



CASTILLA Y LEÓN

Ribera del Duero vs Toro

Ricardo Santiago

Club del Vino

March 29, 2022



I – OBJECTIVE OF THE TASTING

OBJECTIVE

- Get acquainted with the two most important Denominación de Origen (DO) in the Spanish Duero River Valley, Castilla y León
- Compare Toro x Ribera del Duero in Semi-Blind Tasting: the wines are known but not in which glass they are poured



The selection of wines and tasting methodology

- 2 wines from Ribera Del Duero and 2 wines from Toro
- Point prices: 1 wine \$25 and 1 wine \$35 from each DO
- All wines received very good reviews from wine critics
- 3 wines: 100% Tempranillo and 1 wine blended with 15% Garnacha Tinta
- Alcohol: 3 wines 14.2/14.5% and 1 wine 15.5%
- Aging in oak: 12 - 18 months
- Blinding Tasting in random order
- Participants will rank the wines by order of preference (subjective ranking)
- Participants will comment on the wines
- The wines are identified

A map of Spain with its regions labeled: GALICIA, CASTILLA Y LEÓN, LA RIOJA, ARAGÓN, PORTUGAL, MADRID, EXTREMADURA, and CASTILLA - LA MANCHA. The Balearic Islands are also visible in the southeast. The text "II - CASTILLA Y LEÓN" is overlaid in large black font.

II - CASTILLA Y LEÓN

CASTILLA Y LEÓN

- Cultivated vines date back thousand of years
- Romans: improved agricultural techniques
- Middle Ages: wine for ecclesiastic purposes, Camino de Santiago pilgrimage
- Monastic orders: expansion of vineyards
- Renaissance: Burgos home of the royal court and highly prized wines
- 19th Century: phylloxera in France –Castilla y León supplied wines to France
- 21st Century: Castilla y León has 9% of the vineyards area of Spain (2nd after Castilla-La Mancha)

CASTILLA Y LEÓN: *“NUEVE MESES DE INVIERNO Y TRES MESES DE INFIERNO”*

- Climate: Continental extreme temperatures (very hot summers and very cold winters)
- Primary topographic components: the Duero River Basin and the mountain ranges surrounding it in the northern part of the Meseta
- Most of the wine-growing areas are situated on or near the Duero River or one of its tributaries



THE DUERO RIVER VALLEY

- Begins near the border with La Rioja in Castilla y León and crosses Portugal to the Atlantic (895 km)
- Largest river basin on the Iberian Peninsula (97,290 km²)
- 81% of the area in Spain and 29% in Portugal
- The Valley in Spain lies within Castilla y León
- Significant historical and viticultural region



GRAPES AND WINES IN CASTILLA Y LEÓN

- Castilla y León is a red grape country and Tempranillo is king
- Tempranillo excellence in Castilla y León: long history with biotypes adapted to the climates
- Tempranillo is an authorized grape in 12 of 13 appellations
- Bierzo DO is the lone exception where Mencía is the primary grape
- Rueda DO is the only wine-growing area where white wines take the lead (Verdejo is commonly blended with Sauvignon Blanc to produce crisp, fresh, and aromatic wines)
- Cigales DO: one of Spain's largest producers of rosé wine

TEMPRANILLO: *EL ESTANDARTE DE ESPAÑA*

- Most planted grape in Spain in 2021 and third variety for red wines in the world
- It is not a 'global' variety: 88% of world production is in Spain
- Recent success in Spain: 19TH century and expansion in the 1980s with the DOs
- Short cycle: buds later/early ripening
- Very yield-sensitive vine (loses phenolic concentration) and very site specific for great wines



TAUSTING TEMPRANILLO

- Typically powerful, concentrated, full-bodied, tannic wines irrespective of oak-aging, which is common
- Sometimes slightly low acidity
- Not particularly fruit-forward
- It is one of the varieties more difficult to identify tasting blindly: Tempranillo has aromas of cherry like Merlot, of red berries of Pinot Noir and species of Syrah – it does not have an aromatic profile unique and distinctive
- Most of the best wines are marked by aging in oak barrels: vanilla, spices, roasted coffee-bean, and leather
- With aging: complexes aromas, silk texture, and distinctive character is revealed.

III — DO RIBERA DEL DUERO



EUROPA



DO RIBERA DEL DUERO: History

- Situated along the Duero River (length of 115 km from east to west with a width of 35 km)
- Archaeological presence of wine 2500 years ago in site Vacceo
- Middle Ages: Cistercian and Benedictine monks and interconnected underground cellars still in use today
- 15th century: quality was codified into law ("Ordinances of Castilla y León")
- 17th and 18th centuries: wines were exported from the region
- Vega Sicilia: until the 1970's the area's only real success with blended Tempranillo with red Bordeaux varieties
- Followed in the 70s by Alejandro Fernandez (Pesquera) single varietal Tinto Fino and P. Sisseck in the 90s (Pingus)
- 1982: gained DO status and quality was improved with regulatory standards
- 2021: 310 wineries. Collectors wine from Vega Sicilia and Dominio de Pingus among the 5 top Spanish prices in auctions

DO RIBERA DEL DUERO: Main Facts

- DO Awarded: 1982
- Main Wine Style: Tinto 99%
- Soil: 32 different soil types, mainly clay, sand, and stones
- Climate: Extreme Continental, low rainfall, and high diurnal temperature variation
- Elevation of vineyards: 720-1100m (one of highest average of all wine regions in Europe)
- Area under vine: 23,000 ha
- Red varieties: Tinto Fino (Tinta del Pais/Tempranillo), Cabernet Sauvignon, Garnacha Tinta, Malbec, and Merlot
- White varieties: Albillo Mayor



DO RIBERA DEL DUERO: Main Regulations

- Red wines: Minimum of 75% Tempranillo but most producers use 100%
- Aging: American and French oak are used and the DO requires longer aging times than required by Spanish wine law
- Minimum aging requirements for red wines:
 - Cosecha (Joven): No aging required
 - Crianza: 12 months in Barrel and 24 months before release
 - Reserva: 12 months in Barrel and 36 months before release
 - Gran Reserva: 24 months in Barrel and 60 months before release
- Most top producers omit any such classification, even though they age their wines for a long time

DO RIBERA DEL DUERO: Wine Styles

- *“No existe el tempranillo de la Ribera, sino muchos tempranillos”* usually blended from different parcels
- *“No es oro todo lo que reluce en Ribera”*: the vineyards in fields for cereal cannot produce the excellence of Tempranillo
- Joven: moderate in color and tannin, medium-bodied and full of ripe strawberry and black plum fruit
- Crianza and Reserva: are more concentrated with fuller-body, powerful tannins and a flavor profile that is savory and spicier vs. fruit-driven
- Gran Reserva are full-bodied with supple tannins and complex layers of tertiary flavors and aromas
- The age classification is almost irrelevant for indication of quality, except for the Gran Reserva category



DO TORO: History

- Situated along the Duero, west of DO Ribera del Duero, Provincias de Zamora and Valladolid close to Portugal
- Some of the lowest rainfall of the entire region
- Toro's Heritage: many pre-phylloxera vines on sand soils
- 3rd century BC: Romans were the true promoters of viticulture
- Wines from Toro were part of Columbus' first trip to the New World
- 19TH. century: Large quantities exported to France to fill the gap that has been left by the phylloxera plague
- 20th. century: In the 70s first steps to create the DO
- 1987: Toro Designation of Origin was created with only 4 bodegas
- 2022: Over 50 wineries and 1200 growers

DO TORO: Main Facts

- DO Awarded: 1987
- Main Wine Style: Tinto 93%
- Soil: Sand and clay with limestone with stones and pebbles in the north of the DO
- “*Pie Franco*” Old Bush Vines (en vaso)
- Climate: Extreme Continental with harsh winters and short summers
- Elevation of Vineyards: 600-800m
- Area under vine: 5,555 ha
- Red Varieties: Tinta de Toro (Tempranillo) and Garnacha Tinta
- White Varieties: Verdejo and Malvasia Castellana



DO TORO: Main Regulations

- Red wine: DO requires 75% of Tinta de Toro but most producers use 100%
- If blended, the blending partner is Garnacha Tinta
- Nowadays the Consejo Regulador requires new plantings on resistant rootstocks
- Aging for red wine (standard requirements of Spanish wine law):
 - Joven: No aging required
 - Crianza: 6 months in oak and 2 years before release
 - Reserva: 12 months in oak and 3 years before release
 - Gran Reserva: 18 months in oak and 5 years before release

DO TORO: Wine Styles

- Tempranillo has specific expression in Toro due to the continentality and low pluviometry resulting in deep colored, dense, high in alcohol, and powerful wines
- Toro wines are often massively oaky, savory, solid, fruit-forward, bold, and tannic wines with soft acidity
- Can age extremely well and aging in oak helps tame tannins and adds complexity
- Best wines are typically aged in French oak

CONDADO DE
HAZA

RIBERA DEL DUERO
Denominación de Origen

CRianza 2018

4^{to} Si 2019



TERMES
ESPANA

TINTA DE TORO
2017

BODEGA
NUMANTINA

ALMIREZ



V — THE WINES

CONDADO DE HAZA

- One of 4 bodegas of Familia Fernández Rivera group owner of Tinto Pesquera
- Condado de Haza: first vineyards planted in 1988
- 200 ha of vineyards with 100% Tempranillo in south facing mountain slope leading right to the river's edge
- Winery is dug into the hillside and the bottle cellar is almost 30 m underground





CONDADO DE HAZA, RIBERA DEL DUERO, CRIANZA, 2018

- Variety: 100% Tempranillo
- Designation: Crianza
- Vintage 2018 in DO Ribera del Duero: 'Very Good'
- Own vineyards in heterogeneous soils with high content of clay and the presence of sand at 800m altitude
- Average age of vines: 30 years
- Fermentation: Stainless Steel
- Aging: 14 months in American oak barrels and 10 months in bottle
- Alcohol content: 14.5% by vol.

DOMINIO DE PINGUS

- Small producer run by Danish-born renowned winemaker Peter Sisseck
- The Psi is a special project of DP: is a 'neo-cooperative' venture with independent growers
- Growers are paid by quality of grapes
- Several small parcels of old vines in various locations
- Goal: 'capture the soul of Ribera del Duero', preserving the region's clonal heritage in its old head pruned vineyards



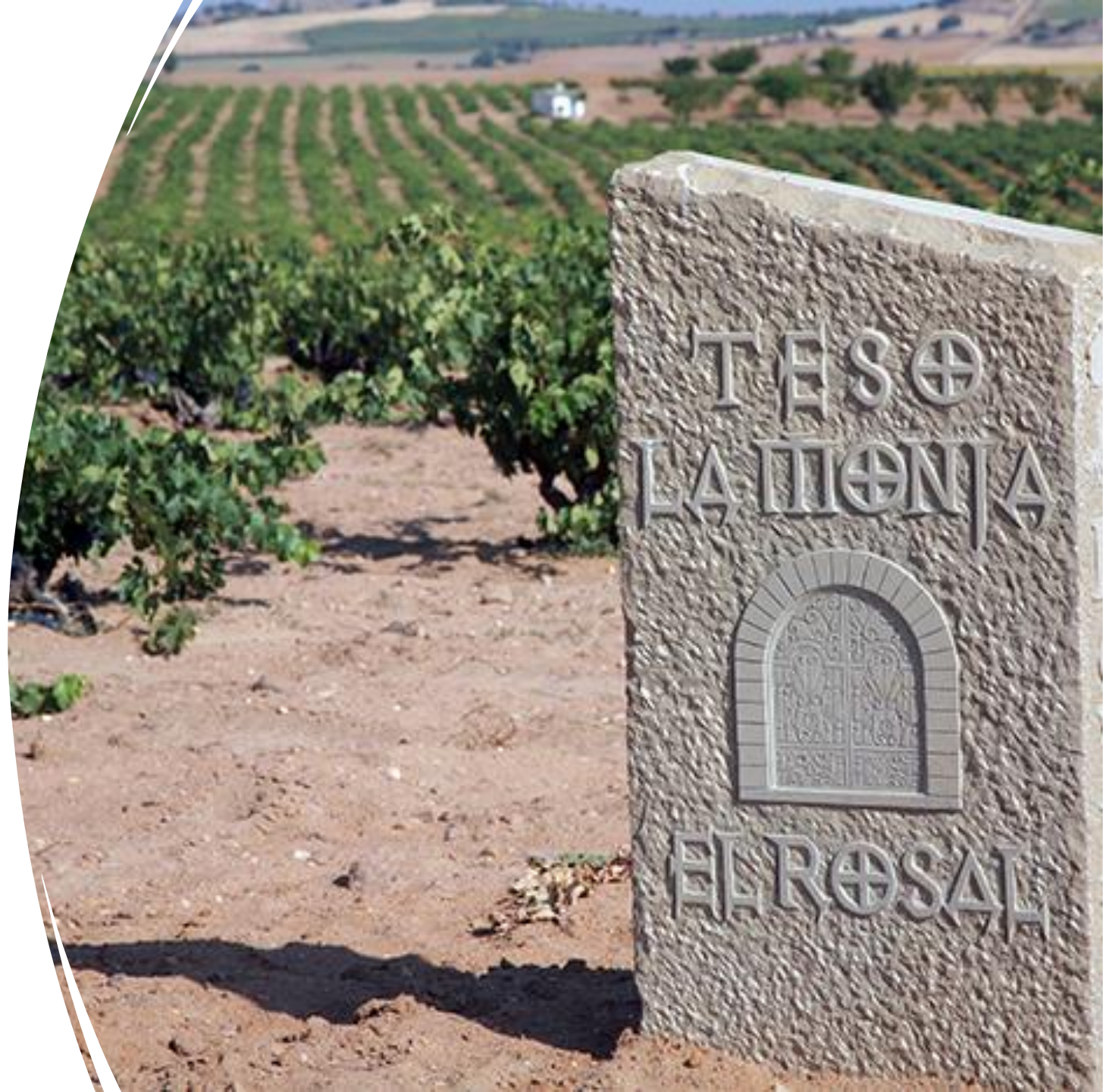


DOMINIO DE PINGUS, RIBERA DEL DUERO, Ψ PSI, 2019

- Variety: Tempranillo 90% and 10% Garnacha
- Designation: Cosecha
- Vintage 2019 in DO Ribera del Duero: 'Excellent'
- Multiple growers, mostly organic and biodynamic
- Average elevation of vineyards 750m
- Traditional winemaking and little new wood
- Aging: 18 months in a mix of old barriques and large wooden tanks
- Alcohol content: 14.2% by vol

BODEGA TESO LA MONJA

- Through its wine group, Sierra Cantabria, the Eguren family established the Toro-based Teso la Monja
- Family of La Rioja winegrowers
- 2007: Teso La Monja was founded (after the sale of Numanthia)
- Soil: sandy-clay with higher proportion of rounded stones
- Head-trained vines
- Hand harvested and fermented in SS using indigenous yeast





TESO LA MONJA, TORO, ALMIREZ, 2018

- Variety: 100% Tinta de Toro
- Designation: Almirez
- Vintage 2018 in DO Toro: 'Excellent'
- Own vineyards in Valdfinjas and Toro
- Altitude of vineyards: 750-850m
- Average age of vines: 15-65 years.
- Aging: French oak barrels for 12 months with 30% new oak barrels
- Alcohol: 14.5% by vol

BODEGA NUMANTHIA

- Founded in 1998 by the Eguren family. It has been owned by LVMH since 2008
- Unique single variety: Tinta de Toro
- Vineyards in distinctive terroirs in sandy and rocky soil
- Bush and ungrafted vines some reaching up to 200 years old with very low yields
- Manual harvesting, dry-farmed and certified organic
- Parcels vinified separately and blended by winemaking teams
- Powerful and intense wines





BODEGA NUMANTHIA, TORO, TERMES, 2017

- Variety: 100 % Tinta de Toro
- Designation: Termes
- Vintage 2017 in DO Toro: 'Excellent'
- Dry farmed and ecological management with manual harvesting
- Blended from different plots with average age of vines 30-50 years old
- Fermentation: Stainless Steel
- Aging: 14 months in French oak (225 l and 400 L) with only 20% new barrels
- Alcohol content: 15.5% by vol

VI – TEMPRANILLO AND FOOD



FOOD PAIRING: A FEW HINTS

- Tempranillo is great with food
- Beware: there is no Tempranillo of Castilla y León, there are many Tempranillos
- It matches perfectly the region's foodstuff: *colchinillo* and *lechazo*
- Take note of the aromatic compounds of oak: vanilla, spices, and cloves
 - Close relationship of the wine and the aromas of charcoal cooked food
 - The vanilla from oak : a buffering effect 'rounds off' spicy foods
- Texture, texture, texture: do not pair with delicate food
- Consider you own individual preference: I love Toro wines with *feijoada*

THE MENU: CAPRI RISTORANTE ITALIANO

- Mushroom Soup
- Ravioli di Vitello
- Lamb Chops
- *Queso Curado* (Spanish aged sheep's milk cheese):
Manchego or Zamorano or Idiazabal.
- Dessert



BOOK

VII - REFERENCES

VINTAGE

REFERENCES

- Ballesteros Torre, Pedro. *Comprender el Vino: Casi todo lo que aún no te havian contado de los vinos españoles*. Planeta Gastro, 2021.
- Ballesteros Torres, Pedro. “Ribeira under £30.” *Decanter*, p 122-124, March 2022.
- Chartier, François. *Taste Buds and Molecules: The art and science of food, wine, and flavor*. John Wiley & Sons, 2012.
- Clarke, Oz. *Grapes and Wines: A Comprehensive Guide to Varieties and Flavours*. Sterling Epicure, 2015.
- Fisher, Rick. *Wine Scholar Guild, Spanish Wine Scholar: Study Manual*. 2019.
- Jackson, Nick. *Beyond Flavour: The Indispensable Handbook to Blind Wine Tasting*. 2020.
- Kavanagh, Don. “Spain’s most wanted wines.” *Wine-searcher*, March 10, 2022. ([Spain's Most Wanted Wines | Wine-Searcher News & Features](#)).
- Lawrence, James. “Investors developing a thirst for Spanish fine wine.” *The Drinks Business*, April 14, 2021. ([Investors developing a thirst for Spanish fine wine - The Drinks Business](#)).

REFERENCES

- Neish, Sarah. “Tim Atkin reaffirms Ribera del Duero’s ‘enormous potential’ for fine wines.” *The Drinks Business*, January 28, 2022. ([Tim Atkin calls for Ribera del Duero to be recognised as a fine wine region \(thedrinksbusiness.com\)](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2022/01/tim-atkin-calls-for-ribera-del-duero-to-be-recognised-as-a-fine-wine-region/)).
- Shaw, Lucy. “Lowi: Numanthia has moved away from 200% new oak.” *The Drinks Business*, March 05, 2020. ([Lowi: Numanthia has moved away from 200% new oak - The Drinks Business](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2020/03/lowi-numanthia-has-moved-away-from-200-new-oak/)).
- Radford, John. *The New Spain: A complete guide to contemporary Spanish wine*. Mitchell Beazley, 2004.
- Robinson, Jancis et al. *Wine Grapes*. Harpers Collins, 2012.
- Woodward, Richard. “Tempranillo: the radical cultivar.” *The Drinks Business*, October 13, 2021. ([Tempranillo: the radical cultivar - The Drinks Business](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2021/10/tempranillo-the-radical-cultivar/)).

REFERENCES: SITES

- Bodega Numanthia: <https://www.numanthia.com/>
- Bodega Numanthia LVMH: [Numanthia, wine of the Spanish "Toro" appellation - Wines & Spirits – LVMH](#)
- Condado de Haza: www.familiafernandezrivera.com
- Consejo Regulador DO Ribera del Duero: <https://www.riberadelduero.es>
- Consejo Regulador DO Toro: <https://www.dotoro.com/es/>
- Dominio de Pingus: www.pingus.es
- Junta de Castilla y León: <https://turismocastillayleon.com>
- Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, Gobierno de España: mapa.gob.es
- Ribera y Rueda: <https://www.riberaruedawine.com>
- Teso la Monja: <https://www.sierracantabria.com>



The End. Wait... we are
going to taste Tempranillo
from La Rioja in August!
