

BERNABELEVA

‘One of Spain’s most dynamic producers.’ -Vinous

‘Winemaker Marc Isart produces a range of complex, highly perfumed wines that smoothly play power off finesse, in a style that’s reminiscent of the best producers of France’s southern Rhône valley.’ -Vinous

Year Founded: 1923

Region: Madrid, Spain

Owner: Juan Bulnes

Winemaker: Marc Isart

Known For: Bernabeleva was a pioneer in putting Gredos on the radar of many now famous names in Spain and in the zone – names like Raul Perez, Dani Landi and more.

Fun Fact: Juan Bulnes, the owner of Bernabeleva, has been committed to saving and recovering the old bush pruned vines in the San Martin de Valdeinglesias zone since 2006.

-Biodynamic, Organic-

While the modern-day story of Bernabeleva begins in 2006 with Juan Bulnes hiring Raul Perez to make the winery from his family’s old vine holdings, the actual true origins of the family domaine began with a truly inspired family member named Vicente Alvarez-Villamil in 1923. Vicente was a successful doctor in Madrid and in 1923 purchased land outside the village of San Martin de Valdeinglesias to build his estate. Here he planted



Garnacha (Grenache) because he believed that in this area the varietal could produce wines of profound elegance and character. The area was an ancient Celtic hunting ground with the countryside dotted with stone carvings that were believed to be bears. Because of this he named the estate Bernabeleva or “bears forest”. With the Spanish civil war erupting in 1936, his plans for the estate did not materialize. Successive generations of the family held onto the land and maintained the vines selling the fruit to the local co-op. As mentioned above, in 2006, Juan Diez Bulnes and Santiago Matallana Bulnes (the great grandchildren of Vicente), inherited the vineyards they decided to finally create the estate of Bernabeleva. By that time in 2006, the vineyards were now 80 years old and capable of showing great ripeness and depth but more importantly, lift and freshness, that the high altitude and granite soils reflect. To protect this unique personality of the wine from “commercial winemaking” and trends of the time, they hired Raul Perez who was proving his prowess as a winemaker championing cool climate wines.

Right away Raul hired Marc Isart to be the winemaker who had been working with the great Jose Luis Mateo as assistant winemaker in Monterrei in Galicia. Marc worked and continues to work tirelessly in the vineyards practicing viticultural methods that incorporate organics and biodynamics with astute attention to how nature works in this area. In the winery, he also focuses on low intervention methods and natural winemaking practices, preferring long fermentations and aging in large, mostly older wood so as not to destroy the amazing aromatics of these wines. The Navaherreros Tinto and Blanco are each made from selected estate vineyards with a vine age of around 40 to 60 years. The crown jewels at the property are two single-vineyard Garnachas, “La Bonita” and “Arroyo del Tortolas”, which are made from two of the most singular, high elevation (800+ meter), old vine vineyards on this historic property. These wines could easily hold their own with any of the top wines now made in the Vinos de Madrid sub-zone. The Bernabeleva wines are a far cry from what you would expect from Grenache grown in a Mediterranean climate, such as Chateauneuf-du-Pape or Cotes-du-Rhone. The high elevation, large diurnal shift and mineral, granite and schist soils all lead to wines that showcase more of the “Pinot Noir” side of Garnacha. Elegant, perfumed and red-fruited, these wines are balanced and fresh.



2023 Camino de Navaherreros Blanco

An assemblage of Albillo, Malvar, Macabeo, Moscatel. All fruit is pressed into a combinations of vessels - used oak barrels, large oak vats and stainless steel. All fermentations are with native wild yeasts. The wines age in their fermentation vessels and depending on taste some go through malo and others do not. Filled with honey, wild flowers, stone fruit and citrus. This has great mouthfeel with a touch of weight on the palate and more than enough freshness to be thirst quenching. Superb value.

90 Points - Robert Parker



2023 Camino de Navaherreros Tinto

100% Grenache. All the fruit comes from the San Martin de Valdeiglesias area which is high altitude vineyards. Granitic Sand. 25 day maceration with some whole cluster. Fermentation takes place in a combination of stainless steel, concrete and large wood vats. No fining and no filtering. Aged in large upright old wooden vats or stainless steel.

91+ Points – Robert Parker – *“A fruit-driven nose with aromas of berries, flowers and herbs. It has a medium-bodied palate with fine tannins and is balanced, easy to drink and very pleasant.”*