

BODEGAS HIDALGO LA GITANA

BODEGAS HIDALGO- LA GITANA HARVEST REPORT 2016



The 2016 vintage has been of much better quality and lower yields than 2015. For this vintage in the Sherry area, only 31 press-houses out of 80 wineries had registered with the D.O. to produce and crush their own grapes. La Gitana is one of only 31 wineries to produce from their own grapes.

Most of the wineries in Jerez de la Frontera started harvesting the grapes in the middle of August. This is a lot earlier than usual due to the higher temperatures at the beginning of summer (July averages 32°C. & 35°C in August). Wineries that start harvesting early usually focus on volume rather than in quality.

At Bodegas Hidalgo – La Gitana we started harvesting on 5th September and finished harvesting on 17th September in order to obtain better quality grapes at the right maturation point, probably one of the latest harvests in the whole area. The two coastal single vineyards (Vinos de pagos) we own (Balbaina & Pastrana) have great influence from the sea and the river, the best conditions for Manzanilla. As known, the Sherry harvest is a gradual process which begins in the interior vineyards and gradually extends towards the coastal areas as the grapes gradually reach the optimum level of maturity for picking. The maturation for the grapes in areas closer to the Atlantic is longer and steadier.

In general, the grapes arrived at the press house in a very healthy condition this year. There was almost no rain during the winter with an average rainfall slightly below average around 450 litres per m² (the annual average is 640 litres per m²). Good rainfall in May had a very positive effect on the vines, with an almost total absence of pests and disease, the Levante wind helped. At Hidalgo they have been using Ferhormons for a long time, which is the most effective and sustainable way to control pests. The spring rains were spread out over a good period of time, meaning that the Albariza soil was able to absorb the water gradually obtaining the reserves necessary for summer time. (Albariza is well known for its “sponge effect”). The influence from the Levante wind during July & August was substantial, which helped to obtain a good maturation, and pretty low yield.

Consequently Hidalgo – La Gitana had a very healthy crop with a good balance of acidity and an average sugar level of 12.35 baumé, (most wineries start harvesting when the grapes reach 10.5 baumé). In terms of quantity, yield per hectare was low, and at the end of the harvest it did not exceed 5,600kg per hectare (11,428kg is the maximum allowed by the D.O). The total production was 673,940 kg, 33.7% less than 2015 harvest.

This highlights Hidalgo’s commitment to quality not only in the Solera System, but also in the vineyards - long pruning, not using pesticides and only pruning at optimum ripeness levels.

