

Allende Blanco 2008 Rioja

1 Sep 2011 by Jancis Robinson

From €12.63, \$21.47, £17.45, 194.95 Danish krone

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White rioja is a funny old beast. It used to be rich and waxy when successful, flat and oxidised when not. Then it modernised itself to become rather anodyne, crisp and heavily dependent on early-picked, cool-fermented Viura (Macabeo). But of the newer producers, Miguel Angel Gregorio of Allende in Briones has shown exceptional flair in consistently producing white rioja that splits the difference between these two extremes and can age remarkably well. You can read more about the background to this wine and to the unfairly low esteem in which the Viura grape has been held in Rioja in [Macabeo/Viura - the Cinderella grape](#).

As is the delightful, traditional Spanish custom, this wine is aged until it is ready to drink before being released (how uncommon is that nowadays?) and I tasted this 2008 at the extremely extensive tasting organised by UK wholesaler Fields, Morris & Verdin in London last June. So extensive that Batholomew Broadbent, who had crossed the Atlantic to show his wines there (and, presumably, see his parents Michael and Daphne Broadbent), complains bitterly in [this thread](#) on our forum that I did not manage to taste his wines there). You can read my tasting notes on a pathetic 71 of the 300+ wines shown there [here](#). (I could not get there earlier because I had to film [this video](#) for the *Financial Times* beforehand.)

My tasting note is ecstatic, if not exactly the most descriptive: 'Good value! Tangy and racy and lanolin and absolutely gorgeous!' I would be very happy to drink this complex, full-bodied dry white wine any time over the next three years, although I suspect it will last longer than that.

It is not too difficult to find in the UK (where Slurp.co.uk have a very much better price than FMV's owners Berry Bros), the US, Spain and Denmark and I urge you to give this unusual wine style a try.

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