

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.



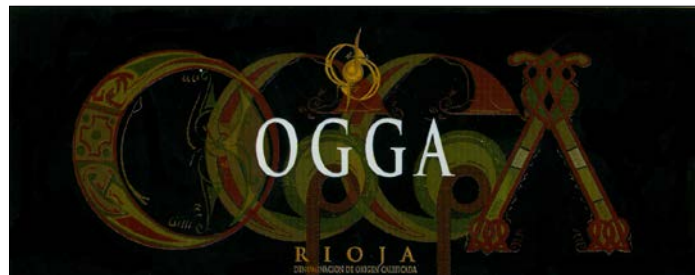
They have traditional style wines, Emirta; and Abando, which is the son taking over, introducing modern techniques.” Making wines under eight labels, including Santiago Ijalba Ogga, Vina Hermosa and Bodegas Santalba Abando, the Ijalba family has 20ha under vine, all of which is certified organic. The 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 vines found in one contiguous vineyard, which is very unusual in Rioja. It makes Ogga quite a statement.

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.”

In the winery, both father and son employ spontaneous fermentations. They use indigenous yeast from the vineyard, and never add artificial yeasts.

OGGA RESERVA



Varietal/Blend: 95% Tempranillo, 5 other varieties (field blend)

Farming: practicing organic

Altitude: 450m

Soil: sand and silt

Ave Year Vines Planted: 1956

Harvest Technique: by hand

Fermentation: stainless steel / cold soak for 3 days and pump-overs as fermentation progressed

Aging: 20 months new French oak

Alcohol: 14.5%

Yeast: indigenous

Fined: none

Filtered: none

Production #s: N/A

OGGA Reserva is produced exclusively in the best vintages with the family’s oldest vineyard site that is planted mostly to Tempranillo and other varieties. The vineyard sits on a bench above the Ebro River and it is influenced by Mediterranean Sea. The soil is dominated by sand deposits. These old vine plantings produce a classical Rioja Alta with great potential of aging.

Country: Spain

Region: Rioja

Sub Region: Rioja Alta

Vineyard: Gimileo and Haro

Vineyard Size: 2.5 hectare