

Razón – tradition and modern winemaking get it all together

Amador Escudero's "Razón" is a whole new venture that brings together the Escudero family's traditional Rioja knowhow, and a modern approach to winemaking in tune with today's tastes. The real story dates back to early 2004 during a trip to the US when Amador had the opportunity to taste Morambro Creek. If this was the wine the American wine buyer wanted, why not "build" a Spanish wine along the same lines as this Australian bombshell.

Back in Spain, Amador analyzed and "deconstructed" a sample bottle of this same wine. Once a technical profile of the wine-style was on paper, what remained was to find the raw material (eg. grapes) that could be transformed into a wine in line with the original sample.

The 2004 vintage was dry, sunny and warm, just the thing to produce grapes with the extra ripeness and high sugar levels needed to satisfy the Razón project's "blueprint". Several old-vines garnacha vineyards were de-classified and therefore excluded from the official Rioja vintage. The extra-ripe grapes were left to dry in the sun and partially dehydrate on the vines and then harvested by hand well after the main harvest was in the vats.

Back at the winery the grapes were passed through the triage table and this carefully selected fruit was then fermented and macerated in stainless steel tanks for three to four weeks. Once the malolactic fermentation run its course, the wine was allowed to decant naturally and transferred into oak barrels. The ageing process in a mix of French and American oak lasted six months, just the time needed to transform the raw wine into the end product defined by Amador's "blueprint".

It's important to note that Razón is made with genuine oak barrel ageing, the way cellar-worthy wines have been made for centuries. While other winemaking methods may add an oaky/spicy flavor, barrel ageing provides the material and the environment to fully round out the winemaking process. Allowing for gentle oxidation through the pores of the oak staves, as well as adding tannins and flavor, traditional barrel ageing "builds" a complete wine, ready to drink today, but with the "stuff" and stability to hold up well over time.