

Imperial Reserva 2017

Imperial is one of the great names in Spanish winemaking. It is a true classic in Rioja and was first made in the 1920's. It is only made in the most special vintages.



- **Type of wine:** Red
- **Region of production:** Rioja
- **Year:** 2017
- **CVNE vintage rating:** Excellent
- **Grape varieties:** 85% Tempranillo, 15% Graciano, Mazuelo and Garnacha
- **Type of bottle:** Bordeaux
- **Bottle size:** : 75cl., 1.5l., 37.5 cl.
- **Bottling date:** July 2020
- **Aging and barrel type:** 24 months in American and French oak barrels

Analytical data

- **Alcoholic volume:** 14%
- **Volatile acidity:** 0.66
- **Total acidity:** 5.71
- **SO₂ Free/Total:** 30/80
- **pH:** 3.58
- **Total Polyphenols Index:** 82
- **Suitable for vegans**

The vineyard

Grapes destined for Imperial come from our own vineyards in Villalba, Briones and Torrementalvo. In Villalba, the small plots of Remedio and Encinas are situated at altitudes of between 550 and 650 metres and are very close to the Sierra de Toloño meaning they are under both Atlantic and continental climatic influences. The plots make up 12 hectares within the 42 which CVNE own in this village.

In Torrementalvo, our vineyards San Quilez and Pico de Águila are at an altitude of 450 metres and the climate here is more moderate than the plots in Villalba. These vines make up 30 hectares of the total of 70 owned by CVNE. Nearby in Briones, Imperial is selected from 10 hectares of our own vineyards. All these vines are over 40 years old and although the main variety is Tempranillo, other traditional Riojan varieties such as Garnacha and Graciano can be found interplanted with it. The soils are chalky clay, poor in organic material, low yielding and mainly south facing and the vines are bush trained.

Winemaking

Hand harvesting into 20 kg crates followed meticulous monitoring of the ripening process. On arrival at the winery, the grapes were placed into a cold room for 24 hours, in order to avoid oxidation, stabilize color and preserve the aromas of the fruit. Then a further selection of the grapes was made on a sorting table after which they were transferred by gravity to large oak vats of different capacities, 80, 120 and 160 Hl, depending on the size of each plot for the alcoholic fermentation with indigenous yeasts. The wine was then aged for two years in French and American new oak barrels. Each plot does its ageing individually and in the type of barrel which best suits its organoleptic characteristics. At the end its when we assemblage the final Imperial. The wine ages for a minimum of 12 months in bottle in our centenary cellars until its release to market.

Vintage / Harvest description

The 2017 harvest in the Imperial vineyards began on the 18th September and ended on the 3rd October. The year began with warmer temperatures than usual which brought forward the growing season, including bud burst. The new growth then succumbed heavily to the severe frost at the end of April reducing even further a yield which had already been diminished by drought.

At the end of July, isolated storms helped to restore vegetative balance in the vines, so raising hopes for improved production yields.

Rioja Alta's usual continental climate with cool summer nights contributed to avoiding excessive ripening in the grapes and assisted in producing a high quality vintage. In addition, regular checks in the vineyard were critical in deciding the optimum timing for the harvest and safeguarding the characteristic freshness of wines from the region.

Tasting notes

Deep cherry red in colour with reddish hints. On the nose there is a perfect balance between wild berries such as blackberries, raspberries, currants, blueberries and aromas from the barrels, balsamic, liquorice, pepper, cocoa and light sweet toffee notes. The palate reveals a wine characterised by its elegance, depth of flavour and fine, velvety tannins. The finish is long and complex. Perfect for pairing with Spanish dry cured Spanish, all types of meat and cured cheeses and to be enjoyed on its own. Recommended service temperature 18°C.