

RAFAEL PALACIOS

Louro



ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Valdeorras

SOIL

Sandy granite

AGE OF VINES

20-40

ELEVATION

650-740 meters

VARIETIES

Godello, Treixadura

FARMING

Conversion to certified organic

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, pneumatic pressing, natural yeast fermentation in foudre

AGING

4 months in French oak foudre

As quaffable and enjoyable as Godello can be from Valdeorras, it rarely reaches the level of richness, balance and complexity as it does in the hands of Rafael Palacios. Having left his family's estate in Rioja in 2004, Rafa settled in the Val do Bibei, a rugged, weathered and off the beaten path sub-zone of Valdeorras. Bordering Ribera Sacra, the Val do Bibei is a tortured landscape of granitic, terraced slopes dotted with hard to reach and hard to farm vineyard plots. Whereas most of the rest of the DO is at lower elevation with limestone and schist soils, Rafa works exclusively with Godello planted on granitic soils at much higher elevations – so high that late Spring snow and frost are ever present dangers to his already low yields. Locally these plots are known as sorte, a word in the local dialect that refers to the practice of drawing lots to determine inheritance. Rafa has assembled 24.5 hectares of vines divided among 32 sorte. Some plots he owns outright, others are on long-term lease. The oldest vines, some nearing a century, are head pruned while the younger vines on more gentle slopes are trellised. The farming is minimalist since the sub-zone is blessed with free draining soils and warm, dry summers. All the vineyard work done by hand, including harvesting.

Louro is a blend of Godello with a small amount of Treixadura from parcels located in the villages of Chandoiro, Lentellais, Outardepregos and Santa Cruz. After decades of conventional farming, the organic practices of Rafa have begun to revitalize the soils of these sites and Louro is becoming more complex with each vintage. Louro is fermented in French oak foudres and aged on its lees for four months. Up to 10% of the blend in Louro will be Treixadura, a variety that can be found co-planted in Rafa's sortes.

ACCOLADES

93 – 2019 Louro – Wine Advocate

92 – 2017 Louro – Wine Advocate

92 – 2016 Louro – Wine Advocate

