

BODEGAS BHILAR

RIOJA BLANCO 'KHA ME'

ORIGIN

Spain, Rioja, El Villar

WINE TYPE & VARIETIES

Still white, Garnacha Blanca

SOIL

Clay and limestone

AGE OF VINES

Around 15 years

VITICULTURE

Certified biodynamic

VINIFICATION

Hand harvested followed by the grapes being crushed and fermented with indigenous yeast for a few days prior to being aged in terra-cotta amphora for 18 months

Founding proprietors David Sampedro Gil (born and raised in Elvillar) and Melanie Hickman (from Ohio in the US) are a spirited and dynamic husband and wife team. They set out on this journey in 1999 with the creation of Bodegas Bhilar (Bhilar is Elvillar in Basque). It all started with one hectare of vines that David got from his mother. The goal here is “to make terroir-driven wines with soul, respect the land, work only with indigenous grapes, and to share unique wines with good people with positive energy”.

David's career took off after he completed his master in oenology. When working for some larger wineries in Rioja he realized that great wine can only come out of great vineyards. This realisation made David focus on the vineyards and led to the philosophy of making wine that speak of a place through sustainable agriculture and minimal intervention in the winery. David is considered to be one out of handful producers leading the way for the New Rioja, crafting wines built on elegance, freshness and purity of fruit. David, although educated as an oenologist, first and foremost considers himself being a vine grower, this sets the foundation for the philosophy here - its all about the vineyards and how they grow. Since 2006 all 9,5 hectares have organically grown with biodynamic practices, David owning 6 and Melanie 3,5. The majority of vineyards are based on limestone and being in the Alavesa sub-region the microclimate is cool thanks to the high altitude. The way of working is greatly inspired by old traditions from David's grandfather, when all things were less manipulated and more natural. Hence all work is manual, carried out by human or horse, and the new winery is solar-powered (until 2016 this was a sort of garage-project). Wines are loosely divided under the labels of “Bodegas Bhilar”, “David Sampedro Gil” and “Melanie Hickman/Struggling Vines”.

This is the first wine aged in terra-cotta amphora by Bodegas Bhilar. This is not an orange wine made from a prolonged skin maceration. Rather, it was made using a traditional ageing method that allows the wine to evolve very differently than in stainless steel tanks or oak barrels. Kha mé and the kanji symbol are roughly translated to amphora (The symbol is pronounced “Ka Mé”). Bodegas Bhilar's Japanese distributor said there is no direct translation and this was the most suitable word.



VIN EST. 2012