

Rioja, 18th March 2016

AB What are your feelings right now about the 2015 vintage?

Agustin Santolaya They're one of satisfaction. I consider it a very good vintage and I'm certain that the 2015 will provide enormous drinking pleasure, despite not being one of the greats.

AB How well has the 2015 developed in barrel since the malo-lactics?

Agustin Santolaya Very well indeed. They're very good wines for ageing, and they're developing beautifully.



AB How much did the hot weather influence the style of the wine?

Agustin Santolaya The really hot months were in May and July with temperature highs of 35° during the latter. August was mild, and during the ripening process it wasn't so hot. The result was that advanced phenological ripeness initiated in the early part of the cycle increased, and the harvest was done two weeks ahead of normal. Curiously, despite the hot July weather the wines have real freshness.

AB How do you explain that?

Agustin Santolaya What really makes wines convey the heat of a vintage is the hot weather after the veraison, during the months of August and September. Hot weather prior to that advances the vine cycle but has a lesser impact on the wine's taste profile.

AB However, alcoholic degrees were somewhat higher than normal weren't they?

Agustin Santolaya A bit higher, which often occurs in early-ripening years, when the vines have had more time to complete their cycle. At Roda we harvested early trying to avoid excessively high alcoholic degrees.

AB What is the average alcoholic degree at Roda?

Agustin Santolaya 14.5, which is in fact our usual average in our old Tempranillo vines.

AB Is there a quality missing in this vintage, which might have made it outstanding?

Agustin Santolaya Difficult to say, because it's a vintage without defects. It just has a different profile, a more mediterranean one, and the wines are very expressive.

AB How would you describe Roda's wines in particular in this vintage?

Agustin Santolaya They have very attractive colour. They're very expressive on the nose with red berry fruit aromas coming through more than black fruit. Fine, firm tannins with a mediterranean yet fresh profile. It's a vintage of very high quality, but as I mentioned before it isn't a legendary year.

AB Have you already chosen which lots will go into Cirсион, Roda I, Roda and Sela?

Agustin Santolaya Sela is always brought in, vinified and aged separately. This is wine produced every year from the same vines of 15 to 30 years old. There will be around 90,000 bottles. The selection for Roda and Roda I is only done after 12 months' ageing in barrels. So for the moment the different plots for these wines are ageing separately. Together, the two brands will produce a total of around 250,000 bottles. Cirсион comes from a selection of individual bunches picked from different vines in the oldest vineyards, and in 2015 I don't think there will be more than 5,000 bottles.

AB How highly do you rate the 2015 vintage in Ribera del Duero and in particular at your Corimbo estate?

Agustin Santolaya In Ribera del Duero, the weather pattern was different. It rained less and crop sizes were small. I think 2015 will produce wines with great depth of flavour. In terms of quality it will be excellent. In both Corimbo and Corimbo I, the tannins are extremely fine and promise great things. The wines are developing beautifully in barrel.

AB In a couple of words, how would you sum up the wines of the 2015 vintage in your two wineries?

Agustin Santolaya A vintage that will bring wonderful drinking pleasure.