

# IMPERIAL GRAN RESERVA 2018

*Imperial is one of the great names in Spanish winemaking. A true Rioja Classic, it was first produced in the 1920s. It is only made in vintages that the company classifies as Excellent.*



**Type of wine:** Gran Reserva

**Region of production:** Rioja

**Year:** 2018

**C.V.N.E. vintage rating:** Excellent

**Grape varieties:** 85% Tempranillo, 10% Graciano, 5% Mazuelo

**Type of bottle:** Bordeaux

**Bottle size:** 75cl., 1.5l.

**Bottling date:** July 2021

**Ageing and barrel type:** 24 months in French (80%) and American (20%) oak barrels (new and from 1 wine)

**Alcoholic volume:** 14%

**pH:** 3.55

**SO<sub>2</sub> Free/Total:** 30.4/88

**Total Polyphenols Index:** 81

**Total acidity:** 6.03

**Volatile acidity:** 0.71

**Suitable for vegans**



## The vineyard

Our best vineyards in Rioja Alta are set aside for the production of Imperial Gran Reserva. In 2018 we selected the small plots Remedio and Encinas, located in Villalba between 550 and 650 m of altitude, very close to the Sierra de Toloño and with a climate of Atlantic and continental influence. These plots represent a total of 12-hectare among the 42 that CVNE owns in this town. The plots of Barbarroja and Antoñanzas were also chosen in 2018, situated in Torremontalbo and where the low yielding vines are 40 years old. The vines are bush trained, dry farmed and the plots are small. The soils are clay with areas of river pebbles, are low in organic matter and are situated on gentle south facing slopes. The climate is moderate continental.

## Winemaking

Manual harvest in crates, with a double selection of grapes both in the vineyard as in the winery. Cold refrigeration of whole bunches in order to improve fruit extraction and color stability.

The crushed grapes were transported by gravity to small oak vats for maceration with cold temperature for a few hours. Followed by fermentation with indigenous yeasts at controlled temperature between 28 and 29°C.

Punching and delestage are carried out during fermentation, as well as tastings to determine the perfect moment for draining the vat. After completing the malolactic fermentation in concrete vats, the wine is aged for two years in 80% French and 20% American oak barrels, new and from one wine, with rackings every 8 months, followed by aging in bottle in our century-old cellars until the wine is released to the market.

## Vintage / Harvest description

The 2018 harvest took us back to weather conditions of years ago, with a winter of heavy frosts, snow and abundant rainfall. The spring was also cold and rainy and then came the summer, warm but without excessive temperatures, which allowed for good ripening.

These weather conditions were generalised in Rioja Alta and very particular in our Imperial vineyards, allowing the production of wines with a slightly lower alcohol content than usual, a slightly higher acidity and, in short, wines with a lot of fruit and freshness.

The harvest had a long growing season of 180 days, which favors the production of great wines.

The Imperial harvest began on October 8th and ended on October 26th with very good expectations.

## Tasting notes

Layers of red cherry colour.

Complex aromatic intensity with hints of blackberries, gooseberries, strawberries and liquorice. All accompanied by aromas from the barrel aging such as roasted coffee, chocolate, cloves, toffee, cigar leaf...On the palate it has a smooth entry and a passage marked by soft tannins, giving it elegance. A long finish with certain balsamic notes.

A round and balanced wine that can be paired with meat, fatty fish, cured cheeses...

Recommended serving temperature 18°C.