

# ALBERTO ORTE

## VALDEORRAS 'ESCALADA DO SIL' TINTO

### ORIGIN

Spain, Valdeorras, Ourense

### WINE TYPE & VARIETIES

Still red, with Merenzao,  
Mencía, Garnacha Tintorera

### SOIL

Slate and granite topsoil with a  
thin clay subsoil

### AGE OF VINES

Around 30 years old

### VITICULTURE

Practicing organic

### VINIFICATION

Whole cluster maceration  
for 28 days followed by  
fermentation. Once  
fermentation has taken place,  
the wine is pressed and aged in  
500 liter French oak barrels for  
15 months. After one month of  
natural decantation, the wine is  
gently filtered then bottled

It's hard not being fascinated by Alberto Orte — a man who is creating Spanish wine history through history, who is creating the future Spanish wine map through looking back in time. Alberto is without a doubt one of Spains most interesting winemakers.

Alberto grew up in Madrid where he also attended law school. During his time in the city an interest for wine emerged, perhaps sparked on one of his trips down to Cádiz where Alberto had family working with wine. Eventually Alberto earned a diploma in oenology, in that way continuing his family's wine legacy, whom have been wine producers since the late 1800's. Today Alberto lives in Cádiz.

Cádiz is only one of the regions Alberto grows vines, he also does in Valencia, Rioja, Galicia and others. Alberto is involved in many wine projects around Spain and wherever he goes the idea is the same - to create genuine wine of the land where it grows, and to the history part, of grapes that are indigenous to the place. All through respecting nature, practicing organic farming and sensible, hands-off winemaking Alberto dedicates much of his time researching Spanish wine history through documents, writings and the memory of older generations. Especially one iconic piece of Spanish wine literature has proven to be very valuable: Simon de Rojas Clemente y Rubios documentations about varieties and their characteristics in Jerez from 1807. The examples of Alberto's fascinating work are many and equally unique.

Ever since Alberto set out on his mission he has been in search of truly great vineyards, sites that out-perform and gives the potential of producing the best wine in a given region. This work has involved identifying indigenous varieties and old vines grown organically in balanced, low-yielding, soils. Alberto is today one of the main figures and one of only a handful producers, as the likes of Raúl Pérez and Envinat, taking care of the old viticultural heritage Spain has; saving old varieties, recuperating old vineyards/regions as well as making wine based on terroir/site rather than blending them all together. These people are in the forefront of bringing Spain into a new (or old so to speak) era of wine.

Escalada do Sil is a history project. Intrigued by century-old wine writing that described elegant, aromatic reds from Valdeorras, Alberto sought to replicate this style, veering away from the Godello that is the predominant grape now planted in the region. He found an old-vine parcel, terraced



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because of its almost cliff-like steepness, at the western end of the appellation adjacent to Ribera Sacra. He found a plot to Mencía, Garnacha Tintorera and Merenzao, the grape known as Trousseau in the Jura. With these cool-climate, aromatic red varieties, Alberto knew he could bring this history to life with Escalada do Sil – the Staircase to the Sil.