



Balea Txakoli 2022 (DO. Getariako Txakolina)

Method: Native yeast fermentation in stainless steel.

Varieties: 95% Hondarrabi Zuri, 5% Hondarrabi Beltza

ABV: 11.0%

Tasting Notes: Sea mist and melon on the nose. Tart green apple on the palate with a slight fizz. Light and dry. A secondary savory quality of salt and stone. Pair with salty snacks and seafood—Cantabrian anchovies and crusty bread are the traditional go-to.



Balea Txakoli Rose 2022 (DO. Getariako Txakolina)

Method: Native yeast fermentation in stainless steel.

Varieties: 60% Hondarrabi Zuri, 40% Hondarrabi Beltza

ABV: 11.0%

Tasting Notes: Watermelon competing with a morning-dew-on-grass herbaceousness on the nose. Citrus and a hint of jalapeño on the palate. The subdued fruit makes it a great option for drinkers that find fruit-forward roses to be “too sweet”.

Txakoli, the Sea, and BALEA

Hondarrabi Zuri and its red cousin *Hondarrabi Beltza* are the indigenous grape varieties of the Spanish Basque coast. Since at least the 1400s, these grapes have been made into a spritzy, high-acid white wine called *txakolina*. Much like cider in the inland, it was the every-day drink of the coastal Basques and especially popular among fishermen who traded parts of their catch for whole foeders to take out to sea. Whalers, whose voyages tended to be the longest, naturally bought and consumed the most. Thus, whaling and txakoli production became linked over the centuries; vines dotting the green cliffs were often trestled with whale bones, while barrels of wine being hoisted onto ships could be seen in the ports below. Today, the whalers are long gone, but they are commemorated in the logo of the most prominent txakoli appellation, D.O. Getaria and in the name of this wine, BALEA, which is the Basque word for whale.

About the Producer, Lasalde Elkarte

Many Basques can trace their ancestry to rural farmhouses or “*baserris*”. These small estates generally made a living by raising cattle for sale and subsisting off whatever else they could produce. To drink, this almost always meant cider for the inland *baserris* and txakoli on the coast. As the economy changed in the mid-1900s, many *baserris* traded in their cattle pastures for expanding their orchards and vineyards. This was the case for the neighboring *Akarregi Txiki* and *Lasalde* farms which, after generations of collaboration, formally joined houses to form *Lasalde Elkarte*. The txakoli they produce today bears the *Akarregi Txiki* name and was one of the 10 original wines to be admitted into the appellation of origin, *Getariako Txakolina*, of which there are now 33 member producers. Lurdes Zubizarreta and her son Iker Eizmendi are the current generation carrying on the family tradition with Lurdes overseeing the cellar and Iker tending to the vineyards along with an increasing number of sheep.