

La Miranda de Secastilla, Old Vine Garnacha Gems

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The 2013 La Miranda de Secastilla Garnacha Blanca is beautiful in the glass, bright yellow infused with a green iridescence, intensely aromatic and flavorful, textured and elegant.

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Garnacha, abundantly grown in Spain, likes to linger. Linger in the vineyard, as it is late ripening, and linger on your palate, since it makes a big bodied wine, full of fruit and spice, low in tannin and color, yet flush with alcohol. It can be a party animal, better in a blend than alone, unless you corral its exuberance, and limit its numbers. And so, the thin-skinned grape that sprang from Spain's rocky terrain can make easy drinking wines but in limited production, can produce intense, age-worthy wines of character. **Viñas del Vero** bottles two fine examples of the in-between, a **La Miranda de Secastilla Garnacha Blanca and Tinta**, delicious, well balanced, and value priced wines, perfect for parties or to share with friends.

Stony soils, lots of sun, and little water creates more intense wines, from vines that struggle and concentrate their survival into each grape. The **Secastilla Valley**, tucked into the foothills of the Pyrenees, provides a perfect microclimate for **Garnacha**, which likes it hot and dry. The climate helps keep Garnacha in check, as it can get very fruity and highly alcoholic if not restrained in its

growth. Here, in northeastern Spain, in the higher altitude region of **Somontano**, Viñas del Vero discovered an ancient Garnacha vineyard, nestled among olive and almond trees. Over 100 years old, the gnarled vines had been neglected but soon responded to viticultural TLC. Clinging to stony slopes, like Syrah in France's Rhône Valley, the grapes must be hand-harvested, and then are gently processed in a gravity flow winery. Coaxing bright and intense fruit from the grapes, the delicate handling preserves the soft nature of Garnacha and avoids its tendency to oxidize. The old vines add savory and slightly spicy notes to the wine.

The Blanca is immediately pressed upon harvest, and fermented at low temperatures to preserve its aromatic character, then aged for 4 months in French oak barrels.

The Tinta, made from Garnacha, Syrah, and Parraleta (also known as Graciano), is macerated individually with the skins, and then fermented for 10 days at low temps. After malolactic fermentation, the wine is blended and aged for over 8 months in French oak. The team at Viñas del Vero knows how to handle Garnacha, bringing out its textural best side, while balancing its fruit and alcohol, making a pleasant, food friendly wine.

The **2013 Viñas del Vero La Miranda Secastilla Garnacha Blanca** is 100% Garnacha Blanca, is fragrant with white fruit, citrus, and apple, flavorful and waxy textured, accented with notes of mineral and nuts. This is a distinctive white wine, crisp yet slightly creamy, and lightly framed with oak. This is a wine for the ABC crowd, Anything But Chardonnay, as it packs the wow factor. Intensely aromatic, it is equally matched by its unique flavors in the mouth. Delicious on its own, the Garnacha Blanca pairs well with salads, fish, rice dishes, and goat cheese.

The **2013 Viñas del Vero La Miranda Secastilla Garnacha Tinta** is mostly Garnacha, blended with Syrah and Parraleta. Aromas of dark fruit, prunes, violets, toasty oak, and licorice swirl into a well balanced wine, velvety and medium bodied, and lightly lingers on the finish. This wine pairs well with roasted meats, rich fish dishes, cheese, and desserts.

The castle pictured on the label is a nod to the origin of the Secastilla name, since the ruins of seven ancient castles overlook the valley. Tradition here holds that the woman of the house is given ownership of the property, so this "Pago La Miranda", or Estate of Miranda, is noted on the bottles. This renowned property belongs to the prestigious "Association of the Great Estates of Spain", which recognizes its distinctive terroir.

The 2013 harvest was the latest ever for Viñas del Vero, Garnacha was not picked until the end of October, ripening slowly over a long hang time. These wines reflect that extra time. Incredibly, both wines retail for \$15, quite a bargain for old vine Garnacha. Discover the La Miranda de Secastilla Garnacha wine gems, party perfect and a good gift idea, from Viñas del Vero, the leading winery in the Somontano DO, what a deal!



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