



ARTADI

2018 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

“We could define it as the vintage of caressing wines”

JUAN CARLOS LÓPEZ DE LACALLE, ARTADI, May 2019

Based in Laguardia, in Rioja Alavesa, Artadi has in recent years cemented its role in the region as a pioneer, leading the push for recognition of a concept of *terroir*. It is now nearly three years since Artadi chose to leave the Rioja appellation, at the end of December 2015. The single vineyard wines it has since released have made the case eloquently for the nuances which make up this highly intricate region.

Artadi has come a long way since its establishment in 1985 by a group of 13 local vine growers as a cooperative. In those days, just one wine was produced, from one vat, using the method of carbonic maceration, as historically practised in Beaujolais. Those fruity, easy drinking vintages will have borne no relation to Artadi’s style today.

The social element remains however, long after Juan Carlos López de Lacalle bought out the other cooperative members. Artadi stands for respect for the region’s traditions, both human and natural. Its recent rebellion against the local regulator is borne from a desire to showcase the region’s typicity to best effect, unhampered by red tape and the marketing concerns of larger producers.

“The value of great wines is inextricably linked with the land and its people”

Juan Carlos López

Artadi’s exit from Rioja’s *Denominación de Origen*, much publicised in Spain and elsewhere, may just mark a turning point in this region which has until now valued blends over vineyard typicity.

THE VINEYARDS

Artadi's Rioja vineyards are planted with old bush vines, although the majority are trellised rather than free-standing.

Vineyard practices are best described as 'sustainable'. No synthetic chemicals are used and Juan Carlos is now in his ninth year of organic farming.

The team is inspired by the richness and diversity of the land and intrigued by this, the Vinos de Parcela collection (here below), single vineyard sites, was devised.

There are six plots in total: Valdeginés, Quintanilla, San Lazaro, La Poza de Ballesteros, El Carretil and El Pisón.

WINEMAKING

Oak barrels are used for gentle oxygenation rather than to add a flavour component to the wine. For this reason, French oak is used in place of Rioja's traditional coconutty American oak.

Multiple sorting tables are employed in the winery, to make absolutely sure that only first rate fruit makes the grade.

Fermentation takes place in a mixture of open top wooden vats and bespoke inverted conical stainless steel tanks.

Stems are used as deemed fit, according to vintage conditions. Grapes are 100% Tempranillo.

THE 2018 VINTAGE

“Wines built up by a great fresh and fruit-forward aromatic load, full of energy and youth.”

JUAN CARLOS LÓPEZ DE LACALLE, MAY 2019

We ought to start at the finish – i.e. the wines resulting from the growing season – if we are not to reach for a shotgun. These wines are remarkable silky, aromatic and with commendable freshness – not something assured during the year. Ultimately, a dramatically good result from a difficult season.

2018 was one of the wettest in the past ten years. This was not so much high rainfall per shower as pretty well constant. In spring, March through to May, it rained every two to three days. Ordinarily we would highlight this as a restoration of the reserves – and a good thing – but nigh-on incessant rain inevitably invites less attractive guests, the fungal diseases mildew, odium and botrytis.

Thankfully the onset of summer was more benign, with less rain but some summer storms. The arrival of high temperatures helped to control disease and such condition lasted until October – tremendous conditions for harvest – and so to the wines. The general style is vibrant and richly-fruited, bristling with red and wild fruits and supported by coated tannins. Triumph over adversity – these wines are extraordinary, truly memorable.

Alison Buchanan

TASTING NOTES

VALDEGINÉS

Valdeginés sits directly opposite another parcel, La Poza de Ballesteros, in the San Ginés Valley in Rioja Alavesa. Valdeginés (4.5ha) is over twice the size of La Poza and is planted part slope – on shallow soil over sandstone and partly on the deeper-soiled, cooler clay-limestone terraces. East-facing, the slope bathes in early morning sun, resulting in a cooler, fresh style of wine. This 2108 vintage presents airy, ethereal fruit on the nose, with shades of red fruit. The palate has greater focus, precision and presence, crunchy berries and cherries underscored by saline minerals. Lovely wine, poised, harmonious and tremendous value.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022 - 2030)

17-17.25

£165.00/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

QUINTANILLA

Quintanilla was offered to us for the first time last year and this 2018 is only the third vintage to have been produced. It comprises 1.13 ha of clay-limestone over hard limestone and sandstone mother rock. The fruit on the nose is vibrant and assertive, rounded off by shades of vanilla cream. The palate takes no prisoners, darkly fruited and almost teutonic in structure yet there is such a concentration of fleshy fruit, freshness and, emerging from the wings mid-palate, both chocolate richness and a haunting perfume which extends through a protracted finish – extremely impressive.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 - 2032)

17.5

£175.00/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

SAN LÁZARO

This is the elder statesman amongst the single vineyards, in terms of vine age – planted in 1956. It is also a higher site, 1.62 ha at 650 meters above sea level. The soil is deep clay-limestone built up of geological strata, Quaternary over Tertiary – well aerated – perfect for growing struggling vines. That struggle makes for greater complexity and, well-sheltered from the south-east winds, the vineyard enjoys a unique meso-climate. Bright plum-ruby in colour, this announces itself with a fabulous array of berries, cherries and floral notes. on the nose. The palate reflects the aromatics on the nose, presented with flair, supported by super-ripe, fine-grained tannins. Rather than pretty, this is a real beauty, with elegance, poise and drive, clearly evoking great purity of fruit, sensitively handled.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023 - 2032)

17.5 - 18

£300.00/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

LA POZA DE BALLESTEROS

La Poza, named after a pool-like hollow at the centre of the vineyard, is a west-facing 1.18ha site, vines planted in 1960. In contrast to Valdeginés therefore, it generally sees only the afternoon sun. The harvest is around 4 days earlier here as a result. There is correspondingly greater intensity and firmer tannins in La Poza. The soil is poor silty clay, dotted by limestone. Jet-plum in the glass, this immediately imposes its authority, powerful and broadly-fruited on both the nose and palate, the latter revealing ripe and rounded yet firm tannins. Lightly spiced, with warming generosity and bright complementary acidity, this has good ageing potential – a serious wine, which warrants such patience.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 - 2032)

18

£395.00/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

EL CARRETIL

This is a 3.64 ha plot planted in 1930, 1975 and 1988, on a variety of soils at around 500m above sea level. At the highest points there is clay-limestone over sandstone bedrock and in the deeper, cooler areas the topsoil covers a layer of silt and clay. Although mainly southfacing, El Carretil is further north and cooler over all. The limestone element provides a defined chalky minerality. This is richly-fruited on the nose, red fruits laced with vanilla - rather hedonistic. The palate is bold, ebullient and driven, bursting with berried fruit, lightly spiced, only just reined in by refined crushed shell minerals – terrific.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023 - 2033)

18+

£650.00/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

EL PISÓN

The walled vineyard of El Pisón is the heart and soul of Artadi, Located in Laguardia, there are 2.4 hectares of gnarly, old bush vines, on deep clay-limestone soils, originally planted in 1945 by Juan Carlos' father.

El Pisón has been seen as the jewel of Artadi since its first release in 1991. It is indeed a very special place where the topography balances shielding the vines from the wind and allowing optimal sun exposure. The wine epitomises the style at the heart of the various wines. Each is true to site yet common to all is an extraordinary purity of fruit and that thrilling balance between power and elegance. El Pisón is universally recognised as one of the greatest wines of Spain.

Deep jet-plum in colour, the nose offers a rather heady array of roses, violets, cherries and berries, all layered with dark chocolate. The palate reflects the aromatics presented on the nose but is surprisingly more ethereal, weightless somehow despite its innate power. It transcends the possible to offer arien character, focus, purity and heightened tension. It is only on the mid-palate that one is reminded that this is embryonic, the fruit camouflaging a firm, ripe tannic structure – built to last – and goodness it warrants more than a modicum of patience.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2036+)

18.5+

£1,175.00/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

UK ARRIVAL

The wines will arrive in the UK in winter 2020.

TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

TO ORDER

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