



Benjamin Romeo

Benjamin Romeo 2006 Vintage

"When I manage to produce wines where I can hold my head high in spite of some less than ideal conditions at harvest time, it pleases me greatly. The wines from the 2006 vintage are very good examples of this." Benjamin Romeo, November 2008

Benjamin Romeo (pronounced *rom-ay-oh*) handed me his new business card when I visited in September. It really made me smile. Beautifully designed and made from fine cork, it is a work of art; so symptomatic of the man. Benjamin's attention to detail verges on pathological, yet his energy and passion renders it apparently normal. To read more about Benjamin's fantastic new winery, [click here](#)



Benjamin Romeo's vineyards

2006 Vintage Report

The official declaration on the 2006 vintage in Rioja will not be made until Spring 2009 – but the regulatory authorities think it is a “promising year.” According to Benjamin, the 2006 growing season was unremarkable in many ways, the most obvious effect being a sudden and rapid increase in temperature during the final stages of grape maturation. The resulting rise in sugar levels would once have been viewed as a great achievement but now, quite rightly, it is frowned upon in the interests of balance. Benjamin's practice is to achieve natural balance through a combination of picking early and

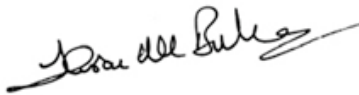
selecting higher altitude parcels. The sheer speed of the temperature increase in 2006 made this difficult. As a result, rigorous selection was needed to meet his exacting standards and smaller quantities are available as a result.

Two key wines from Romeo's range were not produced at all in 2006. The ultra rare **Que Bonita Cacareaba** (his top white wine) was not made as Benjamin decided that the pH was too high. High pH creates concerns over longevity and Benjamin was not prepared to take the risk – despite the impact on his balance sheet. **Contador**, his iconic red wine, was not made either. Although 2006 was not a particularly difficult year, we have always known that Benjamin would only make Contador in exceptional years. He has set a standard and will not be moved from it. We applaud his resolve.



The good news is that the other wines have benefited from this staggering perfectionism. The wines are plummy and opulent in texture, in line with the vintage. They are very seductive but retain the uplifting minerality and freshness which characterise Benjamin's wines.

Given the short history of these wines, their drinking dates are difficult to assess. Our estimates are guided by their intensity, power and structure. Our experience thus far is that they are incredibly approachable from the outset but warrant further ageing to gain in complexity. They seem to evolve gently without closing up as so many wines do.



Alison Buchanan
Associate Director, Buying
December 2008



Church of Santa Maria la Mayor, looking down onto the Benjamin Romeo winery

Tasting Notes

Predicador

£176/case of 12, in-bond UK

91% Tempranillo, 8% Garnacha and 1% Viura from 45 yr old vines
Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18

Launched last year, Predicador was an instant sell out. Benjamin exercises his usual exacting standards here but with slightly higher production, lighter bottles and the re-use of the first wine's French oak barrels allowing for a lower price. The 2006 is deeply coloured with decadent, autumnal fruit compote on the nose. More dates and plums than overt primary aromas. The palate leads on from the nose with a luscious, rich texture supported by ripe, well-integrated, supple tannins. Accessible and beautifully balanced, this is enriched by 16 months in one year old oak and presents a long, layered finish. The name, Predicador, (meaning preacher,) and the label are inspired by Clint Eastwood's Pale Rider – of which Benjamin is something of a fan. Though I cannot imagine when he manages to watch it.

Recommended Drinking 2009 to 2014

La Cueva del Contador

£245/case of 6, in-bond UK

Contador, 97.5% Tempranillo and 2.5% Garnacha
Corney & Barrow Score 18

The second wine of Contador, this is strictly selected and has benefited from the declassified Contador. Almost opaque, black-plum in colour, it is darkly fruited, warm and inviting with dates, prunes, raisins and bitter chocolate, laced by oak. A refined minerality, allied to a significant tannic structure, gives good definition, despite relatively low acidity. Spiced and richly structured, the palate has lovely balance and translates the heady aromatics of wild herbs which are interspersed amongst the vines. This is a lovely Cueva, long and poised and somewhat hedonistic.

Recommended Drinking 2009 to 2015

La Viña de Andres

£375/case of 6, in-bond UK

100% Tempranillo
Corney & Barrow Score 17+ to 18+

This vineyard, planted by Benjamin's father (after whom it is named) is from one single plot, planted on alluvial, chalky soil. Such terroir has a natural tendency to over-produce. Benjamin however, rigorously persuades it otherwise. This is dark and sultry with dried black fruit on the nose and palate, a sweet, ripe, candied/concentrated style. The tannic structure melds effortlessly, creating an illusion of silk on the palate. As with all of Benjamin's wines, this is elusive and almost whimsical. Just as the taster grasps a snapshot of the complexity on offer, a further layer of intrigue presents itself – a very fine translation of the vintage.

Recommended Drinking 2012 to 2020

**To order please call 020 7265 2430 (London)
or 01875 321 921 (Edinburgh)**

Please note these wines are to be sold on a "first come first served basis".
The wines have now been shipped and are available for delivery.

Event for your diary

TARDIEU-LAURENT TASTING
Thursday 26th February 2009, venue TBC.

For tickets to this event,
please call 020 7265 2453 or email events@corneyandbarrow.com