

# Barahonda Monastrell



The Candela family know their way around the Yecla DO and its native grapes, having founded Señorío de Barahonda in 1925 and handing down their artisan spirit through four generations. They live with the conviction that good wine is made in the vineyard, and their estate is farmed accordingly. Their 340 hectares (840 acres) are planted on sandy limestone soils and farmed organically, using no additional irrigation despite the extremely dry climate.

This wine combines the powerful Monastrell grape with the spicy, soft tannins of Syrah. The Candela family established the bodega in 1925. Winemakers Agustín Carrión and Araceli González Martínez are key figures who have shown the potential of Monastrell in Yecla. Monastrell is better known as Mourvèdre in France's Chateaufort-du-Pape appellation, where the terroir and climate are similar to Yecla. Both regions have a Mediterranean climate with warm days and nights. Located in the warmer southeast part of Spain, Yecla is one of the country's oldest wine regions, with a rich history that dates back to the 6th Century. In recent years, the astounding rediscovery of Yecla by American journalists and consumers has prompted international acclaim for wines based on Monastrell. Native to Spain, Monastrell was brought to France around the 5-6th Century.

**WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?:** This wine is made from estate-owned grapes. It is 100% un-oaked and one of the few 100% Monastrell wines from Yecla. Normally, winemakers in Yecla blend Monastrell with other grapes. The vines are situated in high-altitude vineyards, at 713 meters (2,339 ft.) elevation, which results in pretty, almost floral wines that contrast with other Monastrell wines, which can show more animal and barnyard characters.

**RATING HISTORY:** 2015 90VM; 2011 91WA

**GRAPE:** 100% Monastrell. Vines planted from 1970 - 1980. Tended in 70% clay, and 30% chalk soil at 713m (2,339 ft) elevation in the Campo Abajo subregion.

**PAIRING SUGGESTIONS:** This wine's pretty, spice-inflected fruit will pair wonderfully with sweet or savory veal or pork sausage, Cuban "Ropa Vieja" and beef or pork empanadas. There's also enough spine and substance to stand up to Mexican turkey or chicken mole poblano.

**VINIFICATION AND AGING:** The best bunches are harvested by hand in the cool, early morning hours, then the best grapes are selected and gently crushed. The whole clusters are macerated at cool temperatures (59F). The skins and stems are macerated before and after fermentation, for a total of 15 days. Malolactic fermentation takes place in stainless steel tanks. The wine is aged in stainless steel tanks for 5 months before bottling.

**LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE:** The vineyards are within the Yecla DO (Zone 8), within Murcia in southeastern Spain. The vineyards are in the Campo Abajo district of Yecla, at 713 meters (2,339 ft.) elevation. Monastrell is the most planted grape in this area and is the second most planted red grape in Spain. Yecla's higher altitude results in cooler temperatures than neighboring regions, which makes wines that are brighter and more aromatic. The soils are composed of limestone and chalk with clay and gravel subsoils that are low in organic matter. The soils are deep and have good drainage. The clay subsoil retains water, which is essential for the health of the vine in this arid climate. This results in greater overall concentration and complexity in the wine. The average temperature from May-October is 66F, with only 13 inches of rain per year. The climate is Mediterranean with a light Continental influence, due to its higher altitude.

**TASTING NOTES** Deep ruby. Spice- and mineral-accented blackberry and cherry scents are complicated by hints of cola and candied flowers. Sweet and seamless on the palate, offering concentrated dark fruit and spice cake flavors along with suggestions of lavender pastille and licorice. Closes with persistent, resonating spiciness and solid punch; youthfully chewy tannins add shape and grip. — Josh Reynolds

**ALCOHOL CONTENT:** 14.5%

**UPC CODE:** 810411010730

