

CALLEJO

RIBERA DEL DUERO

History

Félix Callejo was born in June 1943 at Sotillo de la Ribera. His family had a long tradition of working in



the wine world. Both his grandfather, Faustino, and his father, Felix, owned vineyards and were also “corredores de vino”, or local wine brokers, who acted as agents to find buyers for batches of wine produced by growers in Sotillo.

At only 16 years old, he took over the reins of the family business on the death of his father. Naturally curious, he dreamed of one day making a wine of his own. That dream was to become reality after meeting his wife-to-be, Pilar, who shared with him his adventure and the years of effort and hard work. Pilar, who was a schoolteacher by profession, was key to this exciting project’s success, and their first rewards came in 1989 with their first grape harvest.

Vineyards

Our vineyards are made up 100% of the Tempranillo grape variety or Tinta Fina (as it’s known locally) and

are located in Sotillo de la Ribera, a village of 500 inhabitants in the province of Burgos. Situated in the northern part of the Ribera del Duero appellation, in the highest part of the Duero valley, the vineyards lie at 850 to 930 metres above sea level and are contained within a privileged enclave. The high altitude brings about sharp contrasts of temperature between day and night-time, with swings of over 15°C, which enhance grape ripening during the day while the low night temperatures preserve good acidity.

The soils in which the vines are grown range from limestone in the high parts (930m above sea level) to sandy-clay, sandy, and pebbly, as the land slopes down to lower altitudes. With this diversity of soil types, in which the Tinta Fina or Tempranillo expresses different characteristics, our wines acquire a complex range of flavours. The concept of “terroir” refers to the interaction of various factors which contribute to the character of the wine: the climate, soil, grape variety and actions of the individual vine grower. In order to produce wines that express their terroir, the vineyard’s soil characteristics must be carefully respected, and only with an organic approach can maximum expression of terroir be achieved.



CALLEJO

RIBERA DEL DUERO

Philosophy

Our philosophy: VINEYARD. Bringing José Félix Callejo into the winery as the œnologist marked a new phase in its development. The search for maximum expression of terroir then became our main objective. Great wines are born from the roots of vines growing deep in the soils. Only careful vine-tending and balanced canopy management can bring out the maximum expression of the Tinta Fina in each soil. We had to unlearn the methods of conventional agriculture, which were solely high-yielding, fast and without scruples, to achieve our aim of producing a true terroir wine. The word terroir implies many things, but the most important feature in a terroir-driven wine is its authenticity. To get that authenticity from our vineyards we eliminated all use of weedkillers, insecticides and pesticides.

Terroir: how do you bring it out in the wine? Preserving life in the soil is essential for the vine to develop in complete balance and harmony with its environment. The roots need to be capable of exploring their surroundings in their search for nutrients. The micro-organisms present in the soil favour this exploration. Our work in the vines consists in carrying out vineyard practices which work in favour of that balance. Some of the vineyard practices we carry out: mulching, cover crops (with a herd of sheep to trim and naturally fertilize), tilling, and natural preparations with a base of seaweed, horsetail, camomile, nettles, etc..

