



Champagnes & Châteaux
QUALITY SINCE 1989

FINCA LA EMPERATRIZ RIOJA TINTO 2018 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.

Part of the vineyard, the older vines, is officially classified in Rioja as a "Viñedo Singular", a new system in Rioja since 2017, which is the equivalent to the Cru system in France to identify and protect outstanding pieces of vineyard. Of just 200 Ha in the whole of Rioja, Finca la Emperatriz accounts for 35 Ha., all in one piece.

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: 76% Tempranillo, 20% Garnacha and 4% 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 5,500 kg/ha (33,10 hl/ha).

Harvest Hand-harvested into 180 kg crates, from the 10th to 12th 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 4-5 days cold maceration.

The wine fermented with indigenous yeasts and daily smooth pump-overs.

After 15-20 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.



Champagnes and Châteaux, 11 Calico House, Plantation Wharf, London SW11 3TN

t 020 7326 9655 e info@champagnesandchateaux.co.uk

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Cont'd:

2018 Harvest: The year was very unstable, cold, and wet. The hail that fell at the beginning of July affected some plots slightly which, together with the hail that fell in September, attacked the most delicate berries. This, along with an excess of humidity, made necessary a greater sanitary control in vegetation management and treatments. Ripening was slower than usual, although the rain respected a long harvest with mild temperatures. An exhaustive selection of bunches was necessary, first in the field and then through a shorting table in the winery, to eliminate the affected parts. Only old vines are used to elaborate this wine.

Wine Advocate Tasting Note:

The wine labelled in 2016 as Gran Vino and in 2017 as Viñedo Singular has finally been simplified to 2018 Finca la Emperatriz Tinto with the category of Viñedo Singular, the new official single-vineyard category. It's a modern, clean and generously oaked blend of 76% Tempranillo, 20% Garnacha and 4% Viura from vines worked organically from 2020, with 14.5% alcohol, good freshness and balance. It fermented in concrete and matured in 60% new French barriques and 40% used American ones for 18 months. This is a vin de garde that needs time in bottle to finish integrating the oak. As with the white, the 2016 is evolving more gracefully than the 2017 (tasted from half bottles, so perhaps not the best data point...). 32,544 bottles and some other formats were filled in August 2020. **94 Points, Luis Gutiérrez, July 2022**

James Suckling Tasting Note:

A deep nose, full of blackberries, dark plums, black pepper, cedar and some dark spices and smoke. This is broad but juicy and elegant on the palate, framed with a wealth of refined tannins. Long, subtle and dry finish. 76% tempranillo, 20% garnacha and 4% viura. Drink or hold. **93 Points, July 2022**

Guía Proensa, 2023 96 Points

Tim Akin Rioja Report 2022 95 Points

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.