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The Region of Murcia— *your next great wine adventure*



Wherever you travel in the wine world these days, it's plain to see how much effort is now put into attracting and welcoming tourists, alongside the more traditional aspects of winemaking. For some regions though, the sheer beauty of the culture, landscape and climate do most of the selling all on their own. With three specially curated wine routes, 35,000 hectares of vineyards and an astonishing 300 days of sunshine every year, Murcia is definitely one of those regions, and should be on the bucket list of every wine lover.

The Region of Murcia boasts three denominations of origin—Bullas, Jumilla and Yecla—whose wine carries an ever-increasing prestige among the international wine-drinking public, with a wide range of red, rosé and white wines for all tastes and palates. The experience of a Murcian wine pilgrimage is more than this though; it is an escape from the grinding routine of everyday life, to wander between vineyards and wine cellars, restaurants and unique accommodation nestled in the same landscape

as the vines themselves.

Besides being famous for its wines, Jumilla holds many other riches that are well worth discovering. The city lies at a crossroads for travellers and cultures which have left a rich heritage. Here one can find historical and artistic remains of all the civilisations of the Mediterranean. It comes as no surprise that it is a prosperous land, full of contrasts which the Arabs called the "Power of Wine".

Only in the old town centre of Bullas will you find conserved over 200 traditional wineries, the majority built between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition to its well-known natural, architectural, historical and artisanal attractions, the municipality's wine culture has shaped the environment, heritage and the welcoming nature and manner of its people.

With over 7,000 hectares of vineyards, the town of Yecla sits on the Murcian Plateau, and

is home of the prized grape variety of Monastrell (or Mourvèdre), one of its most coveted treasures. A winemaking tradition defined by the rigorous and creative nature of the people of Yecla has given birth to wines worthy of occupying their rightful place today in the most demanding and avant garde markets of the world.

The Yecla Wine Route has over 30 establishments between wineries, as well as accommodation, restaurants, shops, leisure activities and wine bars. Plan your trip carefully, to take advantage of the many gastronomic festivals, tastings, oenology courses and related wine cultural events that make Yecla such a hotspot for Enotourism.

To learn more about The Region of Murcia, and to plan your own visit to one of the world's most rewarding wine destinations, visit: www.murciaturistica.es/en/wine_tourism



AND THUS, WAS SUNSHINE WAS TURNED INTO WINE



For years we've wondered what it was that makes our land, and what it grows, so special. After travelling to the most distant corners of the earth, we have finally found our answer. We discovered it through the eyes of others, of those outside our borders, who delight in our unique climate and the scented air of our open landscapes, and who long to return to this land of warm dry summers, where they can sit under a moonlit sky sipping a glass of Jumilla wine. The glorious sunshine and beguiling air of Jumilla are encapsulated in our wines and reflected in these people's happy smiles and expressions of sincere pleasure as they appreciatively share that special moment of uncorking a bottle of Jumilla.

vinosdejumilla.org



JUMILLA
DENOMINACIÓN DE ORIGEN
PROTEGIDA

Minds behind the words



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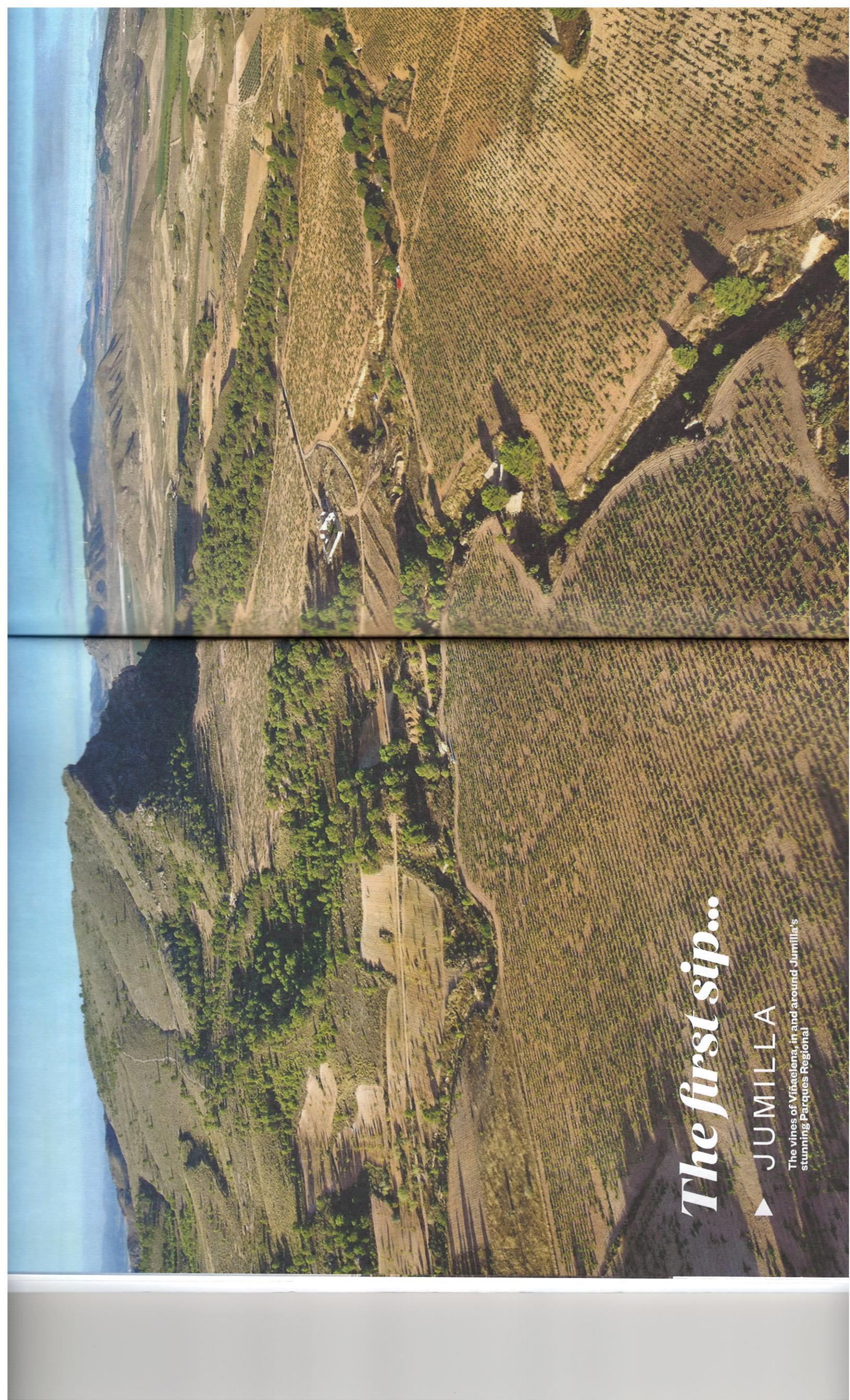


Vinka Woldarsky
She/Her
One of our favourite writers just now, Vinka is right about pretty much everything. Yes it's fucking political.
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Laura Hadland
She/Her
Veteran food and drink writer; find her by-line wherever there are words. Precisely the right kind of nerd.
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plus:
Dan Kirby
He/Him
'All-round wine person, Flint Vineyard regular, currently crowd-funding his Master of Wine journey, so chip in
@dnkrbywine



The first sip...

▶ JUMILLA

The vines of Viñaelena, in and around Jumilla's
stunning Parques Region

Jumilla

Jumilla—practice with us, hoo-me-yah—is home to Spain’s best Monastrell wines. The sun and the long, dry summers create perfect conditions for some of the world’s favourite grape varieties too. Basically, it’s a playground for winemakers who want to experiment with well-known grapes under the juice-intensifying glare of the Spanish sunshine.

Easily reached by rental car from Benidorm and Alicante, Jumilla town is home to one of the most joyous and historic wine harvest festivals in the country, as well as being the centrepiece of the Jumilla D.O.. Visit traditional bodegas and modern vineyards, and see how each winemaker works with and against the fierce summer sun to produce juicy, full-bodied wines with the unexpected freshness this region is so famous for.

Speaking of the harvest, in this issue join Vinka Woldarsky around the vendange team’s table for a group meal, and learn with Laura Hadland what our changing climate means for harvests all over the world right now. For something a little closer to home during this cosiest of months, curl up with a bowl of cereal—or perhaps a creamy risotto—with Rachel Hendry.

Whatever you do as the year sinks into crisp, sparkling Autumn, enjoy this month’s sunny issue of Glug and the delicious Jumilla wines that accompany it. Perhaps even use Jeanette Hurt’s recipe for a spiced red wine cocktail to hang on to some of that heat and warm those cockles. Now there’s a plan.





Jumilla



In the hot, hot lands of Jumilla in southeastern Spain, the land is baked and the soil is dry. In this sun-dazzled landscape, instead of shrivelled and sunburned, the grapes are juicy and rich, full of flavour and texture, and packed with aromatic depth.

It's partly down to the pockets of cool, filtered water beneath the surface of the soil held by ancient limestone layers. Far from parched, the vines are getting what they need from the environment around them. It's also down to high-altitude Jumilla's chilly nights, which drop a good 20-30 degrees centigrade once the sun goes down. The grapes have plenty of time to recover, without being subjected to damaging mists or rain. Hot in the day, cool at night, and dry. It's reliable, and that's what these grapes like.

One of the most unique aspects of Jumilla winemaking is that aside from one huge local hero, indigenous grape varieties here are pretty much

non-existent. Here, grapes from all over the world were planted to take on interesting, delicious characteristics thanks to the climate and terroir, and you're as likely to find Garnacha, Syrah, Tempranillo, Macabeo, Malvasia and Airén as you are its one proudly indigenous variety—the main grape of Jumilla, the one that loves this place of extremes, is Monastrell.

Monastrell is a big deal in Jumilla. It makes up more than 70% of the regional grape varieties grown here, thanks to its hardiness, its resistance to Phylloxera, and the unique intensity, complexity and depth it can develop in this special area. The Jumilla D.O. was created with it in mind, to maintain a high standard of quality for the wines it produces within the region. If you're into Parker Points, a Monastrell wine from the Jumilla D.O. was once awarded a solid 99.

Known as Mourvedre in France and the US, Monastrell has popularity in some of the world's

most prestigious winemaking regions in the world thanks to the flavours and aromas it can produce, but in Jumilla, the vines step it up a level. Sure, in the Rhone you can enjoy a wine blended with Mourvedre with tannic structure and deep, plummy fruits, but in Jumilla, the unique growing conditions give it something extra. Here, they like it as a single variety—prize it, even—and use this thick-skinned, resilient grape to produce wine that's big, bold and complex.

In the Rhone, Mourvedre is used as a small part of a wider plan, to add tannin to big blends like Chateuneuf du Pape. In Jumilla, Monastrell is grown because it is loved. In Jumilla, the hot days suit the grapes down to the ground, encouraging them to ripen on time—Monastrell is infamously late-ripening elsewhere. It's also a thick-skinned variety, making it tough enough to avoid ill-effects from the fierce rays of the sun, and almost impervious to pests like moths and fruit flies. It's

also got the moxy to be immune to mildew (not that that's particularly problematic in this region), and those frosty winter nights? Not a problem for this guy.

The result is a grape that, in the right hands, can craft a complex, nuanced wine with bags of power and intensity—yet still manages to maintain freshness and balance. In big red wines of 14% ABV and above, you'd be forgiven for starting to wonder about their flabbiness, or reliance on alcohol for mouthfeel and spice. Not with Monastrell. It's a grape that has a decent level of acidity to counteract the fruity flavours and sugar content within that thick skin, enabling it to be uncommonly easy-drinking for such a bold wine, and combined with its tannin content, the best bottles are a great option for ageing. Oh, and it makes a great rosé too.

When aged in wooden barrels, the deep fruits of a Monastrell red wine can develop into coffee



and dark chocolate, and the tannins melt into a silky texture underlying the velvety stewed fruit and spice within. Similar to the Rioja region, in Jumilla you can find Monastrell of different ages by checking for the labels 'joven', 'crianza' and 'reserva,' with joven being the youngest, crianza being aged for 24 months or more, and reserva for a minimum of three years, one of which must have been in wood.

Before you start thinking this is a one-grape town, there are other varieties in Jumilla besides Monastrell, and they can be just as captivating. Macabeo is a white grape found most prominently in the Rioja region of Spain and anywhere within the country where Cava is made—it being one of the three varieties used to make the sparkling wine. In Jumilla, where, as we've already established, the weather is hot and the sun always shines, Macabeo flourishes (with a little help from experienced vignerons) into plush wines with flavours of tropical fruit and sweet, ripe oranges.

That big juicy sun also lends a hand to Garnacha, a grape variety whose homeland is Aragon in northeastern Spain, but which grows well all over Spain and in the warmest regions of France and the New World. Late to bud and ripen like Monastrell, Garnacha (or Grenache, its other name) makes a velvety-textured, red fruit-flavoured wine that can err on the side of flabby if it's not able to retain the acidity it needs.

As a result, it's often blended with grapes that have higher acidity and tannin levels to create the balance and structure it needs, especially when grown in high temperatures like those in Jumilla. Airén isn't indigenous to Jumilla, but it's grown here all the same. Again, unlike plantings elsewhere in the world, the unique climate of Jumilla brings out rounder, stickier flavours, and aromas you might not expect—banana, apples, even papaya. The same goes with Malvasia, a grape that can make wines often described as having an unusual, bitter edge. The terroir here brings out elegant aromas of woody herbs that can get lost in the high citrus of a cooler climate Malvasia.

Other popular varieties grown in Jumilla are Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, which are absolutely suited to the climate and soil. Here, Syrah makes a lot of sense as a blending grape for Monastrell, and the two get along famously in big, bold wines packed with black fruits and a bramble pie-like decadence. Cabernet Sauvignon too is a big fan of a Monastrell meeting, and those thick tannins and bold, ripe fruit flavours do enjoy the fresh acidity of the Monastrell grape. Winemakers have been enjoying these popular global varieties for decades in Jumilla, making the most of the hot weather, long growing season and the bright sunshine to create high quality wines to rival Californian and Australian Shiraz. 🍷

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Bodegas Luzón

17 Jumilla DOP

Cerretera,
RM-714, Km 31, 30520
Jumilla,
Murcia, Spain

Despite being Murcian to its core, the name and inspiration for Bodegas Luzón comes from 7000 miles east, and over 100 years in the past. The winery's story begins in 1916, when a Spanish doctor working as naval officer was assigned to the island of Luzon in the War of Independence of The Philippines. When he returned to his homeland, he decided to undertake an adventure that continues today. With a few oak barrels and a small plot of land, he took his first steps into the wine world, naming his first Monastrell vineyard Finca Luzón, in honour of his stay on the island.

In the century than followed, Bodegas Luzon saw much expansion and modernisation, including a major upgrade of the winery in 2005, when it invested significantly in the latest winemaking technology and new facilities. Today, Bodegas Luzón is a modern and innovate winery, preserving the best of its past to produce wines of great personality and character.

Bodegas Luzón cultivates about 500 hectares of vineyards, monitored throughout the entire growth cycle by a team of technicians, who participate in the decision-making processes at every step. Each plot, which range in size from seven to 15 hectares, is carefully assessed to determine the optimum grape varieties. The microclimate and the low yields allow for the production of each grape variety in separate parcels. Its vineyards are planted with 50% Monastrel, with the remaining 50% split

between Garnacha Tintorera, Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo, Syrah, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Macabeo, Airen, and Sauvignon Blanc.

The grapes are hand harvested and transported in relatively small crates, reaching the winery almost intact. Once sorted, the clusters are fed into the de-stemmer and moved to the fermentation tanks. Each grape variety is fermented separately, to maintain its own unique and distinctive properties. Traceability and temperature control are paramount at this stage in the process. Upon arrival, the grapes are stored in a refrigerated room and remain refrigerated throughout the elaboration process.

Luzón's aging rooms are underground, which provides largely constant temperatures and humidity year-round. It currently owns 3,500 barrels and has an aging capacity of more than 5,000 American and French oak barrels. Once bottled, wine is aged in the absence of air, in a reductive environment, which results in its roundness, harmonises its aromas and optimises its organoleptic characteristics.

Bodegas Luzón has also pioneered organic winemaking in Jumilla. There is no room for chemical products, synthetic pesticides or weed killers in its daily work, which instead relies on environmentally friendly products that do not harm human health and—just as importantly—are beneficial for preserving the distinctive natural flavour of the grapes. 🍷

Selected for you

Las Hermanas Blanco

ABV 11%
Savour between 7-10°C
Grapes o Macabeo & Sauvignon Blanc

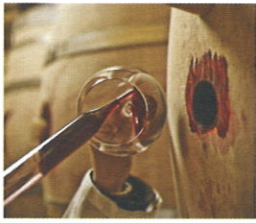
Tasting notes
An aromatic white, with nutty, savoury notes complemented by ripe citrus. The palate is a bit of a surprise, textured but with fresh and zesty citrus fruit acidity, mineral notes and a clean, crisp finish. Perfect with creamy chicken and tarragon or a simple grilled fish.



Bodegas Viña Elena, S.L.

2 / Jumilla DOP

Paraje Estrecho de Marín,
N-344, Km 52.6, 30520
Jumilla, Murcia,
Murcia, Spain



Nestled among the beautiful Parques Regional just south-east of Jumilla town, Viñaelana has been owned and run by the passionate Pacheco family since 1948. The original bodega was built by Grandpa Francisco Pacheco, who began by making wine in a modest, home-based wine press that was later inherited by his son Paco Pacheco.

Some 30 years later, in 1978, Paco built a second bodega, with large subterranean vats; this building is now used to bottle its finished products. The magnificent current bodega, which incorporates winemaking, office space and a retail counter, was built by Paco's daughter Elena in 2005.

Elena and Emi, the two sisters now at the helm of the family bodega, represent its third generation, while a fourth generation—Fernando, María and Elena—are already on board, running exports, wine tourism and purchasing, respectively. Now a greatly expanded and more sophisticated operation, Viñaelana's young family team continues to run the business with the passion of their forebears, combining traditional wisdom with innovation and contemporary knowledge about the winemaking process.

"It's a huge responsibility for us to maintain the family winemaking legacy—a legacy started by our grandfather—and we also have a commitment to maintain the old vineyards in the rest of our

region because they give us our identity, character and differentiation," says Elena. "It's fundamental that we are able to connect with the land and the grape-growers in the region, the elders who know how to interpret the vines in any given moment. We need to learn from them and take up the mantle of knowledge."

Viñaelana lives by the credo that "wine begins in the vineyard", and dedicates a huge amount of time and energy to understanding the makeup of its lands—the soils, sunshine hours and fine details of the microclimate—to find the exact spot that will give vines their best chance.

Elena continues: "The poor calcareous soils enable the Monastrell variety to develop incredible fruit to make fine, elegant, quality wines. We are working hard for our indigenous grape variety, but we also cultivate other varieties, whose growth cycle has adapted well to our soils and climate, varieties such as Garnacha Fina and traditional white varieties such as Malvasía."

One of the most significant evolutions to the business has been its transition to organic cultivation, which Elena says has meant "adopting a prevention rather than cure attitude, anticipating problems and not using far-reaching products". Biodiversity is a huge priority here, and biological solutions, such as the introduction of predator species to manage pests, help create

a more natural, balanced local ecosystem. Particularly in a region with such low humidity, organic agriculture is an obvious and hugely beneficial choice. Wine tourism has also become a real focus, and Viñaelana has gone to great lengths to give its guests a truly memorable experience. The original

Pacheco family home—which Francisco Pacheco bought in the early 1940s—as well as the original 'Bodega o' have both been renovated as part of the winery's tourism experience, including a culinary space for visitors: La Casa de los Abuelos ('The Grandparents' House'). 🍷

Selected for you

Portazgo Garnacha

ABV 14.5%
Savour between 12-14°C
Grapes o Garnacha

Tasting notes
Selected from hillside plots of low-yielding bush vines, this lightly coloured Garnacha delivers everything one would expect from this variety. Full of ripe raspberry fruit and spice, not too heavy but full of flavour. Great for char-grilled foods and dishes with a little spice.



Selected for you

Portazgo Blanco

ABV 13%
Savour between 7-10°C
Grapes o Airen & Macabeo

Tasting notes
This delicious blend hails from the high-altitude vineyards of Jumilla. Very pretty on the nose, fresh, floral with ripe stone fruit, nectarine and yellow flowers. The wine is textural and broad, with nutty, savoury flavours combined with ripe fruit, fennel and herbaceous notes. Pairs well with less acidic, more savoury dishes with herbs—think creamy seafood.



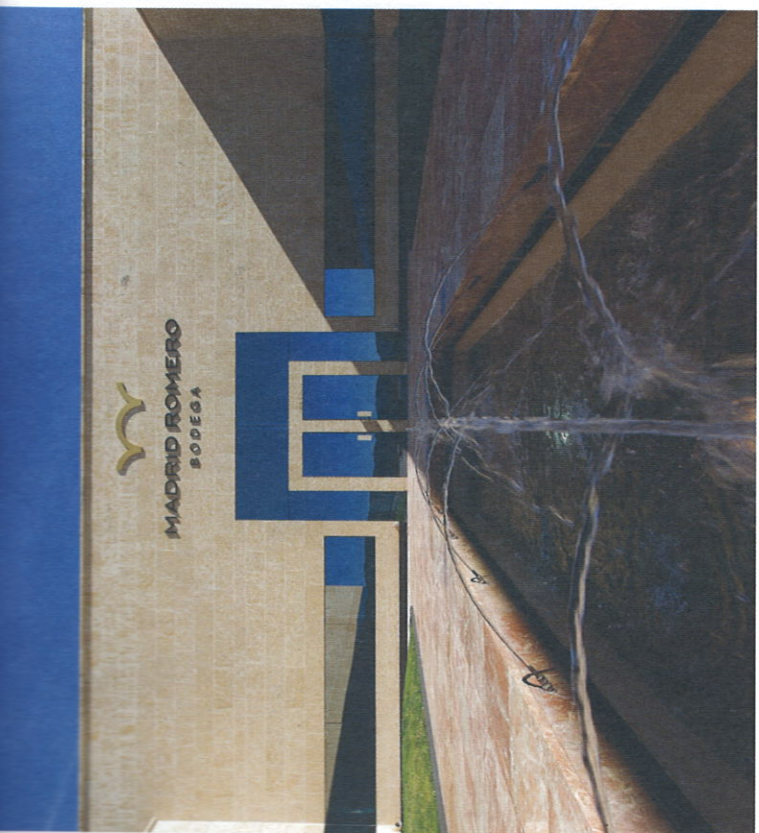
Madrid Romero

4 / Jumilla DOP

Otra, de El Carche,
Km. 8, 30520
Jumilla,
Murcia, Spain



WINE PROFILE



There can be few wineries in the world with a more attractive home than Bodega Madrid Romero. Located in the heart of the Regional Park of El Carche Valley, the beautiful modern bodega – clad in distinctive Salamanca river stone – enjoys exceptional panoramic views of its vineyards, olive groves and the entire natural enclave which gives its vines shelter and sustenance.

The winery was established less than a decade ago by Rosana Madrid Romero, and its motto tells you everything you need to know about its approach: ‘Tesón, esfuerzo y espíritu emprendedor’ (determination, effort and enterprise). In this, Rosana has firmly followed in the footsteps of her father, Mariano Madrid, who spent most of his working life developing a successful pepper growing business. As well as passing on his considerable tenacity, Mariano has also lent more practical help, initially advising Rosana in her search for the best plots, and eventually supervising her first harvest in 2017.

From its inception, Bodega Madrid

Romero earned a reputation for its absolutely uncompromising approach, accepting nothing less than the highest possible quality, in everything from the grapes themselves to the performance of staff, and through to the presentation of the finished wine.

The winery comprises 17 hectares of vineyards, allowing a production of around 30,000 bottles per year, and production methods are almost entirely manual. Its relatively limited output results in a laser-like focus, with every bottle treated as an ambassador not only for the winery, but for the land that Rosana loves.

This pride in the landscape and the local culture and produce can also be found in the winery’s fine dining restaurant; a key part of its enotourism offering. Using only the freshest seasonal produce, Bodega Madrid Romero has created a home for guest Michelin Star chefs to explore the flavours of the region, and an authentic space for these quintessentially Mediterranean flavours to meet their match in expertly selected wines.

Selected for you

Triviños Syrah

ABV 14%
Savour between 15-18°C
Grapes o Syrah

Tasting notes

A delightful example of Syrah grown in a warm climate. Intense aromas of ripe black fruits, stewed blackcurrant with hints of coffee and balsamic. Delicious palate, juicy, spicy and tannic but mellow at the same time. Best served with roasted and grilled lamb or beef, but also works well with pork belly and duck. Decant 30min before drinking.

