

BODEGAS SANTALBA

After working in the industry for 33 years, Santiago Ijalba Garcia established Bodegas Santalba in 1998, in the Rioja town of Gimileo. Obtaining his degree in oenology in 1974, Santiago was later joined by his son, Roberto, in 1997, after he'd finished studying at UC Davis in 1996. In the winery, both father and son employ spontaneous fermentations. They use indigenous yeast from the vineyard, and never add artificial yeasts.



They have traditional style wines, Emirta and Abando, which is the son taking over, introducing modern techniques." Making wines under eight labels, including Santiago Ijalba Ogga, Vina Hermosa and Bodegas Santalba Abando, the Ijalba family has 20ha under vine, all of which is certified organic. The remaining fruit, they purchase from other growers. "My dad's 63 years old," says Roberto, "he's been in the business for 46 years...he knows a lot of people, very good producers [from which we buy our fruit]...35-40% of which are practicing organic."

Santiago Ijalba is in charge of their label Ermita, which produces rosé, white, Crianza, and Reserva. And while Santiago produces other wines, these are not available on the U.S. market. Abando and Ogga are produced by Roberto. "The Ogga plantings are 90+ year old certified organic," says Jorge. "They come from one contiguous vineyard, which is very unusual in Rioja. It makes Ogga quite a statement. It [the wine] is pretty stellar."

In speaking of how he and his father work together, Roberto says, "Both of us look for the Rioja style. We believe that Rioja has a great name and quality. It has its own style. The difference [between father and son]? Maybe he's more focused on balance and elegance, [while] I'm looking for an expression of the grape, Tempranillo. Not to make an international wine, but a more concentrated Rioja...not heavy. I studied at UC Davis, so my style is a little different."

ERMITA ROSADO



Varietal/Blend: 100% Tempranillo

Farming: practicing organic

Altitude / Exposure: 470-490m / multiple

Soil: chalky-clay

Vine Age: 20-25 years old

Harvest Technique: by hand

Yeast: ambient

Fermentation: spontaneous fermentation in stainless steel

Aging: none

Alcohol: 12.5%

Fined: light

Filtered: light

Production #s: N/A

Ermita Rosado is produced exclusively from the famous grape from Rioja, Tempranillo. The grapes are destemmed and only the free run juice is used. Juice spends 4 hours in the cold without any pumping. Juice is then separated from the grapes and the must is fermented in stainless steel. Spontaneous fermentation occurs.

Country: Spain

Region: Rioja

Sub Region: Rioja Alta

Vineyard: Vigorta - Pontarron area

Vineyard Size: 8 hectare