



# The White Ribera

Press kit

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CONSEJO REGULADOR DE LA DENOMINACIÓN DE ORIGEN

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## THE ALBILLO MAYOR GRAPE

The culture of wine in Ribera del Duero dates back various centuries. **The Albillo Mayor grape is a reference in the history of the region**, existing within remnants of the past that have been traced back to the Middle Ages.

Until recent years its role had been one of a **complementary grape, nevertheless essential**. The Albillo Mayor has been principally used in the creation of rosé wines, those famous *claretes* of Ribera del Duero, in addition to red wines.

Currently, **centenarian grapes of the Albillo Mayor variety exist in the Ribera del Duero region**, that have grown with tempranillo. In spite of being a grape with a secondary and complementary status within the production of tempranillo, **the average age of its vineyards is 50 years old**, which comes as the reward of the hard work of Ribera del Duero viticulturists. Moreover, the total growing area of Albillo Mayor vineyards is almost 500 hectares, of a total of 23.000 hectares of the total growing area for wines protected under the DO for the Ribera del Duero region.

### APPROACH: DEFINITION AND PROCESS

Wine makers that blend wines with the Albillo Mayor of Ribera del Duero define this grape as **one of great versatility, perfect for the synthesis of aged wines**.

The grape is like a Castilian, for its difficult, harsh and complicated character that one may encounter at first, yet one that eventually offers great generosity and versatility after a while.

The Albillo Mayor has great personality, yet is delicate. **It is very dependant upon close care, as it requires harvesting at exactly the right time**, not a moment too late nor too

early, with even the minimum amount of neglect ruining its great potential. Although it is demanding to grow the Albillo Mayor, its final product reaches great heights of excellence.

The white wines that are produced in Ribera del Duero with the Albillo Mayor grape follow the same process as local red wines, as in spite of it being a white grape, **it behaves as if it were that of a red wine variety.**



## **THE COMMITMENT OF THE REGULATORY COUNCIL OF RIBERA DEL DUERO**

For the first time ever since the foundation of the Denomination of Origin of Ribera del Duero, white wine is now able to be produced under this demarcation. **Thus the White Ribera is born.** The DO Regulatory Council has listened to the producers requests to not only protect the historical value of the Albillo Mayor for the region but to also enhance and



give it all the recognition that it deserves as a centenarian and native grape variety. This process has been continuing for many years and has demanded rigorous studies, reports and audits in order to have been unanimously approved.

This milestone in this wine-producing region has been made possible by the **modification of specifications within the rules of the DO that now permits the wine houses to produce wines with at least 75% Albillo Mayor content.**

The draft for the product specifications has been published in the BHOE on the 27th of July 2019, and after 2 months the deadline for submitting complaints has passed. After this, once definitive publication in the BOCYL has been confirmed, the change will be finalized and white wines produced with Albillo Mayor grapes will be able to be included under the Appellation of Origin as they will now meet these new standards.

A DO as important as Ribera del Duero, with national and international recognition for its red and rosé wines, needed to incorporate a great white wine. The Albillo Mayor variety has the necessary potential to maintain and increase the demanding standards of quality that are certified by the DO, and that express its essence, its terroir.

## **THE WHITE WINES OF THE ALBILLO MAYOR GRAPE OF RIBERA DEL DUERO**

Currently, **around 30 of the more than 300 houses that form part of the DO of Ribera del Duero create white wines with the Albillo Mayor.**

Production is limited, the majority of which does not go beyond five thousand bottles a year.



The Albillo Mayor is used with great creativity in the region, to a similar degree to how the tempranillo was first used 37 years ago when the DO first began work. **The oenologists are currently synthesising the foundations of new white wines using this variety.** They are creating new notes without external influences, guided only by their own interpretation of their work, infusing it with their personality and the character of the wines. As a result, there is **a local melting pot of wines of the region produced with the Albillo Mayor that have their own intricacies and character,** but that all hold the same elevated standards of quality.

### **YOUNG AND AGED WINES**

Every wine in the Albillo Mayor's range holds the same **balanced and well integrated acidity.** According to experts there are young and reserve wines that hold all of its potential. **The young wines are full-flavoured, attractive, fresh and playful, with a fruity and floral range of aromas.** On the contrary, **the reserves and grand reserves offers all the richness of the Albillo Mayor,** a grape suited to a longevity that creates **elegant, sophisticated and well-structured wines,** of a completely distinctive offering to what currently exists nationally for white wines.

The international industry professionals that have tasted these wines have been surprised by their complexity. They have been compared to the grandest French varieties.

## **THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE WHITE WINES OF THE RIBERA DEL DUERO REGION**

The Regulatory Council of the DO of Ribera del Duero has decided to safeguard, recuperate and increase the potential of this historical and traditional grape that was at risk of losing itself due to its complexity. In this way, the many houses that opted for the Albillo Mayor, through investigating and experimenting with it, today offer extraordinary wines, reaping the rewards of its incorporation under the brand of the DO.



There are houses of Ribera del Duero that have spent decades creating white wines with the Albillo Mayor because they have always been clear of its great potential.

All of these will be subject to the same stringent standards that the Regulatory Council demands for the creation of red and rosé wines, a measure requested by winemakers in order to preserve the same elevated standards of quality for the first white wines of the Ribera del Duero region, and so that the strength of the brand will help give these wines global recognition.

To create **wines with Albillo Mayor grapes is to accept a compromise which requires sacrifice, courage and curiosity**, to want to go beyond the ordinary and to not fear failure in the great complexity of working with the variety.

According to oenological experts, **the future of the Albillo Mayor will be in its authenticity, in seeking true wines**, different wines, without succumbing to external influences and not changing for the demands of the market.

It is time to create, to risk, and to achieve unique wines that will transform this new Ribera del Duero, the White Ribera, into a landmark on the international wine stage, just as its red and rosé wines have done.

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