

Goliardo Loureiro



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 batonnage, 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?: The unique winemaking techniques and talents of lifelong viticulturalist, Rodri Mendez, make for a very interesting project. Rodri extracts single vineyard selections, old vines, coastal vines and red varieties in the subzone Val do Salnes. Wines are fresh with balanced acidity, and low in alcohol (12.5%). This is a red wine that undergoes a process of whole cluster fermentation in a 12-year-old foudre.

RATING HISTORY: 2018 92WA; 2017 92WA; 2016 92WA; 2015 91WA, 90 W&S, 2014 90WA

GRAPE: 100% Loureiro. Vines planted in 1972. Tended in sandy and granite soil at 5 m (16 ft) elevation



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 Salnes, the birthplace of Albariño, is no exception. Within the five unique subzones that fall under the D.O. Rías Baixas, Val do Salnes' 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 63inches (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 It has a fresh nose of brambly dark fruit, hints of black tea and undergrowth that are very well-defined. The palate is medium-bodied with bell pepper infusing the red fruit profile on the entry. There is a crisp seam of acidity that leads it to a harmonious, almost Chinon-like finish that could do with just a little more persistency. But that is a minor quibble for what is a very fine, pure Loureiro. Drink now-2018.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 12.5% / 2015: 12%

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