



VITOLA de Miguel Merino Reserva 2003 A complex and expressive Reserva wine, the perfect match between fruit and oak. Red cherry colour, clean and shining. Ripe fruit aromas, spices (pepper, clove), tobacco, coffee, and balsamic herbs (mint, liquorice). On the palate it is fresh, intense, long and balanced.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Vineyards: Vines planted on bush in Briones between 1952 and 1973. They are all placed on the slopes of those hills further away from the River Ebro –less fertile than the riverside, of calcareous composition.

Vintage: 2003 was a difficult year in Rioja Alta due to the high temperatures and little rainfall. While the young vines were losing most part of their leaves, the oldest –with deeper roots with access to subsoil water- showed a perfect shape. Obviously no botrytis, mildew or oidium attacks were registered.

Harvest: The picking started some days earlier than usual. Collected by hand in small cases, the grapes are taken to the sorting table, which in 2003 was essential in order to reject the overripe grains, completely unbalanced.

Fermentations: The grapes fermented at a controlled temperature of 30°C in small stainless-steel vats. Two *remontages* (pumping over) were applied daily. Malolactic fermentation started spontaneously and went through perfectly well right after the alcoholic fermentation.

Ageing: 26 months in 52 new barrels crafted with American oak staves and French oak bottoms, made by Murua coopers. Rackings every 6 months, keeping the bottoms apart. Every 3 months all the barrels were topped to avoid oxidation. Bottled in Spring 2006.

Grape varieties: Tempranillo (96%) and Graciano (4%).

pH : 3,67

Alcohol: 13,36% vol. **Total acidity:** 4,78 g/l, in tartaric.

Total production: 11.760 bottles.

