



Vega Sicilia

An emblematic Ribera del Duero, Valbuena 2020 distils the purest Vega Sicilia expression: poised, deep and graceful, shaped by altitude, limestone influence and time.



Valbuena 2020

Ribera del Duero, Spain

Region and Vineyards

Ribera del Duero's high plateau delivers extremes: hot, luminous days and cool nights between **720-930 m** preserve acidity and perfume. Vega Sicilia's 210 ha estate spans marl-rich soils with limestone and traces of gypsum near the Duero river, yielding wines of tension and mineral finesse. The location along the so-called Golden Mile concentrates historic addresses and a tradition of meticulous viticulture that privileges balance over sheer power.

Vines average **35 years**, planted at **2,222 vines/ha**. A marked diurnal range lengthens ripening, building aromatic complexity in Tinto Fino (Tempranillo) while keeping alcohol in check. In 2020, yields sat around **26.6 hl/ha**, reinforcing concentration without sacrificing elegance. Harvest ran **21 September-5 October**, with careful stops for showers, ensuring pristine, flavour-intense fruit and the estate's signature clarity.

Winemaking

Valbuena 2020 is **97% Tinto Fino** and **3% Merlot**, hand-picked into 12 kg crates and sorted for optimal berry integrity. The cuvée follows the estate's measured extraction to showcase fruit purity and site definition rather than weight.

Ageing spans **five years**—the origin of "5º": **12 months in barrels** (French and American, new and used), **12 months in wooden vat**, **6 months in stainless steel**, and **18 months in bottle** before release. Bottled **May 2023** at **14% vol.**, the 2020 presents a more ethereal, vertical register after pre-harvest rains and subsequent re-concentration in the berries, delivering finesse, line and sustained length.

Alcohol :14,00 %

Composition: 97% Tempranillo, 3%
Merlot



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep, vivid ruby with youthful violet flashes; limpid and bright.
- **Aroma:** Black cherry, blackberry and plum glide into violets, subtle tobacco leaf, graphite and cedar; hints of cocoa, anise and cool loam add complexity.
- **Palate:** Medium-to-full bodied yet lifted; ripe dark fruit framed by fine-grained, **chalk-toned** tannins. Energetic acidity, polished oak in the background and a long, sapid, mineral-tinged finish.

Did you know?

Valbuena 5º references both the home village, Valbuena de Duero, and the wine's **five-year** maturation arc between wood, tank and bottle. Within Vega Sicilia's hierarchy, it is the most "immediate" red, yet consistently demonstrates **25 years** of cellaring potential in classical vintages—a bridge between approachability and grandeur.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Segovian roast suckling pig (Cochinillo asado):** Crisp skin and delicate richness meet the wine's lively acidity and refined tannins.
- **Wild mushroom and truffle risotto:** Earthy depth echoes the graphite, cocoa and sous-bois nuances; creamy texture complements the wine's silk.
- **Venison daube with juniper:** Game savour and spice resonate with dark fruit and subtle oak, while structure refreshes the palate.
- **Aged Manchego and jamón Ibérico:** Umami and nutty intensity harmonise with Valbuena's savoury length and poised fruit.



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Valbuena 2020



Jeb Dunnuck (JD) : 97 Points (2020)

The 2020 Valbuena 5° ages five years in oak and bottle, which gives it its name. Harvest was challenging due to Covid and rain, requiring due diligence in the field and a faster, earlier harvest than anticipated, the grapes coming from the Vega Sicilia estate's vines with about 35 years of age. It's an ethereal, medium-bodied wine of lovely delicacy and elegance, 97% Tempranillo blended with 3% Merlot, then aged 12 months in French and American oak, six months in stainless steel and then 18 months in bottle. Blackcurrant, cedar, and balsamic highlight a citrusy freshness. It will hit its prime in five years and age another 20-25. (VB)



Tim Atkin (TA) : 96 Points (2020)

The 2020 Valbuena all comes from the Vega Sicilia estate and is a blend of Tinto Fino and 3% Merlot from vines close to the river. Gonzalo Iturriaga uses 70% new wood here, 15% of it American, but then switches to older foudres. Floral and elegant, partly because of the 100mm of rain in September, it's a focused, comparatively forward red with bramble, red cherry and blackberry fruit, scented oak spices, a hint of rocket and a refined, tapering finish.



James Suckling (JS) : 96 Points (2020)

Valbuena 5 used to be the baby Unico, and nowadays it is more like its younger brother with a lot of resemblance and just a bit less depth and tannins. Valbuena 5 comes from younger vines and sometimes different parcels from Unico. On the palate, this is more open and linear, while Unico is more profound and vertical. Notes of iron, blackberries, cedar, minerals and cocoa powder. Medium- to full-bodied with melted tannins and a long, long finish. Drinkable from 2025, but will hold for years. (ZS)



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