



# San Francisco Chronicle

## The Chronicle Recommends: California Albarino

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Spain is increasingly a muse in the search for white grapes that could become California's next big thing, and, for better or worse, the aromatic charms of Albarino - native to Galicia's cold, damp Rias Baixas region - are taking hold throughout the state.

Albarino from its native turf is popular enough to offer an ample supply on shelves here, so the local versions are often noble experiments.

But it's a welcome surprise to see some new names added to the Albarino roster. It's a grape that seems to adapt to both warm and cool California sites with relative ease.

**2009 Verdad Santa Ynez Valley Albarino (\$17):** Louisa Lindquist, wife of Qupé's Bob Lindquist, focuses the Verdad label on Spanish varietals. While she's introduced a new bottling from the couple's biodynamic Edna Valley vineyard, the Santa Ynez original remains pleasingly lean and mineral-driven, with lots of salty stone, basil and lime pith and an almost chewy almond note to the finish. Yet, it retains a lot more weight than you'd expect.