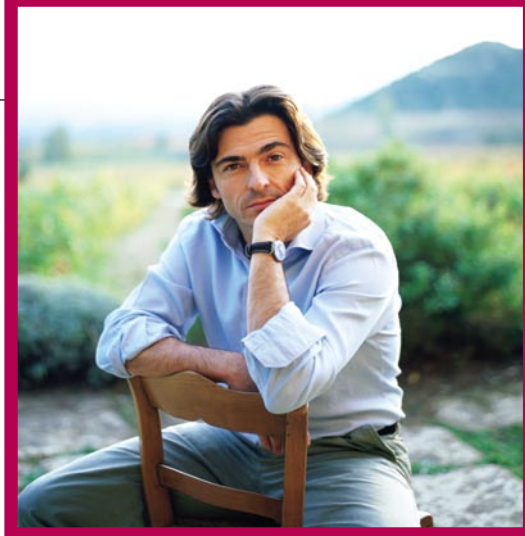


SPAIN

Spain has the greatest area of vineyards in the world and its wine industry is as large as that of Italy and France. Only in 2009 though has Spanish wine bottle production started to match that of the other two as a result of improved viticulture. Lower yields in Spanish vineyards still help to produce concentrated and intensely flavoured wines provided quality winemakers are chosen. Despite the area, the range of grapes has been surprisingly small, dominated by Tempranillo reds and Rueda whites. The investment available from the European Union has brought more variety as witnessed by the extraordinary wines from Telmo Rodriguez and the stunning Gewurztraminer from Vinas del Vero.



Telmo Rodriguez

Described as Spain's greatest winemaker and an 'impassioned lover' of his wines, Telmo learnt his trade in France and became the No.1 at Rioja's No. 1 winery. He then left to found an enterprise promoting Spain's lesser known areas and grapes. The results have been spectacular. We list three wines: Basa Blanco shows all that modern Rueda should be and was described as a 'blast in a glass' by the Sunday Times in April 2009, the silky smooth and tasty Al Muvedre from Alicante and the MR Moscatel from literally the suburbs of Malaga.

Rioja

For years, wine drinkers looked to Spain for Rioja and virtually nothing else. But Rioja can be said to be an enigma. Nearly every On-Trade wine list retained a Rioja as an Old World wine despite its being traditionally made with a lot of oak content giving hard tannic flavours when young. This means Rioja is not fruit driven as are nearly all its New World competitors; it does require food and is usually well above House and Entry level price points. There is also a division between 'traditional' and 'modern' styles now - the modern being more fruit driven and nicer when young.

We list eight reds from Rioja all of which show the warmth and ripeness of Tempranillo with its combination of wild strawberry and bramble fruit. From Crianza upwards, there is more oak but we have chosen wines we know to be user friendly, attractive examples of Rioja.





RED

Taste Guide Trade Sales Price



££ Centelleo Tempranillo

Ripe and juicy bramble and cherry flavours with hints of spice. Good length and tremendous value.

C

£3.99

££ Carrizal Tempranillo Rioja

Made from 100% Tempranillo grapes, this Rioja is easy drinking and extremely good value. Award winner at the International Wine Challenge.

C

£4.39

Castillo del Romero Tempranillo

This Tempranillo from Navarra shows the improved vinification techniques in regions other than Rioja. Plenty of soft, rounded strawberry fruit.

B

£4.47



Al Muvedre

This stunning red is made in Alicante by Telmo Rodriguez and has qualities usually found in well made wines at twice the price. Fantastic flavours and beautiful balance. It really is a must.

D

£5.63



Navardia Rioja, Bodegas Bagordi

Dark, rich and spicy damson fruit with vanilla coming from its time in oak barrels. This is produced organically.

D

£6.24



El Coto Rioja Crianza

El Coto has in just thirty years become the No.1 Rioja in Spain. Their Rioja Crianza is ruby red, has excellent harmony of fruit, tannin and oak and is renowned for its velvety smooth feel in the mouth.

C

£6.63



Marqués de Cáceres Rioja Crianza

This is a fresher, juicier and fleshier style which is very drinkable and which goes well with food.

C

£7.49

££ Coto de Imaz Rioja Reserva

This is a classic Rioja Reserva made from hand selected Tempranillo from the Alta and Alavesa areas. The use of new American oak gives complexity and structure and the integrated tannins give a perfect balance to the wine and reflect expert winemaking.

D

£9.35

Marqués de Cáceres Rioja Reserva

Reservas have by law to be five years old of which half has to be spent in oak barrels. As a result, the wine gains both depth of flavour and complexity.

D

£11.44

Marqués de Cáceres Rioja Gran Reserva

Gran Reservas are at least seven years old with four years in oak or twice as long in bottle. Top quality wines are chosen to mature this way and need to be ten years old before drinking. Result - harmony between fruit and power.

D

£14.09



Coto de Imaz Rioja Gran Reserva

A truly great wine. There are only certain years that these top quality Tempranillo grapes mature enough to consider making the Gran Reserva. The grape must be frequently "pumped over" its lees to produce intense, concentrated flavours and then gain further complexity from a long ageing in new American oak. A wine in total harmony with all its constituent parts.

D

£14.09



ROSÉ

££ Centelleo Tempranillo Rosado

Made in an ultra modern winery, this rosé combines delicious fruit packed with tangy cherry and strawberry flavours and a savoury aftertaste.

Taste Guide

2A

Trade Sales Price

£3.99

Marqués de Cáceres Rosado

Grapes from young Tempranillo vines are used to produce this fresh and fruity wine so there is a distinct wild strawberry presence.

2B

£5.40

El Coto Rioja Rosado

Plenty of strawberry and raspberry aromas and flavours. A touch of rose petals and violets adds complexity to a tasty finish.

2A

£5.43



WHITE

££ Centelleo Macabeo Chardonnay

These grapes are sourced in the La Mancha area and combine so well together. Bright and citrusy and bottled young for maximum freshness. Liquid lemon mousse!

2

£3.99



El Coto Rioja Blanco

White Rioja has proved to be very much more attractive now that it is virtually 100% Viura grapes and cool-fermented in stainless steel tanks. The wine is then bottled young so as to preserve the crisp, apple flavours.

2

£5.43

Vinas del Vero Gewurztraminer

This recently established winery uses the best of modern technology to produce a 100% Gewurztraminer with rose petal aromas and an excellent lingering finish of lychees.

3

£5.99



Basa Blanco, Rueda

A stunning wine packed with yellow plum and peach flavours. Wonderfully balanced, beautiful structure with great length and a very moreish aftertaste.

2

£6.85

MR Moscadel - available only in 50cl bottles

Aromas of fresh mint and orange peel with a richly sweet palate backed by a long honeyed finish. 'A taste of sunshine.' Highly rated by Jancis Robinson.

5

£9.55



SPAIN

