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TEMPRANILLO BLANCO

FACT SHEET



VARIETAL INFORMATION: Tempranillo blanco is a white Spanish wine grape variety that is grown in the Rioja Denominación de Origen (DOC). It is a mutation of the red Tempranillo grape variety that is planted in Rioja. The white grape variety was discovered in a Tempranillo vineyard in the Rioja region by a wine grower in the late 20th century. In 2007, the Consejo Regulador of Rioja officially sanctioned the use of Tempranillo blanco in the DOC wines of Rioja.

Tempranillo blanco was discovered in 1988 by a wine grower in a Tempranillo vineyard near Murillo de Río Leza in the La Rioja province of northern Spain. While Tempranillo is a dark-skin variety used to produce red wine, the grower discovered that one of his vines had undergone a mutation that produced yellow-green clusters after veraison.

In the 21st century, the University of La Rioja and the Agricultural Research and Development Centre (CIDA) worked with local wineries (such as Viña Ijalba) to help revive and establish native grape varieties such as Tempranillo.

Currently Tempranillo blanco is found only in the Rioja wine region of Spain. In 2007, the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade working with the Consejo Regulador of the Rioja region came to an agreement that would allow the planting and use of Tempranillo blanco in white Rioja wines produced under the DOC labels. Tempranillo blanco was one of three native white varieties added to permitted list of Rioja grapes--Maturana Blanca and Turruntés being the others. Additionally, Maturana Tinta, Maturano, Monastel, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Verdejo were added with Tempranillo blanco in the first major change of the Rioja wine laws involving grape varieties since the wine region was officially established in 1925.

Under the DOC rules, in order to have new plantings of Tempranillo blanco vineyards must pull up or uproot a previous planting of another variety. Wineries are able to use Tempranillo blanco in blends or as a varietal bottling.

Tempranillo Blanco pairs well with anything that once lived in the water, from simply prepared shellfish to grilled squid or fattier fish like salmon. It's also lovely with spicier dishes like Thai curry.

As of 2020, 755 hectares (1865 acres) were planted. According to a 2020 regional report, Tempranillo Blanco has the second-highest amount of white grape plantings in DOC Rioja, making this 34-year-old phenom one of the most exciting successes in recent wine history.



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