

IMPERIAL RESERVA 2020

Imperial is one of the great names in Spanish winemaking. It is a true classic in Rioja and was first made in the 1920's. It is only made in the most special vintages.



Type of wine: Red

Region of production: Rioja Alta

Year: 2020

C.V.N.E. vintage rating: Very good

Grape varieties: 85% Tempranillo, 15% Graciano, Mazuelo and Garnacha

Type of bottle: Bordeaux

Bottle size: 75cl., 1.5l.; 37.5cl.

Bottling date: September 2023

Ageing and barrel type:

24 months in American and French oak barrels

Alcoholic volume: 14%

pH: 3.65

SO₂ Free/Total: 32/80

Total Polyphenols Index: 73

Total acidity: 5.44

Volatile acidity: 0.58

Suitable for vegans



The vineyard

The grapes used for Imperial come from our own vineyards in Villalba, Briones and Torremontalbo. In Villalba, we have selected the small plots of Remedio and Encinas, located close to the Sierra de Toloño, at an altitude of 550 to 650 meters. The climate is of Atlantic and Continental influence. The plots compose 12 hectares of a total of 42 hectares that CVNE own in this area. In Torremontalbo, our vineyards San Quilez and Pico de Aguila are located at an altitude of 450 meters, and the climate here is more moderate than the plots in Villalba. These vines make up 30 hectares of the total of 70 owned by CVNE. Nearby in Briones, the grapes are selected from 10 hectares of our own vineyards. All these vines are over 40 years old and although the main variety is Tempranillo, other traditional Riojan varieties such as Garnacha and Graciano can be found. The vines are bush trained, mainly south facing. Soils are of chalky clay, poor in organic material, and of low yields.

Winemaking

The grapes are harvested by hand into crates with a maximum capacity of 300 kg. Refrigeration of the grapes while being transferred to the winery. A second selection of the grapes are carried out, in order to choose only the best quality grapes to produce Imperial. Fermentation takes place in oak vats of different capacities; 80, 120 and 160HL. We use autochthonous yeast coming from our own Imperial vineyards. The maceration lasts for approximately 20 days during which we alternate different types of pump-over depending on the evolution of the fermentation. Malolactic fermentation takes place in concrete and oak before continuing its aging process. The wine ages for 24 months in oak barrels; 30% American oak barrels and 70% French oak barrels, being new and of one wine use. We vinify each plot separately, and carry out the aging in the type of barrel that best suits its organoleptic characteristics. At the end of the aging period, we do the final assemblage before its clarification and bottling. The wine finally rest for another minimum of 12 months in bottle, prior to its release on the market.

Vintage / Harvest description

The 2020 harvest of Imperial began on September 10th in the Torremontalbo area and finished on October 7th in our Villalba estates. The vegetative cycle lasted for 185 days and was marked by rainfall and occasional hail in very localized plots. High rainfall and mild temperatures resulted into a harvest which started two week earlier than in previous year. Picking was selective, depending on the ripeness of the grapes, which was uneven. The grapes arrived at the winery at optimal healthy conditions, resulting in fresh wines, with lower alcohol content than the previous year and very positive organoleptic qualities. The great quality of the grapes makes a vintage prediction of great wines suitable for aging.

Tasting notes

High layer of cherry-red cherry colour. On the nose its aromatic capacity is intense and complex, with fruity notes accompanied by toasted and balsamic notes typical of a very well assembled oak. The palate is full and fleshy, with body and structure that give it a long and pleasant persistence aftertaste. It is a silky, velvety and very elegant wine. We recommend pairing it with red meats, stews, game, cheeses, or simply to be enjoyed on its own in a relaxed atmosphere. Recommended serving temperature 18°C.