

Heredad de Candela



Heredad de Candela is made by Senorío de Barahonda, the oldest winery in the Yecla DO region. The Candela family established the bodega in 1925. Heredad de Candela tastes like a clean, pure expression of old vine Monastrell. The wine's name refers to the winemaking heritage of the Candela family. Winemaker Augustin Carrion is one of the key figures whose work has shown the potential of Monastrell in Yecla. This grape is native to Spain and around the 5-6th Century it was brought to France, where it's called, Mourvèdre, and is now becoming well known in the southern Rhone, Provence and Languedoc Roussillon. Today, Alfredo Candela is the fourth generation bodeguero, or proprietor, of the Barahonda estate where the Candela family has resurrected some of the traditional winemaking techniques of this region such as utilizing open top fermenters and maceration with stems.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: Made with estate-owned 100% Monastrell grapes from head pruned (en vaso) vines that are dry farmed (no irrigation) and organically grown. The vines were planted from 1925 - 1935. Yields are miniscule (800 grams per vine, or 8.5 hectoliters/hectare). Little oak ageing is used (only 12 months) to maximize the pure flavors of the Monastrell grape. Yearly production is less than 1,500 cases.

RATING HISTORY: 2016 90JS; 2015 89JS; 2014 92VM; 2013 92RP; 2012 91RP; 2010 91IWC; 2009 90RP; 2008 90RP&IWC; 2007 91RP; 2006 90RP; 2005 90RP

GRAPE: 100% Monastrell. Organically grown vines planted from 1925 - 1935. Tended in limestone, clay and sandy soil at 713 m (2,339 ft) elevation

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: This grape and wine are more versatile than you think. From pulled pork sandwiches to braised beef shoulder in wild mushroom reduction, this wine can dress up or down as required by the cuisine. The essential character here is a cool climate, spicy, herbal and mineral-inflected red wine with woody and savory accents. Among the panoply of white and red meats, fowl and even fish, there aren't many dishes that won't dance well with this wine.

VINIFICATION AND AGEING: After the meager yields from the Monastrell vines that were planted in 1952 are harvested by hand, the perfect bunches are put into a refrigerated container at 50F degrees overnight to retain optimally fresh aromatics and dark pigmentation. Eighty percent of the bunches are de-stemmed and crushed, and the rest is macerated and fermented with the own stems. Fermentation takes place in open top small stainless steel tanks with daily pumping over to extract the flavor in the skins. Malolactic fermentation takes place in 500-liter French oak barrels. Stirring the lees in the barrels (batonnage) is a regular practice after malolactic fermentation. The wine is aged for twelve months in 500-liter French oak barrels.

PRODUCTION: 1,500 cases

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: The vineyards are located within the Yecla DO in Zone 8, within Murcia in southeastern Spain. The vineyards are in the Campo Arriba district of Yecla, at 713 meters (2,339 ft.) elevation. Monastrell is called Mourvèdre in France, Mataro in Italy, and Monastrell in the New World. Monastrell is the most planted grape in the area and is the second most planted red grape in Spain. Yecla's higher altitude makes it significantly cooler than neighboring Jumilla, and the resulting wines are more aromatic, with a more fresh, easy-to-drink character. The area's soils are composed of limestone and chalk with clay and gravel subsoils. Poor in organic matter, the soils are deep and have good drainage. The clay subsoil retains water, essential for the health of the vine in this arid climate. Due to the low content of nutrients in the soil, the vines have low vigor and yields are only 2 kilograms (4.4 lbs.) of fruit per vine, which produces smaller berries with a higher skin-to-juice ratio. These grapes produce wines with greater concentration and complexity in aromas and palate flavors. For climate, the area's average temperature from May-October is 66F, with only 13 inches of rain per year. The climate is Mediterranean with a light Continental influence due to the region's higher altitude. The vine virtually shuts down or slows considerably during the cool nights, which helps prolong the ripening period. This allows the Monastrell grapes to ripen slowly and prevents over-ripe grapes. The Mediterranean Sea's cool breezes help moderate the arid and sunny climate. The area receives a high amount of sunshine per year (3,893 hours). In summmary, this region has ideal conditions for Monastrell.

TASTING NOTES Inky ruby. Intense, smoke-accented aromas of blackberry, cherry liqueur, spicecake and vanilla, along with a powerful floral overtone. Plush and expansive in the mouth, offering surprisingly energetic dark fruit, violet pastille and cola flavors that pick up a smoky element with air. Closes on a sweet cherry note, showing impressive thrust, lingering florality and supple tannins that fold effortlessly into the energetic fruit. This is a really impressive wine for the region.-- Josh Reynolds.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 14.5%

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Augustin Carrion