



Altolandon

Manchuela, Spain

History of the Winery

The winery began in 1998 when enologist Rosalía Molina and her husband Manolo Garrote, a vineyard manager, purchased a small estate of three hectares around the village of Landete, where they started the winery in Rosalía's grandfather's old house. Altolandon is located in the sub-region of Manchuela in La Mancha, at an astonishing 1,100 meters above sea level. They grew their holdings slowly and intentionally, taking over plot-by-plot as growers in the area retired, using organic principles from the start. Today, the estate has grown considerably to 200 hectares total. Rosalía and Manolo split the work – Rosalía managing the cellar and Manolo managing the vines, with a shared vision to revitalize winemaking in their often-overlooked region of La Mancha. The estate's altitude makes it unique, one of the highest wineries in all of Spain, with a cool, dry, and windy climate that makes organic agriculture quite easy – as Rosalía says, “If you don't need chemicals, why use them?”

JS & Altolandon

We met Rosalía at MillésimeBIO in Montpellier in early 2022. Anyone who has been to one of these fairs knows how exhausting they can be for your palate, but that didn't stop the Altolandon wines from blowing us away. Their balance, purity, and downright deliciousness made them the showstopper of MillésimeBIO, and with the added bonus of the deep passion of Rosalía and unique story of her winery, we knew that we wanted to bring Altolandon to Oregon as soon as we could, as Julian Sinclair's first Spanish direct import.

Viticulture

The estate's location is central to everything about the viticulture at Altolandon. At 1,100 meters, they see extreme diurnal shifts, with very hot days and cold nights, allowing for excellent balance between ripeness and acidity. The soils at this elevation are also notably poor, keeping yields low and quality high. Nearly constant wind on this high plateau limits disease and pest pressure, which means that organic and biodynamic practices are easier to implement and maintain. Their harvests are some of the latest in Spain, beginning in mid-October for whites and late October for reds. They even have the correct conditions to make an ice wine that is harvested in January, the only one made in the country.



Farming has been certified organic and vegan since the outset of the winery, and while not certified, Altolandon also uses some biodynamic practices in the vineyard, like reusing the pulverized grape pomace from harvest for fertilizer and following the lunar calendar to determine harvest dates. They also welcome local farm animals such as chickens, pigs, and sheep to roam the vineyards to promote biodiversity between the vines. Rosalía aims to have as small a carbon footprint as possible, and is working toward carbon neutrality for the winery, using practices such as rainwater harvesting and converting power to solar.

The vines themselves are bush vines, planted to poor and extremely rocky soils over limestone and calcareous clay soils. Many of the vines are 40-100+ years old, with the oldest vines planted to Garnacha and Bobal. Rosalía is particularly passionate about the Bobal grape, which was at risk of disappearing from the area entirely, despite how well suited it is to grow in their unique climate. Bobal's reputation as an extremely productive variety led to a belief that it could not produce quality wines, but Rosalía is part of a new generation of winemakers proving otherwise. In addition to Bobal and Garnacha, Altolandon also produces wines from Tempranillo, Muscat Petit Grain, Petit Manseng, white and gray Garnacha, Godello, and several other international varieties. Grapes are hand-harvested, and any irrigation that occurs (extremely minimal, only in extreme conditions) makes use of recycled rainwater.

Vinification

The winemaking philosophy at Altolandon has always been and remains simple and natural: all wines ferment spontaneously with native yeasts in stainless steel tanks or clay amphora. After primary fermentation is complete, the wines are either cold-stabilized right away, or complete malolactic fermentation naturally in a variety of vessels depending on the cuvée, including stainless steel, barriques, and clay amphora. Rosalía has an impressive variety of clay amphora, some quite large and ancient, salvaged from other wineries and refurbished by Altolandon. After aging in barrels, amphora, or tank, usually for a period of 8-24 months depending on the cuvée, wines are racked back into tanks to cold-stabilize in the cold cellar over the winter, where temperatures can reach as low as -15 celsius. They are neither filtered nor fined, and sulfur is not used.

Wines

2022 Mil Historias White Blend



A blend of five varieties, including Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris, Chardonnay, Viognier, and Muscat à Petits Grains from a range of vine ages and soil types, ranging from sandy soils for the Viognier and Grenache, stony and calcareous for the Chardonnay, and sandy loam for the oldest vines of Muscat. The varieties are cold-soaked with skins for a few days before fermentation begins. Grapes are co-fermented spontaneously in large stainless steel tanks. After primary fermentation,

the wine is gently pressed and racked back stainless steel, and cold stabilized (preventing malolactic).

2022 Doña Leo



100% Muscat à Petits Grains from 70 year-old vines grown on loamy, well-drained soils. Grapes are cold-soaked with skins for 12 hours in stainless steel tanks of 6000l before pressing and the start of fermentation. Malolactic fermentation is prevented by the means of cold stabilization. Aging also takes place in stainless steel with twice-weekly batonnage over seven months.



2022 En Blanco

100% Garnacha Blanca from 20 year-old vines on sandy and rocky soils. The grapes are cold-soaked for 24 hours and then spontaneously fermented on skins in 1000l amphora for 28 days, through primary fermentation. After pressing, the wine is returned to amphora to age over the winter, where it is cold-stabilized naturally.



2021 Sin Filtros

100% Garnacha Blanca from vines around 20 years old, grown on sandy and rocky soils. Cold-soaked in 1000l amphora for 24 hours before fermentation. Spontaneously fermented in amphora, macerated on skins for 28 days. The wine is then gently pressed and aged for five months in amphora and naturally cold-stabilized.



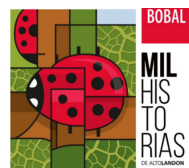
2020 Biodiverso

100% Petit Manseng grown on limestone and sandy soils with stony topsoil. Grapes undergo cold-maceration on skins for 24 hours in 1000l amphora before pressing and spontaneous fermentation. Once fermentation has completed, flor is allowed to develop on the surface of the wine, producing a veil that protects and transforms the wine during the next two years of aging in amphora.



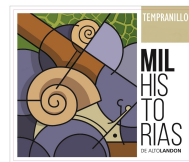
2021 Mil Historias Garnacha

Garnacha from 30 year-old vines planted to clay and limestone soils. Grapes are destemmed and cold soaked for five days before spontaneous fermentation. The grapes are macerated around five weeks in stainless steel with gentle pump-overs. The wine is then lightly pressed and racked to 2nd and 3rd use French oak barrels for four months. Then, the wine is returned to stainless steel tanks to cold stabilize naturally over winter.



2021 Mil Historias Bobal

Bobal from calcareous clay soils, plus some sandy loam and stones. Vines are around 40 years old. Grapes are cold soaked for 24 hours before spontaneous fermentation. The grapes are macerated around five weeks in stainless steel with gentle pump-overs. The wine is then gently pressed and racked to 2nd and 3rd use French oak barrels for four months. Then, the wine is returned to stainless steel tanks to cold stabilize.



2021 Mil Historias Tempranillo

Tempranillo from vines grown on clay, silt, and limestone soils. Grapes are cold soaked for two days before spontaneous fermentation begins. The grapes are macerated for two to three weeks in stainless steel. The wine is then pressed and racked to 2nd and 3rd use French oak barrels for four months. Then, the wine is returned to stainless steel tanks to cold stabilize naturally over winter.



2018 Rosalía

From a plot of 100-year-old ungrafted bush vines of Grenache, grown on sandy, clay, calcareous soils. Grapes are briefly cold-macerated in 1000l amphora. The wine then ferments spontaneously in the same clay amphora, with daily manual punchdowns. After primary fermentation, the grapes are gently pressed, and the wine ages for 8 months in these vessels, and is cold stabilized naturally over winter.