



## Bodegas del Palacio Albariño de Fefiñanes III Año

This is the oldest original Albariño producer. Their small, modern winery was custom sized to fit into the ancient granite cloisters of their grand old Renaissance palace. Built in the first few years of the 17th Century, the building dominates the central square of Cambados - capital of the Salnés Valley - and is still in the hands of the original family.

Since 2002 this pioneering producer has elected to produce something rather different from the norm. Just 7,500 bottles of the 'III Año' are produced from the well-selected fruit of 40-year-old vines grown on granite-based, sandy soils with some lime and clay not far from the river Ria. The key to the success of this wine is the ageing; the wine is fermented in temperature-controlled stainless-steel vats and is aged in contact with the fine lees for 27 months, during which time batonage is regularly practiced. The wine picks up complex nuances from the lees (the fine deposit that forms post fermentation) and by agitating this fine deposit which forms in the vat the winemaker can influence the texture of the wine. The impact of batonage is certainly in evidence here and, as Luis Guitterez of Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate comments; 'their wines are good when released, but I like them even better on their second, third and even fourth year' as these Albariño do offer the prospect of onward cellaring for four to five years.

Simply put, this is a highly distinctive and unusual Albariño. Not some simple quaffable crisp, clean white, but something more complex.

**Production Area:** DO Rías Baixas

**Grape Variety:** Albariño

**Vinification and Ageing:** In the winery, the fruit is usually cold-macerated, for as long as 48 hours prior to fermentation. Partial malolactic fermentation is often used to soften acids, and this wine is given extended time on the lees with 'batonage' (stirring the dead yeast cells and other particles back into the fermenting wine).

**Tasting Notes:** Deeper in hue than expected and revealing stunning aromatics of ripe apricot, yellow plum, and a honeyed quality, this is an instantly distinctive Albariño. There is an uncommon depth to the palate for this variety with a beautiful, layered fruit that suggests a similar array of fruit as the nose, yet with a hint of some aromatic herb. This is a complex wine of good intensity with a marked, juicy nectarine vibrancy. There is a slight viscous quality to the remarkably pure fruit, all of which is underscored by the tell-tale racy acidity of the variety. Clean-cut, mouthwatering with a richer note to the fruit which plays long into the finish.

**Pairing Notes:** Albariño wines pair beautifully with fish and seafood.

**Awards:** Decanter 93Pts, Wine Enthusiast. 94Pts, I-WineReview 95Pts, Vinous 94Pts, & Numerous others.

