

*Proyecto*  
Garnachas  
de España

Press Kit

# Proyecto Garnachas de España

The collection **Proyecto Garnachas de España** pays homage to a local variety that has been traditionally reviled for different reasons and which, however, has enormous oenological possibilities: The Garnacha variety.

To create this collection, we have travelled through **different points in Spain** and found very special vineyards with all the peculiarities we were searching for in this variety, as well as explored how it behaves in different soils and under different climate conditions.

This search and research process has been reflected in the **documentary**, which is also part of this project.

The collection comprises five wines made with Garnacha grown in different areas of Spain, all of them along the Valle del Ebro.



La Garnacha  
Salvaje  
del Moncayo

La Garnacha  
Olvidada  
de Aragón

La Garnatxa  
Fosca  
del Priorat

El Garnacho  
Viejo  
de la familia Acha

La Garnacha  
de Hielo



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## **The Garnacha. A variety with great oenological possibilities**

### **Why has the Garnacha variety been so reviled?**

The Garnacha variety has been traditionally reviled for different reasons. Firstly, it is a difficult variety to grow; finding clones that offer a good balance between quality and productivity is very complicated.

Generally, the clones that provide great quality also have a much-reduced productivity. This issue, as well as when considering the probabilities of coulure (the fruit does not set during flowering), results in excessively low production in many occasions.

On the other hand, it is very sensitive to diseases, such as *Botrytis cinerea*. It is also a very oxidative variety; therefore, it also requires maximum care in the winery.

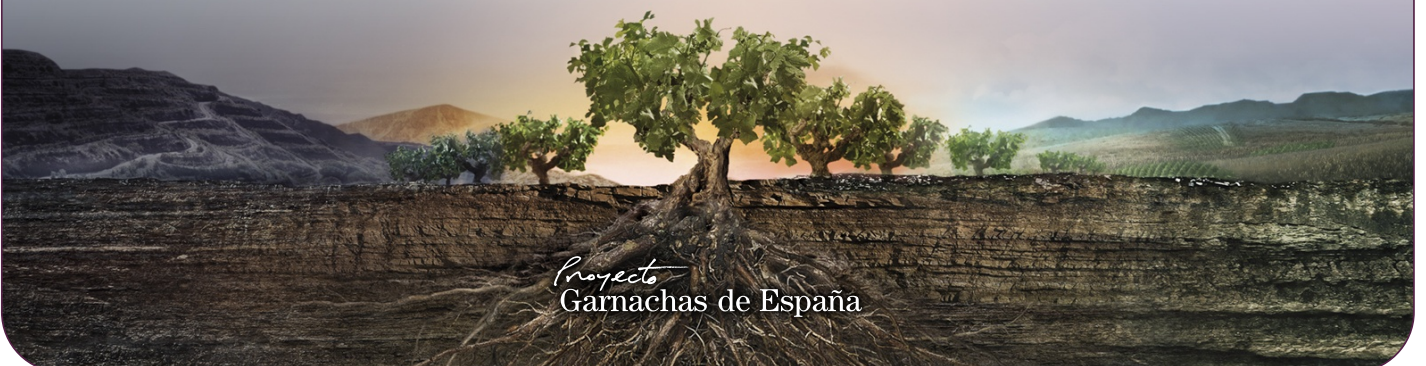
Due to these difficulties in the production process, some of the Garnacha wines made in some periods were of poor quality, thus giving it a very bad reputation.

In many cases, therefore, it was replaced by the Tempranillo variety – a more productive variety and easier to grow -, and the winegrowers began to obtain more profits and suffer fewer problems. Consequently, for many years, a significant number of Garnacha vineyards were pulled up. This became another obstacle for this variety, as the vines produce the best results when they are old.

### **What has changed in these past years?**

In the past few years, the international critics have started paying attention to the Garnacha variety, because, despite its complexity, it offers excellent results and it is much superior to other varieties when the wine has been made properly and carefully.

Wines are starting to be made from the centenary Garnacha vineyards that remained near the Valle del Ebro, where the climate and soils are perfect for the vines needs. The Atlantic-type climate provides them with many hours of sun and the soils have a good drainage, which help the plant endure the drought. This has translated into excellent results in these past years.



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## The Valle del Ebro, the Origin of the Garnacha

The best Garnacha vines have traditionally been grown in the Valle del Ebro. In the Priorat, Aragon, Navarra and La Rioja is where this variety has found a perfect place to re-emerge and provide high quality wines in the past few years. These wines have obtained the best ratings from the international critics and a great acceptance from the current consumer, who looks for easy-drinking, round, sweet and fruity wines with sweet tannins, exactly what the Garnacha offers.

### Why is the Garnacha variety the main character of this collection?

This variety - so reviled in the past - is originally from Spain and is capable of offering excellent results if it is worked properly, as we can see in some of the great wines that have been made in the past few years.

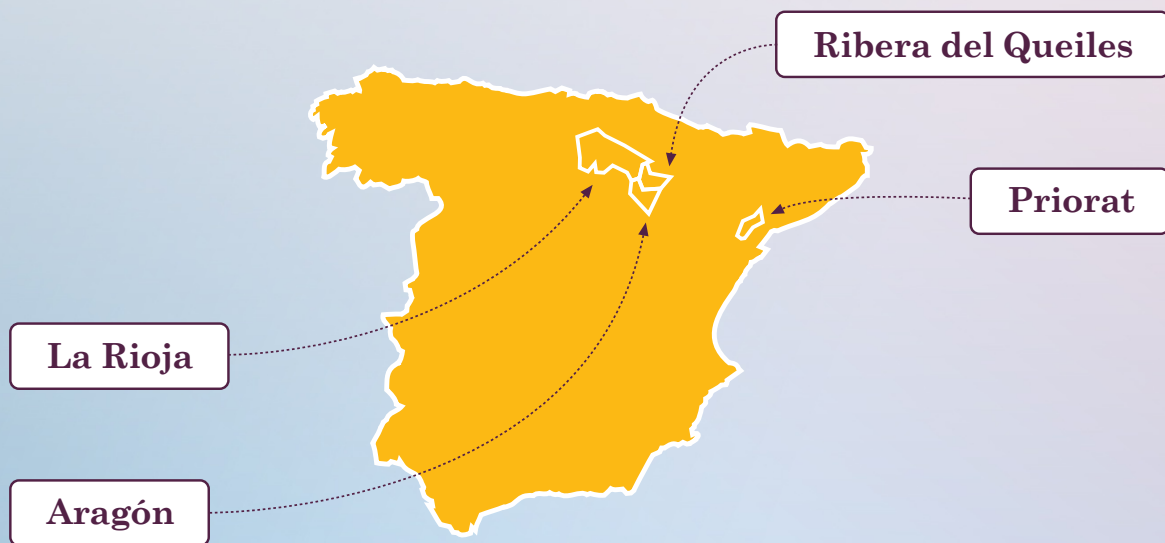
This is a really special collection of wines; each of them has their own personality and history. By means of this collection we have tried to show - in addition to this grape's versatility - the peculiarities that each of the areas chosen provide when making these wines. Old vineyards - between 50 and 100 years old - have been recovered in these areas of the Valle del Ebro, and we have tried to express the unique concept of 'terroir', the nuances and the singularities of their places of origin in the wine.



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## The map of the Garnacha in Spain

Our team of oenologists, led by Raul Acha, a passionate defender of the Garnacha variety, has worked towards selecting some of the best areas for making this wine, such as the Priorat, Aragon and La Rioja. The best Garnacha vineyards have been chosen from these areas. They are all old Garnacha vineyards - between fifty and one hundred years of age - that are in an optimum moment to provide excellent results.



# Proyecto Garnachas de España

## The Wines



### La Garnacha Salvaje del Moncayo

The influence of the Moncayo makes this area one of the best for this variety, which adapts very well to dry climates. At the Ribera del Queiles, a border area between Navarra and Aragon, La Garnacha Salvaje del Moncayo has been made with grapes from old vines planted over fifty years ago on the North side of the Moncayo. This wine is fruity, fresh and presents sweet tannins.



### La Garnacha Olvidada de Aragon

Some of the best Garnacha wines that are currently being made are in this region, the D.O. Calatayud. In the past years, this territory has witnessed the pulling up of thousands of hectares of Garnacha vineyards. This wine is made from the old Garnacha vineyard planted in 1940, and it is present in the wine by means of its pleasant and mature tannins.



### La Garnatxa Fosca del Priorat

The Garnacha variety has resurrected this winemaking area, an area where the dark slate soils provide their personality to the vineyards. The wine brings together the mineral qualities of wines from this area in a perfect fashion, with a fresh and tasty fruit. These vineyards, which are over 60 years old, are located on the sloped hillsides and slate-soiled terraces of the mountains of El Molar (Tarragona), at 300 metres above sea level. The result is a complex but at the same time rich and easy-drinking wine.



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## The Wines



### El Garnacho Viejo de la Familia Acha

This wine contains the affection, extreme care and work of the Acha family. The fruit is from the family's best centenary vines located in Cardenas, which is Raul Acha's hometown and where he learned the Rioja wine tradition and the expertise of his ancestors. The family members themselves, who have also de-stemmed them grape by grape, pressed them in the traditional way and personally monitored them in each of the stages, have harvested the grapes with special care.



### La Garnacha de Hielo

This is one of the few ice-wine made in Spain, and it also originates from the Acha family vineyards. However, in this case, the harvest was performed in December with temperatures between five and ten degrees below zero. At that time of the year, the grape is over-ripe, has maximum concentration and a sweet wine with a very exclusive production is made

# Proyecto Garnachas de España

## **‘Project Garnachas of Spain’, the documentary**

As part of the project and in addition to the wine collection, Vintae has produced a 45-minute audiovisual documentary that tells the story of a trip through the history of the Garnacha variety. The film intends to analyse the past, present and future of this variety and, at the same time, discover and inform of the reasons for abandoning and pulling up thousands of hectares of old vineyards.

The documentary covers the trip carried out by the oenologist, winegrower and passionate defender of this variety Raul Acha through the basin of River Ebro and the areas that have historically grown Garnacha: La Rioja (at the beginning and end of this journey), Navarra, Aragon and Catalonia.

This trip begins at the heart of the family Acha, where Raul defends the value of the Garnacha vineyards that his great-grandfather planted in 1906 in his village, Cárdenas (La Rioja). These vines were about to be pulled up by his father. From this point, Raul decides to search for other areas with old Garnacha vineyards that have similar issues and which are about to be abandoned or already have been.

In each of these areas, he encounters different people that tell him about the Garnacha's history in that area and its evolution. From the Viticulture Professor at the University of La Rioja Fernando Martinez de Toda to members of cooperatives in the area of Calatayud, farmers in Tarazona and a winemaker in the Catalan Priorat, all of them provide their own view of the variety and talk about the singularities of each area.

The documentary also shows the process of making the wine from the Acha family's vineyards. The film highlights how a traditional and family-type harvest is, the subsequent de-stemming grape by grape and the grape's pressing. The first images of the documentary were shot three years ago, and the last sequence in spring of 2011.



**Full documentary available at the following link:**  
[www.garnachasdeespana.com/en](http://www.garnachasdeespana.com/en)



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## **Raul Acha, Oenologist and Technical Director of Vintae**

Born in Cárdenas (La Rioja) in 1976, Raul Acha is an agricultural engineer with a Bachelor in Oenology and Advanced Oenology Studies. He is one of the emerging oenological talents in La Rioja. Since childhood, he has lived very closely to the world of viticulture in his hometown, where he was able to understand the great importance in a meticulous care of raw material when making a quality wine. Raul defends viticulture and a suitable selection of vineyards as key elements for producing a great wine.

Nowadays, together with his team of oenologists, he is able to give expression to his full potential in singular and high quality projects. In each project, he applies the most suitable techniques, and he considers each area's geographic and climatological characteristics above all when making a collection of wines.



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**VINTAE MEDIA DEPARTMENT**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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