

Magaña Dignus



Dignus is an estate-bottled wine made by Bodegas Vina Magana in the Navarra DO, just northeast of Rioja. Spanish wine aficionados who consider Navarra strictly a source for bulk wines would do well to reflect on what owner Juan Magana has accomplished. Thirty years ago, Juan had a vision. After researching the best wines in the world, he decided to grow Bordeaux grapes in Navarra, with its specific Pomerol-like terroir. He bought Merlot cuttings from a nursery that sold to a famous chateaux in St. Emilion and Pomerol, and most notably the hallowed Chateau PÃ©trus. Juan's bodega was a pioneer in Navarra and over the years has become a reference point for quality in the region. The 100-hectare (247 acre) estate is located just south of the Ebro River. The Latin word dignus means dignified. Of the five districts in Navarra, Ribera Baja is the district where Vina Magana is located, and also very rich in limestone. This unique soil is one of the reasons why Vina Magana wines are among the most sought after by collectors. The mineral identity and the naturally low pH of the limestone soil combine to give Dignus an ability to age for many years.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: Estate-grown fruit, limestone soil, PÃ©trus clones of Merlot and Cab. Unique micro-climate. Bordeaux-style wines with good acidity. The Tempranillo portion of Dignus helps makes the wine approachable at a younger age.

RATING HISTORY: 2013 90RP, 91VN; 2012 91RP

GRAPE: 50% Tempranillo, 25% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon. Vines planted from 1971-1985. Tended in limestone soil at 399 m (1,309 ft) elevation. This is a vegan wine.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: This hearty wine is best paired with rich dishes and dense flavors. Osso bucco, braised beef and pork shanks, spatzle with wild mushroom sauce, and bull and ox stews are all great matches for this wine. Both wine and food will help the other to reveal the depth of layered aromas and flavors each possesses.

VINIFICATION AND AGEING: Each variety is vinified separately in 228-liter Burgundy capacity barrels, utilizing 15% whole cluster fermentation. Fermenting with a percentage of stems helps to aerate the sombrero, or *la capa* as it is called in France. This is the layer of solids; skins and pips that form at the top of the fermenting must, so that the oxygen introduces helps to extract beneficial tannins. The wine is aged for 12 months in three-year-old French oak barrels.

PRODUCTION: 3,700 cases

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Zone 4, at an elevation of 399 meters (1,309 ft.). The vineyards are just 400 meters from the Rioja border south of Alfaro. Of the five districts in Navarra, Ribera Baja, where Magana is located, is unique compared to the other districts because of its limestone bedrock and unique microclimate. The winery is located in the town of Barillas. For soils, thick river stones sit atop solid limestone bedrock. The climate is classified in Zone 4, Continental and Mediterranean. In short, it is warm and dry. Magana's temperatures from April-October average 63.7F with levels of rainfall of 14.6 inches per year. The microclimate of the Magana vineyards imparts a hearty character to these wines, making them richer, beefier and more vibrant with brighter acidity, all of which helps them age for many years!

TASTING NOTES A sensational effort from this producer... Bordeaux-style wine with notes of licorice, cedar wood, tobacco leaf, and black and red currants. The color is a healthy, dark ruby/purple, the wine medium to full-bodied, with notes of forest floor, spice box and cedar. Drink it over the next 3-4 years.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 14.0%

UPC CODE: 810411011621



Diego Magaña