

2008 DEHESA LA GRANJA

Vino de la Tierra de Castilla y León

• **WINEMAKER'S NOTES** • The Fernández family has been passionate about winemaking for over four decades, during which they have created four iconic wineries that comprise patriarch Alejandro Fernández's wine legacy: *Tinto Pesquera*, *Condado de Haza*, *Dehesa La Granja* and *El Vínculo*. Located in western Spain in the province of Zamora, Alejandro's third winery is built on a sprawling ranch, where the 120 hectares of high-quality Tempranillo vines produce wines that are large in volume, structure and depth. A true farm-to-table wine, the 2008 Dehesa La Granja is uniquely silky, powerful, balanced and elegant. It contains lush notes of ripe blackberries, vanilla, cigar box and licorice on the nose and palate. *100% estate-owned Tempranillo*

• **VINTAGE** • A vintage marked by an elongated ripening season, the winter of 2008 was oddly warmer than usual and very dry. The unusual weather was augmented by a lack rain for six months, and the dry spell lasted until the beginning of spring, when a series of heavy rain and high temperature spikes began. Spring was atypical as well, with a warmer and wetter-than-usual April and May. The early summer months were mostly dry, with a few intermittent showers. However, temperatures dropped incredibly fast around mid-August, which caused a delayed ripening of the grapes. Harvest was pushed back a few weeks across Castilla y León and, thanks to a lack of rain in October, the Dehesa La Granja vineyard management team was able to harvest healthy grape clusters in all of their vineyard blocks.

• **THE FARM AND VINEYARDS** • "Liberty" is the concept that inspires the winemaking, flora and fauna which prosper on this estate, purchased by Alejandro Fernandez in 1998. The 800-hectare Dehesa La Granja comprises olive trees, garbanzo bushes, cereal crops, rolling hills planted with 25-year-old Tempranillo vines and hundreds of heads of sheep and cattle. Inspired by the great *terroir* of Zamora, plus the 3,000m² of underground tunnels found excavated underneath the farm, Alejandro knew he had discovered the winning combination of an ideal above-ground climate and soil for grape growing, along with a perfect underground climate and temperature for wine aging. Dehesa La Granja was thus founded and remains a fully functioning farm and winery, embodying the truly "free-range" Vino de la Tierra de Castilla y León.

• **FERMENTATION AND AGING** • Each year harvest begins towards the middle of September and all vineyard blocks are vinified separately in small stainless steel tanks in order to ensure optimum wine quality. Alcoholic fermentation takes place between 6-10 days at an average temperature of 20-25°C and the finished wine is aged for a minimum of 18 months in fine grain, 225- and 300-liter neutral American oak barrels with a light-to-medium toast. Barrels are racked a minimum of three times during the first twelve months of aging and an additional 2-3 times before bottling. With the Fernández family dedicated to natural winemaking, all wines produced by Alejandro Fernández are neither filtered nor fined before bottling. Unbound by the strict protocols that govern a *Denominación de Origen (D.O.)* in Spain, Dehesa La Granja may be aged and released any time the winemaker chooses. Known as Alejandro's "transcendental wine" the 2008 Dehesa la Granja is refreshingly fruit-forward for its lengthy aging of 24 months in barrel and close to six years in bottle. *Wine analysis: 4.8 g/l (0.48%) total acidity; 14.0% alcohol by volume*

• **HISTORY** • The 1970's brought the realization of a lifetime dream for a young and determined Alejandro Fernández. Propelled by his conviction that wines of superb quality could once again be made in the place of his birth, he went against the movement of the time, when cereal and beetroot dominated the Ribera hillsides, and planted Tempranillo vineyards in his hometown of Pesquera. In 1982, this iconic winemaking pioneer, who came to be recognized as the "Master of Tempranillo," was the keystone in forming the now-famous D.O. Ribera del Duero, a designation that Alejandro helped to create with only a few other winemaking pioneers.