

BETH WILLARD



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Bierzo 2026

Top 100

BY BETH WILLARD



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Podium

Rising Star of the Year Marina Otero, Encima Wines

Value Wines of the Year

White Encima Wines, Cigüeña Albarín 2023

Encima Wines, Bierzo DO

Cigüeña Albarín	2023	White	VdT CyL		13.0	93
La Cigüeña Godello	2025	White	Bierzo		13.0	92
Cigüeña Godello Cáucaso	2023	White	Bierzo		13.5	94
Para Muestra Un Botón Godello	2021	White	Bierzo		13.5	92
Para Muestra Un Botón Godello, Ponferrada	2023	White	Bierzo	Vino de Villa	13.5	94
Otero Santín	2022	Red	Bierzo		13.5	90

94

Encima Wines, Cigüeña Godello Cáucaso 2023

Bierzo. 13.5%

Only made every four years, this wine is fermented and undergoes extended ageing in barrels made from oak from the Caucasus. With delicate pain d'épices and white floral aromas, the wine opens to an ample palate supported by fine grained oak that brings freshness and elegance. With a little age under its belt already, it is showing lovely development and an individual character. 2026-29

94

Encima Wines, Para Muestra Un Botón Godello, Ponferrada 2023

Bierzo. Vino de Villa. 13.5%

One vineyard in Ponferrada is the protagonist here, fermented and aged in foudres. With time in oak and bottle, it has developed a lovely expression of the variety with white peach, subtle bitter pithy notes and an underlying stoney minerality. It offers a substantial palate, maintained by direct acidity, and while it is really in the perfect moment to enjoy, it will continue to develop in bottle for a few years to come. Delicious! 2026-30

DeMencia de Autor, Bierzo DO

Pyjama by DeMencia	2025	White	Bierzo		12.0	94
DeMencia Godello	2024	White	Bierzo		12.7	94
Pyjama by DeMencia	2024	Red	Bierzo		12.0	93
DeMencia, Villafranca del Bierzo	2022	Red	Bierzo	Vino de Villa	13.5	95
DeMencia, Villafranca del Bierzo	2023	Red	Bierzo	Vino de Villa	13.5	96
DeMencia, Villegas	2023	Red	Bierzo	Vino de Paraje	13.5	96
DeMencia, Cotelo	2024	Red	Bierzo	Vino de Paraje	13.0	95
Inspiración by Franz Frichard	2023	Red	Bierzo		12.5	91

95

DeMencia, Villafranca del Bierzo 2022

Bierzo. Vino de Villa. 13.5%

Because of the hot and dry conditions, there were no parajes made in 2022 so this wine has some of the best parcels of Villafranca in the blend. To be released in the autumn this year, it is a classic profile of red fruited Bierzo with lots of elegance. It is very fine and precise with delicate cranberry and goji berry, and the tannins bring a bit of grip typical of the subzone. It is a wine built to last but remains finessed to the end. 2026-32

96

DeMencia, Villafranca del Bierzo 2023

Bierzo. Vino de Villa. 13.5%

Due for release in 2027, this had spent only a couple of weeks in bottle at time of tasting, yet its finesse and elegance are already apparent. Essentially all the fruit comes from Fuente de San Lázaro this year as the single paraje wasn't bottled in this vintage, and its complexity shines through in delicate rose petal, cranberry and red cherry. Quiet and somewhat shy now, there is an impressive underlying structure, suggesting much more will emerge with time. 2026-33

96

DeMencia, Villegas 2023

Bierzo. Vino de Paraje. 13.5%

With a year in bottle, this is a wine defined by its origins with intense red cherry and raspberry and surprising rose petal aromas. Tannins here offer the energetic grip of the paraje with a balance that comes from the vintage. A beautiful wine, accessible and highly expressive of its origins. 2026-32