

Imperial

Gran Reserva

2016

Imperial is one of the great names in Spanish winemaking. A true Rioja Classic, it was first produced in the 1920s. It is only made in vintages that the company classifies as Excellent.



- **Type of wine:** Gran Reserva
- **Region of production:** Rioja
- **Year:** 2016
- **CVNE vintage rating:** Excellent
- **Grape varieties:** 85% Tempranillo, 10% Graciano, 5% Mazuelo
- **Bottle type:** Bordeaux
- **Bottle size:** 75cl., 1.5l.
- **Bottling date:** July 2019
- **Aging and barrel type:** 24 months in French and American oak barrels

Analytical data

- **Alcoholic volume:** 14.5%
- **Total acidity:** 5.31
- **pH:** 3.65
- **Suitable for vegans**
- **Volatile acidity:** 0.64
- **SO₂ Free/Total:** 28.8/80
- **Total Polyphenols Index:** 81

The vineyard

Our best vineyards located in La Rioja Alta are used for making Imperial Gran Reserva. In 2016, we selected the small plots Remedio and Encinas, located in Villalba at an altitude between 550 and 650 metres, close to Sierra de Toloño. The climate is of Atlantic and Continental influence. The plots are of 12 hectares, within the total of 42 hectares of vineyards that CVNE owns in this village.

The plots of Barbarroja and Antoñana, located in Torrementalbo, were also selected for the 2016 vintage of Imperial. These 40-year-old vineyards are bush trained, rainfed and of low yield. Soils of clay with areas of river pebbles, poor in organic matter and located on gentle south facing slopes.

Winemaking

Rigorous work was held in the vineyard followed by hand harvesting into 20kg boxes with a double selection in the field and in the cellar. Whole bunches were kept cool in order to improve fruit extraction and color stability. To ensure gentle handling, the grapes were fed by gravity to small oak vats where we macerate cold for a few hours before starting alcoholic fermentation, with indigenous yeasts at a controlled temperature of 28 -29°C. Punching and delestage are carried out daily during fermentation, as well as tastings to determine the perfect moment for draining the vat. Once completed, the wine was then aged in French and American oak barrels, new and of 1 year wine, for over 24 months with racking's every 8 months, followed by minimum 36 months bottle ageing in our century-old cellars until its release.

Vintage / Harvest description

The 2016 manual harvest for Imperial started on the 10th of October and ended on the 25th of October.

2016 was a year of excellent quality at CVNE, characterized by lack of rainfall between May and October. The year began with a dry, mild winter and rain at the beginning of spring.

August brought temperatures above average, and with no rain, delaying the ripening process. The vegetative cycle lasted for 161 days. Fortunately, rain in September gave some respite to the vines and enabled full ripening of the grapes. Although the harvest was eventually later than usual, it was of great quality and with the vines in excellent health conditions.

Tasting notes

Intense cherry red layer.

On the nose it is interesting for its complexity, highlighting the liquorice, the fruits of the forest and the aromas of cloves, roasted coffee, cigar leaf, chocolate, caramel and certain balsamic notes, which naturally come from the stay in the barrel. The palate is marked by a velvety tannin that gives it the elegance of this wine as well as having a very attractive aftertaste. In the glass it will evolve, expanding its aromatic variety. It can be paired alone or accompanied by red meats, game, fatty fish, cured cheeses... Recommended service temperature 18°C.