

Acentor Rioja 2018 (red wine)



Isaac Fernandez Seleccion is a unique collaborative venture between two individuals – Isaac Fernandez one of Spain’s most acclaimed winemakers and Aurelio Cabestrero whose vision and commitment helped bring Spanish wines to the forefront in the United States. 2011 was a busy year for the partners as they launched several new wines, a Verdejo from Rueda, a Bobal from Utiel-Requena and this project focused on beautiful old vines of Garnacha grown on the high slopes of Calatayud in what was once the ancient kingdom of Aragon. *Acentor* is named for the small brown birds, similar to starlings which come to eat ripe grapes, always a sign that they are nearly ripe enough to make great wine.

Appellation	Rioja D.O.Ca.
Grapes	85% Tempranillo and 15% Graciano
Altitude / Soil	550 meters / rocky, lime-rich clay
Farming Methods	Sustainable methods, including Integrated Pest Management
Harvest	Hand harvested into small bins
Production	Fermented with native yeasts in stainless steel tanks
Aging	Aged for 8 months in used French oak barrels
UPC / SCC / Pack	8-437012-498655 / 8-437012-498662 / 12

Reviews:

A blend of 85% Tempranillo and 15% Graciano, this is made from the estate’s grapes grown at an elevation of 550 meters (about 1804 feet). Deeply, darkly colored, this Spanish wine evokes cherries and other red fruits, plus subtle hints of floral, spice and vanilla. The blend throbs with ripe fruit which might have been excessive but instead is reined in just in time to be a balanced and tasty red to enjoy with sausages, beef, lamb, and red-sauced pasta dishes.

91 points *Wine Review Online*; Marguerite Thomas – December 8, 2020

“Dark violet. Spice-accented cherry and dark berry aromas are complemented by suggestions of cola and vanilla. Pliant and energetic in the mouth, offering sweet red and blue fruit and spicecake flavors that show good depth and no rough edges. Finishes smooth, broad and long, with gentle tannic grip and lingering smokiness. 2022 – 2027”

90 points *Vinous*; Josh Reynolds – April 2021

“The 2018 Rioja “Acentor” ... was raised in used French oak barrels for eight months prior to bottling. The wine comes in at fourteen percent and offers up a ripe and deep bouquet of black cherries, dark berries, cigar ash, a bit of tariness, spicy oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is deep, full and youthful, with a good core, firm, chewy tannins and a long, woody finish. The oak tannins on the backend here need time to integrate, as right now they are uncovered and rather drying. But, the wine seems to have enough stuffing to absorb them in due course and the wine should turn out to be good once the oak has been integrated, and it would have been good to let this wine settle in for six months longer in the cellar before shipping, as it is not yet ready for drinking. 2021-20240.”

87+ points *View from the Cellar*; October 2019

“This medium-bodied red offers good density, featuring blackberry, cola and spice notes, backed by moderate tannins. Hints of floral and wild herb echo on the finish. Tempranillo and Graciano. Drink now through 2024. 550 cases made, 500 cases imported.” **87 points** *Wine Spectator*; September 2020

“This savory red seems ideal for the weeks on either side of the autumnal equinox. It greets the nose with jammy late-summer aromas of blackberry pie, as well as a sense of a cool afternoon turning to dusk in a forest where the leaves have reached peak color and are almost, but not quite, ready to fall. This wine begs to be paired with meat cooked over fire. It’s young and should age well over the next five years if you’re willing to stock up. ABV: 14 percent.”

2.5 stars (Excellent/Exceptional) *The Washington Post*; September 18, 2020

