

AVANCIA

BODEGAS AVANCIA
D.O. VALDEORRAS

JORGE ORDÓÑEZ
SELECTIONS



History

D.O. Valdeorras lies wrapped around the Sil River as it meanders through the slate mountains of the interior of Galicia, bordering D.O. Bierzo and the province of León. Valdeorras is named for the significant mining for gold that the Romans carried out there. (Val-de-Orras roughly translates to Valley-of-Gold in Latin) Nowadays, the economy is centered around slate mining, with over 80 companies extracting slate from the mountains. This slate is the main component of the vineyards' soils. Mencía has been grown in Valdeorras for millennia. This variety, Galicia's most important red grape, takes on a completely unique expression in Valdeorras, which is perhaps less famous than nearby Bierzo and Ribeira Sacra for the production of red wine. That being said, the cooler climate and slate soils in Valdeorras produce a more elegant wine than in Bierzo, and the effect of the interior continental mesoclimate produce richer wines than in Ribeira Sacra. Bodegas Avancia, located in O Barco de Valdeorras, produces under 2,000 cases of total Mencía production per year to celebrate this unique expression.

Vineyard

Avancia Mencía is produced from the single vineyard called Aeiroá located in the town of Raxoa. Planted between 1904 and 1910, this plot is head trained, dry farmed, and cared for without the use of harmful fungicides, herbicides, or pesticides. Aeiroá is in fact a field blend of Godello and Mencía with a few vines planted here and there of other esoteric Galician varieties. Avancia Mencía is produced as a selection of primarily Mencía with a tiny percentage of other Galician red varieties selected from the vineyard, and a tiny quantity of Godello that is cofermented with the red varieties. Aeiroá, just like every other vineyard that Avancia owns, is oriented to the northeast, which promotes freshness and elegance in a region that regularly reaches scorching temperatures during the growing season. Just like the rest of the region, the vineyard is planted in pure black slate soils, which impart a terrific minerality to the wine. Most importantly, Aeiroá is planted with the most ancient clone of Mencía, which produces tiny bunches and berries. The size of these bunches can be seen in the picture below.

Winemaking

The grapes are hand harvested and sorted rigorously at the winery. The grapes macerate and ferment with indigenous yeast in ten year old 600L barrels. The barrels are flipped vertically and the heads are removed so that the maceration can occur in these vessels. Once completed, the wine is gently pressed over the course of six hours in a small manual basket press, which avoids the over-extraction of harsh phenolic compounds. The wine is immediately transferred to 50% neutral 225L Burgundy barrels for 12 months of ageing, during which the wine completes primary and malolactic fermentation. Philosophically, Avancia Mencía is an incredibly pure expression of Mencía – produced without excessive intervention of Brettanomyces, Pediococcus, or reductive compounds. This allows the unique terroir of Valdeorras and Aeiroá to shine through.



Press

2014 91pts Thomas Matthews Wine Spectator

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