



PLUMPJACK
WINES

PlumpJack Wine Club

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Utilizing the wisdom of tradition and all that modern technology has to offer, wine producers go to great lengths to take what nature gives, transforming it into the best wine possible. With state-of-the-art equipment such as temperature-controlled stainless-steel fermentation tanks, and pneumatic presses, and techniques like gravity-flow movement, little or no pumping, and no filtration, many producers adopt a minimalist approach to winemaking that brings out the optimum concentration and quality of the grapes used. This also helps preserve and honor the wine's distinct vineyard expression. Our two wines this month give us an opportunity to taste the success of this approach. They both reflect their unique terroir, and have mouth-watering flavors and intensity. Although geographically these wines come from different countries, the producers at both estates share the same philosophy toward quality, and take great care and pride in making their wines. These are perfect wines to accompany your summertime meals. From an organoleptic point of view, fresh seafood and grilled meats and vegetables will taste even better when followed by a sip (or two) of these wines.



Located about an hour north of Madrid, the province of Castilla y León contains five Denomination of Origin (D.O.) regions: Ribera del Duero, Toro, Bierzo, Cigales and Rueda. The Rueda D.O. was approved by the Ministry of Agriculture on January 12, 1980, and was the first Denomination of Origin to be approved in Castilla y León. Rueda has an extreme continental climate. It is very dry with a low average rainfall of 300-500 mm/year and long, cold winters with frequent frost and short, hot summers with a dramatic temperature difference between day and night. These large day/night temperature differences, accentuated by the region's elevation of 700 meters, are vital factors in producing grapes with proper phenolic ripeness levels and the development of grape skins with aromatic depth and flavor complexity. The vineyard soils are alluvial sediments of the ancient Duero riverbed. The Dos Victorias Company was created by Victoria Pariente and Victoria Benavides. Victoria Pariente grew up in a wine family (José Pariente) and got her degree in chemistry and oenology from the University of Madrid. Victoria Benavides studied viticulture at the University of Bordeaux in France. The two women met in 1988 when they both joined the oenology laboratory of the local government of Castilla y León, Spain's largest autonomous region northwest of Madrid. They worked together for 10 years in the government office that oversaw regional wine production, and their experiments in the lab led them to the idea to start their own winery, focusing on native grape varieties, traditional techniques, as well as modern science. In 1998, they left their jobs to produce their first vintage - a Verdejo grown in Pariente's family's vineyards in the Rueda region. Their initial attempts to buy land in the Toro region and produce red wine were hampered, for it was difficult for two unproven women in a male-dominated

*2007 Dos Victorias
José Pariente Verdejo
Rueda D.O.
La Seca, Spain*



*2005 Tenuta Badia di Morrona
"Taneto"
Toscana I.G.T.
Terricciola, Italy*

industry to obtain financial backing. Eventually they were taken under the wing of Elias Mora, who sold them some land and let them use his facilities. Their 1998 José Pariente Verdejo won the “Best White Wine in Spain Award” and henceforth, they gained fame and the financial backing to continue with their vision and built their own winery in 2000. They produce two whites: an oaked and unoaked Verdejo, named José Pariente after Victoria's father and three levels of Tempranillo named Elias Mora, after the man who helped them get started with red wines. The grapes for the 2007 José Pariente Verdejo come from a 40-year-old, 15-acre estate vineyard and from purchased grapes grown nearby. José Pariente uses inert gas (nitrogen) in all the must handling, from the moment the grapes are pressed until the wine is safely in the bottle, to minimize oxidation. The grapes were gently crushed in pneumatic presses, followed by a cool maceration for 48 hours. The juice was then fermented under temperature-controlled conditions (55°–60°F), and took almost 31 days for fermentation to finish. The wine was in contact with its lees for 20 days, and cold-stabilization and light filtration occurred before bottling. The 2007 José Pariente Verdejo is very crisp and fresh. It is a fantastic example of Verdejo offering flavors of tart apples and grapefruit, with subtle notes of dried herbs and straw. The wine is wonderful as an aperitif, and pairs beautifully with most seafood dishes especially one like scallop, fennel, and grapefruit ceviche.

The 2007 Dos Victorias José Pariente Verdejo is \$19.99/bottle, \$215.90/case.



Tuscany is a much larger region than many people realize, and it encompasses many different wine regions and microclimates. It ranks 5th among Italy's wine regions in size and 9th in population. Vineyards cover 212,510 acres (4th) of which registered DOC plots total 75,367 acres (3rd). Annual wine production of 3,600,000 hectolitres (8th) includes 33% DOC or DOCG (tied for 2nd with Piedmont), of which more than 85% is red. Badia di Morrona is located in Colline Pisane between Pisa and Florence, in the heart of lands once walked by the Etruscans, and a short distance from the village of Terricciola. It is one of the four badie (monasteries) founded by the count of Fucecchio, and dates back to the 11th century when it was run by Benedictine monks. After the unification of Italy, the abbey was sold and is presently owned by the noble family Gaslini Alberti. Today, the estate covers 1,236 acres with 222 acres of vineyards, 74 acres planted to olive groves, and the remaining to various crops. Though the estate is relatively large, all grapes are harvested by hand. Badia di Morrona represents the perfect marriage between tradition and modern technology in the production of its wines and olive oil. The current owners recently completed building a new winery based on the use of gravity. The crusher/destemmer for processing grapes is on the roof of the winery and grapes are loaded into the machine and then emptied into holes in the roof that are set directly over the fermentation vats. The vats, in turn, are set over the aging and barrel room, which is located in the basement. The gravity flow winery, which reduces the use of pumps, allows the winemaking process to treat the wine as gently as possible. Badia di Morrona's “Taneto” is a super-value Super Tuscan. Super Tuscan was a term coined to refer specifically to wines that “fell out” of the official DOCG classification of Italian wines because they either contained grapes not permitted (international varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot,) were aged differently (i.e. in barrique) or were 100% Sangiovese. Though classified simply as Vino di Tavola, these wines quickly found favor in international markets and commanded prices above the highest quality DOCG Chianti Classico and Brunello di Montalcino wines at the time. Subsequently, the Italian authorities, under the Goria Law 1992, amended the classifications, and created a new category, IGT (Indicazione Geografica Tipica), which now includes Super Tuscans. “Taneto” is a blend of 50% Sangiovese, 30% Merlot and 20% Syrah. The grapes were fermented in stainless-steel vats, and then aged 12 months in French barriques, followed by another 5 months in bottle. Total production was 2,000 cases. The 2005 “Taneto” has an intense ruby red color and a delicate yet pronounced bouquet of red fruits, with hints of cherry and currants, followed by spicy hints of cinnamon, cacao and black pepper. Full-bodied and dense, the texture is velvety and elegant. This wine goes well with red meats such as “Fiorentina steak” or other grilled meats, and compliments strong-flavored and medium-aged cheeses.

The 2005 Badia di Morrona Taneto is \$20.99/bottle, \$226.70/case.