

Antidoto

A Ribera Star is Back in the Saddle

Over the past quarter century, Ribera del Duero has become arguably the most successful wine region of Spain. Yet, some of its finest wines are yet to be made.

The reason is simple: many of the best *terroirs* and oldest vines are in the remote eastern part of the region—the province of Soría—which is still largely unexplored by today's winemakers.

In fact, if it weren't for a young French winemaker, Bertrand Sourdais, Soría might still be unknown. Bertrand first brought Soría to light with his pioneering wines at Atauta, a village within the province. But when Atauta was sold in 2009 during Spain's economic downturn, his gaze shifted to his family's Chinon estate in France's Loire Valley.

Birth of a New Wine

Yet the pull of Soría remained strong and he soon returned to the region to make a new wine which—like all of his work at Atauta—would be full of the soul of ancient-vine Tinto Fino.

And so, **Antidoto** was born. As at Atauta, his goal is to capture the essence of this singular region. And he will do so by sourcing from the best vineyard sites—many of which date from the time before Phylloxera—and by ultimately managing the viticulture himself. Wherever possible, he will employ organic and, when possible, biodynamic methods.

As for Antidoto's intriguing name—Spanish for “antidote”—it has a particular meaning for Bertrand in the wake of Atauta's sale. But the wine



also serves as an antidote to the many Ribera de Duero wines that substitute heavy-handed winemaking for a sense of place and variety. And at a relatively modest price point, it is surely an antidote to high wine prices in the appellation.

The Rooftop of Ribera

Bertrand poetically describes the Soría zone as “sitting on the rooftop of Ribera,” where temperatures are cooler than in the rest of Ribera del Duero. There are numerous soil types, but most

of them have two things in common: their poverty and an abundance of sand that has kept Phylloxera away for the past 150 years. As a consequence this is one of the largest concentrations of

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To Bertrand's mind, the Soría sub-zone offers a transitional wine type that can—in the right hands—blend Rioja's fragrance and finesse with Ribera del Duero's traditional power and depth. He is using long, gentle macerations to minimize tannin extraction and no new barrels are employed for aging. The immediate goal is a wine with balance, perfume, and complete tannins.

Ribera's Great Bargain

With its low price, Antidoto promises to quickly make its mark as *the* bargain among serious Ribera del Duero offerings. And Bertrand's launching of the wine could not have been better timed, taking advantage of two great vintages in 2009 and 2010.

Antidoto is an extraordinary wine—and extraordinary value—in today's marketplace.

ANTIDOTO

Ribera del Duero, Spain

OVERVIEW

Established: 2010
Proprietor: Bertrand Sourdais & David Hernando
Winemaker: Bertrand Sourdais
Antidoto is located in the province of Soria, in perhaps the coolest microclimate of the Ribera del Duero. The resulting wines are considerably fresher and more elegant than typical from the appellation.

VINEYARD INFORMATION

Soils: Sand with gravel (50%), sand/limestone 20% and clay 30%
Vines: 100% Tinto Fino from top sites throughout the Soria portion of Ribera del Duero.
Elevation: 950 m average
Appellation: Ribera del Duero
Harvest: by hand and machine

VINTAGE NOTES

2011 – Another strong vintage in Ribera, with wines that fall somewhere between 2009 and 2010 in style.
2010 – Similar in concentration to the great 2009 vintage, but with perhaps a little fresher style.
2009 – Like Bordeaux, this is a year with intensely concentrated, yet balanced fruit. An exceptional year by any measure.

THE WINES

Ribera del Duero

Fruit Source: Estate and purchased grapes, most farmed organically. Most vines are very old, with many exceeding 80 years old.
Yields: <30 hl/ha
Oak Aging: 14 months in 2nd & 3rd passage French barrique.
Production: 5,000 cases (2011)