

## 2020 HARVEST EVALUATION REPORT

Rueda, 10 May 2021

Among the determinants that influenced this vintage's characteristics, we would like to highlight the following:

-Temperatures: The 2020 season began with mild temperatures in the month of November, in which frosts were observed in the second fortnight. In the month of December, the temperatures remained cold, dropping at the end of the month to between -2 and -8 °C with frosts. January was the coldest month of the year, with continued frosts, while daytime fog kept the thermometers at low temperatures that did not climb above 0°C. February and March were milder, with warmer-than-usual temperatures in both months and highs of around 20°C, although lows of below 0°C were recorded, mainly in the Segovia area. In the month of April, with regard to lows, there were mild frosts on some days at the beginning of the month without consequences for the crop. Starting in May, the temperatures rose with highs even exceeding 25°C, followed by a hot summer.

-In terms of rainfall, this season was the rainiest in recent years, with a recorded average of 451 litres/m<sup>2</sup> after starting in November with significant rains. Subsequently, the months of March, April and May continued to accumulate good rainfall levels, especially April, in which 80 to 100 litres/m<sup>2</sup> were measured. In general, all stations measured rainfall of 415 to 500 litres/m<sup>2</sup>, which is considerable compared to what is customary in our area.

-Budding was ordinary, taking place a bit earlier than in a normal year, between 2 and 8 April depending on the grape variety.

-Flowering took place around 4 June, which meant an earlier cycle due to the rains and high temperatures observed at the end of May.

-Fruit set occurred around 11 June, and finally, veraison was widely observed on around 10 August, ending the cycle a bit earlier than in the previous year.

-The harvest started on 22 August with the Sauvignon Blanc variety and finished on 16 October.

-Due to the weather conditions, the health conditions were generally good, although plots with significant attacks of powdery mildew were detected. This health situation reduced production, since this disease causes a reduction in general yields.

The situation with the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the market; as a result, in the 2020 vintage, the Specifications were temporarily modified to reduce the maximum yields of grape production by 15%. In addition, the grant programme for green harvesting also led to a reduction in the production area, so the 2020 vintage only saw a 2% increase in production compared to the 2019 vintage.

However, as the ripening conditions were suitable, the alcohol content was within the usual range of 13 to 13.5, giving the wines a good structure, similar to that of the previous vintage, a factor that greatly benefits their characteristics on the palate. In the case of the

Sauvignon variety, yields improved this year compared the previous vintage due to the rainfall recorded, which enhanced its varietal character.

It is important to note that this year, in the production of white wines, new varieties such as Chardonnay and Viognier were included, which in some cases slightly modified the wines' organoleptic profiles. The new category of wines expands the organoleptic possibilities, reducing the varietal presence of the Verdejo and Sauvignon Blanc-type grapes, which previously marked the wines' varietal character much more.

Having transformed the musts into wine, we find the following general characteristics:

In the glass, they maintain the customary colour range of pale yellow to greenish yellow, depending on maceration; this year, this technique could be carried out while being careful about the health situation of the grape batches.

On the nose, they maintain the customary low aromatic intensities, which range from ripe fruit to typical vegetables and even certain thiolic hints that may be reminiscent of the Sauvignon variety in the wine blends, although there are yeasts that, even in the absence of this variety, can obtain certain ranges of pyrazines from Verdejo. Compared to the past vintage, we can say the aromatic intensity has improved.

In the tasting phase, the wines show high intensities, long persistence and a powerful structure in the mouth, with a good concentration and a bitter finish. They are therefore more powerful wines in terms of intensity and structure in the mouth.

In general, the wines of this vintage matured better and earlier than those of the previous one, showing good intensity on the nose and palate and a high overall level in all the wineries. The wines' general conditions may have improved compared to those of the past vintage. The wines are more complex, wider on the palate and generally do not show reduction defects that could be common in other seasons.

The 2020 harvest will be pioneering with the launch of GRAN VINO DE RUEDA, whose organoleptic evaluation began in April 2020. Although it is still too soon to draw conclusions about this type of wine, the batches that have been presented for tasting stand out for their power on the palate, marked by their intensity and volume. Therefore, under this category, wines offering a greater expression of the organoleptic qualities of Rueda wines will reach the market.

#### **CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE 2020 VINTAGE/HARVEST:**

The harvest determinants described, which could initially cast doubt on the quality of the wines due to the health conditions and excess rainfall, produced wines with a superior character and organoleptic level to previous vintages. The good ripening conditions resulted in intense wines with good structure in the mouth, in view of the alcohol content and acidity observed, giving the varietal character a marked presence and keeping the wines' general characteristics at a high level.

Regarding Sauvignon Blanc variety wines, the wineries continue to sell wines with a majority presence of this variety, with good varietal characteristics and aromatic intensity, a suitable and improved varietal expression compared to previous years, with a good overall expression both on the nose and in the mouth.

As a general consideration, according to the results of the tasting sessions, we may give this harvest an overall rating of Excellent, since the wines show a good level both on the nose and in the mouth. They display the usual characteristics of wines from our region, with a long, persistent finish and varietal character. All the wines from our Designation of Origin maintain a good overall level.



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