



Champagnes & Châteaux

QUALITY SINCE 1989

FINCA LA EMPERATRIZ GRAN VINO RIOJA TINTO 2016-1500ml HERMANOS HERNÁIZ - RIOJA ALTA

Finca La Emperatriz -The Empress's Estate- is an historic vineyard in Baños de Rioja that once belonged to the last Empress of France, Eugenia de Montijo.

12 km from Haro, nestled between the Sierra de Cantabria and Sierra de la Demanda mountain ranges, Finca La Emperatriz is located in the north western end of the Rioja DOC, at 570 m above sea level in one of the highest plateaux in the Rioja Alta.

In 1996, the Hernáiz family purchased that same estate, and brothers Eduardo and Victor Hernáiz took charge of a project aimed at producing quality wines.

The soil of Finca La Emperatriz is unique in La Rioja. A poor, extremely hard soil, which provides the wines with a distinctive elegance and minerality and great ageing potential.

Grape: 70% Tempranillo, 28% Garnacha and 2% Viura.

Vineyard & Vinification Note:

Region D.O.Ca Rioja, Rioja Alta.

Terroir Impressive terroir with a layer of large white pebbles to a depth of about 40 cm, covering a loose, sandy sub-soil. An ideal soil to grow vines, as it has excellent drainage, plenty of light and the roots are well placed to receive all the nutrients they require. The wines produced from this type of soil are fine and elegant.

Vineyard 50-65 years old bush vines. With the same type of soil, gravel and pebbles on surface. At 570 meters altitude.

Yields of 4.950 kg/ha (32,17 hl/ha).

Harvest Hand-harvested into 180 kg crates, between the 18th and the 20th October.

Wine-making Grape selection at the sorting table. 100% destemmed and 40% crushed. Grapes ferment in concrete tanks.

Tempranillo, Garnacha and Viura are harvested at once and vatted in the same tank, followed by a 5 days cold maceration. The wine fermented with indigenous yeasts and daily smooth pump-overs. After 20 days of post-fermentative maceration, it is devatted directly to barrel for MLF.

Ageing 18 months in barrels, 60% new French oak and 40% second-year American oak barrels.



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2016 Harvest: Until August, 2016 was a cold year, marked by a strong delay in the vineyard. During that period, the rainfall was 401 mm, mainly concentrated from January to April. From August on, temperatures rose considerably, being September especially warm. Throughout August, September and October rainfall was only 33mm, perfect to allow a smooth maturation. It was a very uneven vintage among old vineyards, with low fertility, and young vineyards that had a perfect and large fruit setting, which made green harvest necessary to control yields. Only old vines are used to elaborate this wine.

Tasting Note:

Deep ruby colour. Markedly spicy on the nose (black pepper, cumin and even a sweet touch of cinnamon) which contrast with the sobriety of the fruit and some subtle meaty notes that impart character. A savoury wine with tension on the palate and firm tannins. A naked, pure and direct expression of the estate's terroir with the hallmarks of a red wine suitable for ageing.

Wine Advocate Tasting Note:

The top red is the 2016 Finca la Emperatriz Gran Vino Tinto, the finest and most elegant red I remember tasting from the property. It's a blend of 70% Tempranillo, 28% Garnacha and 2% Viura, where Garnacha and the white Viura have an important role to provide some acidity and freshness, even in a cool year when the wines had more natural freshness than in previous vintages. It's a selection from the older vines on sand, gravel and boulder limestone soils from La Emperatriz estate, and it fermented destemmed with some 60% uncrushed grapes in concrete vats and matured in 60% new French barriques and the rest in used American oak barrels for 18 months. It's classical Rioja but with clean and precise aromas and flavors, still young. 41,876 bottles, 660 magnums and some large formats produced. It was bottled in June 2018. It should develop nicely in bottle. **94 Points, Luis Gutiérrez, June 2019**

James Suckling Tasting Note:

A bold wine that's a big statement of ripe and bold summer berries with plenty of oak in the mix, too. The palate has a wealth of fleshy, fine-grained tannin and a strong thread of mocha at the finish. Plenty to like here, but could tone down the oak a little. Drink or hold. **93 Points, July 2019**

Guia Peñín : 93 Points, 2020

Guia Proensa: 97 Points, 2020

Food Pairing:

A great wine to pair with many dishes. Great partner to lamb and beef, rich Spanish food and barbecues. Great with pork, chorizo, iberico and cheeses such as manchego, an aged gouda or mature cheddar.