

Castelo do Papa Godello



DO Valdeorras, the “Gateway to Galicia,” is a region rich in history, both of wine and far beyond. Located in interior Galicia in Northwestern Spain, this appellation is protected by mountains on both sides, making it warmer than its neighbors to the west and cooler than its neighbors to the east. Dubbed the “Valley of Gold” by the Romans, it was beloved for the moderate climate that allowed them to plant olives and almonds further north on the supply line than they had historically been able to. The Ladera Sagrada estate, or “sacred slopes,” where Papa Godello is made, is located directly alongside the famed Camino de Santiago, the pilgrimage route that ends in Santiago de Compostela. Steeply sloped, terraced vineyards of slate and granite are the hallmark of this terroir, and Godello is the most widely planted grape. Generous, clean, and well-balanced with a persistent beam of minerality through the middle, the Papa is a classic expression of Godello’s charm, and of Valdeorras itself.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: Ladera Sagrada uses the best 20% of its estate vineyards to make this wine. Papa is a clean, classic expression of Godello with beautiful minerality and just enough stony fruit to soften the slatey palate. Its persistent acidity and balance make it a versatile pair—try it with funky dishes!—and also give it the structure to age for years.

RATING HISTORY: 2021 94W&S 'Best Buy', 92WE; 2015 90VM; 2014 90VM; 2013 90IWC

GRAPE: 100% Godello. The vines were planted in 1983 (average). Tended in granite, clay and slate soil at an average of 600 m (1,968 ft) elevation. This is a vegan wine.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: If you visit Ladera Sagrada, Señor Luis Sharon will serve this alongside the famous pulpo gallego – octopus with pimentón de la vera, lemon and salt. If you find yourself without octopus, this will pair beautifully with all manner of seafood, including fried oysters, clams and fish and chips.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: After the best bunches are hand picked in the steeply sloped vineyards, the grapes are brought in small 15 kg boxes to the winery for de-stemming and crushing. The unfermented juice macerates on the skins for 8-12 hours. A slow fermentation takes place with the indigenous yeast of the grapes. The wine is fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks without malolactic fermentation.



LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: The vineyards are located in the autonomous region of Galicia, in far northwestern Celtic Spain, within the Valdeorras DO (Zone 1) in Valdeorras district and within Orense province. The vineyards are in the mountain town of Larouco, at 600 meters (1,968 ft.) elevation. The soil is composed of slate and granite topsoil with a thin clay subsoil. This soil profile is poor in matter and the vines yield 2.5 kg (about 6 pounds) of grapes per vine, compared to the average of 7.5 kg (around 17 pounds) per vine in Valdeorras. The surface of the granite and slate soil is warmed by sunlight during the day which provides heat to the roots, and encourages the grapes to continue ripening during the cool nights. Lower yields result in more concentrated grapes providing more intense aromas and flavors in the wines. The area's climate has an average temperature from April-October of 57.2F, among the lowest average temperatures in Spain, with 30.2 inches of yearly rainfall. One of the lowest levels of precipitation in the region, this helps prevent overnight frost. The cool temperatures of this Atlantic-influenced climate (Zone 1) provide a longer ripening period, which results in zesty wines with great aromatic expression.

TASTING NOTES Light green-hued yellow. Tightly focused lemon and pear scents are complemented by deeper melon and peach notes. Lively and focused on the palate, offering vibrant citrus and orchard fruit flavors and a gingery nuance that adds back-end spiciness. Finishes nervy, energetic and long, featuring lingering suggestions of bitter lemon pith and dusty minerals. -- Josh Reynolds.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13%

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