes a hands-on approach with extended hang times, manual harvests, and organic farming practices.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: This exquisite Albariño is grown in "beach sand" soils, in a parcel in Arra, which combines plots of 20 and 120 years' old and sits just 30 meters (100 ft) from the sea.

RATING HISTORY: 2020 96WA; 2019 96VM, 94WA, 94TA; 2018 98TA, 96WE "Editors' Choice"

GRAPE: 100% Albariño. Vines planted in 1960. Tended in sandy soil at 20m (65 ft) elevation

VINIFICATION AND AGING: Naturally occurring fermentation with its own yeast. Aged on its lees for 12 months in neutral French oak foudres.

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Rías Baixas is tucked into the green rolling hills of the northwest corner of Spain, just above Portugal, hugging the deep blue Atlantic coastline. It is a breathtaking region overall, and the sub-region of Val do Salnés, the birthplace of Albariño, is no exception. Within the five unique subzones that fall under the D.O. Rías Baixas, Val do Salnés' prime location is the coolest and most fertile area of the D.O. on the Atlantic coast of Spain. In fact, there is more Albariño vines planted there than any of the other four sub-regions sharing its Rías Baixas name. The soil here is pure granite with top layers of rocks and alluvial soil, perfect for the fresh, Albariño expression. With average temperatures of approximately 60F (16C) between April and October, Rías Baixas is also one of the rainiest areas in Spain with median annual rain falling 63 inches (1600mm). This can often cause difficulties in reaching optimum sugar levels during the last few, very vital, weeks before harvest, often resulting in vintage variation.

TASTING NOTES Salty sea shore, sourdough, green olive and citrus pith characters are complemented by the faintest whisper of oak. - Tim Atkin

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13%

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