

## A Portela Mencia 2015



Mencia, the hallmark grape of Northwestern Spain, is a grape that wears many hats. Ranging from rustic and powerful to high-toned and elegant, it is a grape that clearly reflects its terroir. In this case, A Portela comes from Valdeorras, the “gateway to Galicia.” Valdeorras is a region that defies its geography – so called because it was the only place the Romans found that could grow olives and almonds that far north on their supply line. It’s warmer than its neighbors to the west, shielded by mountains from the cold wet winds of the Atlantic. It’s also cooler than its neighbor Bierzo to the east, similarly shielded from hot Continental winds by mountains. As such, Valdeorras enjoys a temperate climate for virtually the entire growing season. A Portela is a single vineyard, planted to high elevation slate and granite soils. This combination of elevation, soil and temperate climate produces an elegant, mineral-driven Mencia that carries both the generosity of fruit of its neighbors to the east and the precise, elegant acidity of its neighbors to the west. Truly a unique plot, it’s no wonder that A Portela is so named... the Gateway to Heaven!

**WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?:** A Portela showcases the special terroir of Valdeorras. Expressing elegance, minerality and generosity of fruit, this aromatic Mencia is a perfect introduction to the hallmark red grape of Galicia.

**RATING HISTORY:** 2015 93JS, 92VM, 92IWR; 2014 91JS; 2013 92W&S



**GRAPE:** 100% Mencia. Vines planted from 1976 - 1990. Tended in clay, granite and slate soil from 500 - 700 m (1,640 - 2,625 ft) elevation. This is a vegan wine.

**PAIRING SUGGESTIONS:** Herb-roasted chicken, pork loin, sautéed mushrooms, or even salmon would be divine.



**VINIFICATION AND AGEING:** 5 day cold soak in tank. Once fermentation has taken place, the skins spend another 10 days in tank, then racked. The wine is aged 12 months in stainless steel plus another 8 months in French oak barrels.

**PRODUCTION:** 1,691 cases



Alberto Orte

**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 Ourense province. The vineyards are in the mountain town of Larouco, at 500 meters (1,640 ft) elevation. The soil is composed of slate and granite topsoil with a thin clay subsoil. This soil profile is poor in organic 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 and provides heat to the roots, which 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 64.4F, among the lowest average temperatures in Spain, with 32 inches of yearly rainfall. Being one of the lowest levels of precipitation in the region helps prevent overnight frost. The cool temperatures of this Atlantic-influenced climate (Zone 1) provide a longer ripening period, which results in bright wines with great aromatic expression.

**TASTING NOTES** Fragrant crushed-rose and lighter cherry aromas here with a very fluid, even and plush palate. Fine, yet powerful tannins. Dark stones and spices. Plenty of detail. -- James Suckling

**ALCOHOL CONTENT:** 13.5%

**UPC CODE:** 8437008409399