

# A wine fiesta

The West's hot new grapes are Spanish and just right for sipping now

BY SARA SCHNEIDER | PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS J. STORY

## Albariño

**Say it like a Spaniard:** Ahl-bah-REE-nyoh

**Why it belongs in your fridge:** This white strikes a balance between crisp, refreshing citrus and aromatic stone fruit (look for apricots and nectarines) and blossoms—great for winding down a warm August afternoon. **Foods that make it taste even better:** Seafood. If it ever sported a fin or a shell, it's the right pairing—shrimp, crab, scallops, halibut, sablefish... Try all of the above with lemony aioli or mint pesto. And don't let the summer get away without an Albariño-and-paella party (the wine loves mussels and saffron). **Old World Heritage:** Chalk that seafood-friendliness up to its main home: Rías Baixas (REE-us BI-shus), on Spain's northwest coast, where Albariño accounts for 90 percent of the vineyards.

**West Coast regions to watch:** San Luis Obispo County. Tangent Winery, sister to Baileyana, is farming one of the largest Albariño vineyards outside Spain. (But southern Oregon has its share coming on strong too.)

## TOP PICKS

### ABACELA 2009

**ALBARIÑO** (Umpqua Valley; \$18). Ripe, golden apple and peach rounded out with a touch of almond and orchard blossoms.

### BONNY DOON 2009

**"CA' DEL SOLO ESTATE" ALBARIÑO** (Monterey; \$17). Pretty pink grapefruit and peach

with a refreshing green apple backbone.

### DANCING COYOTE

**2009 ALBARIÑO** (Clarksburg; \$11). Wet stone-like minerals lurk under stone fruit spiked with grapefruit and lemon zest.

### TANGENT 2008

**ALBARIÑO** (Edna Valley; \$17). Honeyed and crisp

at the same time, with orange zest balancing peach and tropical notes.

### VERDAD 2009 SAWYER LINDQUIST VINEYARD

**ALBARIÑO** (Edna Valley; \$23). Lean and beautifully austere; limestone and green herbs balance sweet clementine and stone-fruit flavors. >102