



WINES FROM RIOJA DOCa: CRIANZA vs GRAN RESERVA

JOSÉ BRAKARZ
RICARDO SANTIAGO
Club del Vino
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I – OBJECTIVE AND TASTING PROCEDURE

OBJECTIVE

- Compare different reds from La Rioja with different *élevage* protocols.
- Get acquainted with *Crianza* and *Gran Reserva* red wines from the DOCa Rioja.
- Compare the *Crianza* with the *Gran Reserva* in Semi-Blind Tasting: the wines are known but not in which glass they are poured.



SELECTION OF WINES

- Two red *Crianza* and two red *Gran Reserva*
- Prices: *Crianza*: \$15/20 and *Gran Reserva* \$35/60
- Vintages: *Crianza*: 2016 and 2017 and *Gran Reserva*: 2011 and 2012
- Grapes: *Gran Reserva*: blends Tempranillo, Garnacha and Graciano and *Crianza*: 100% Tempranillo and blend Tempranillo and Garnacha.

TASTING METHODOLOGY



Blind Tasting in random order.



Participants will rank the wines by order of preference (subjective ranking).



Participants will comment on the wines.

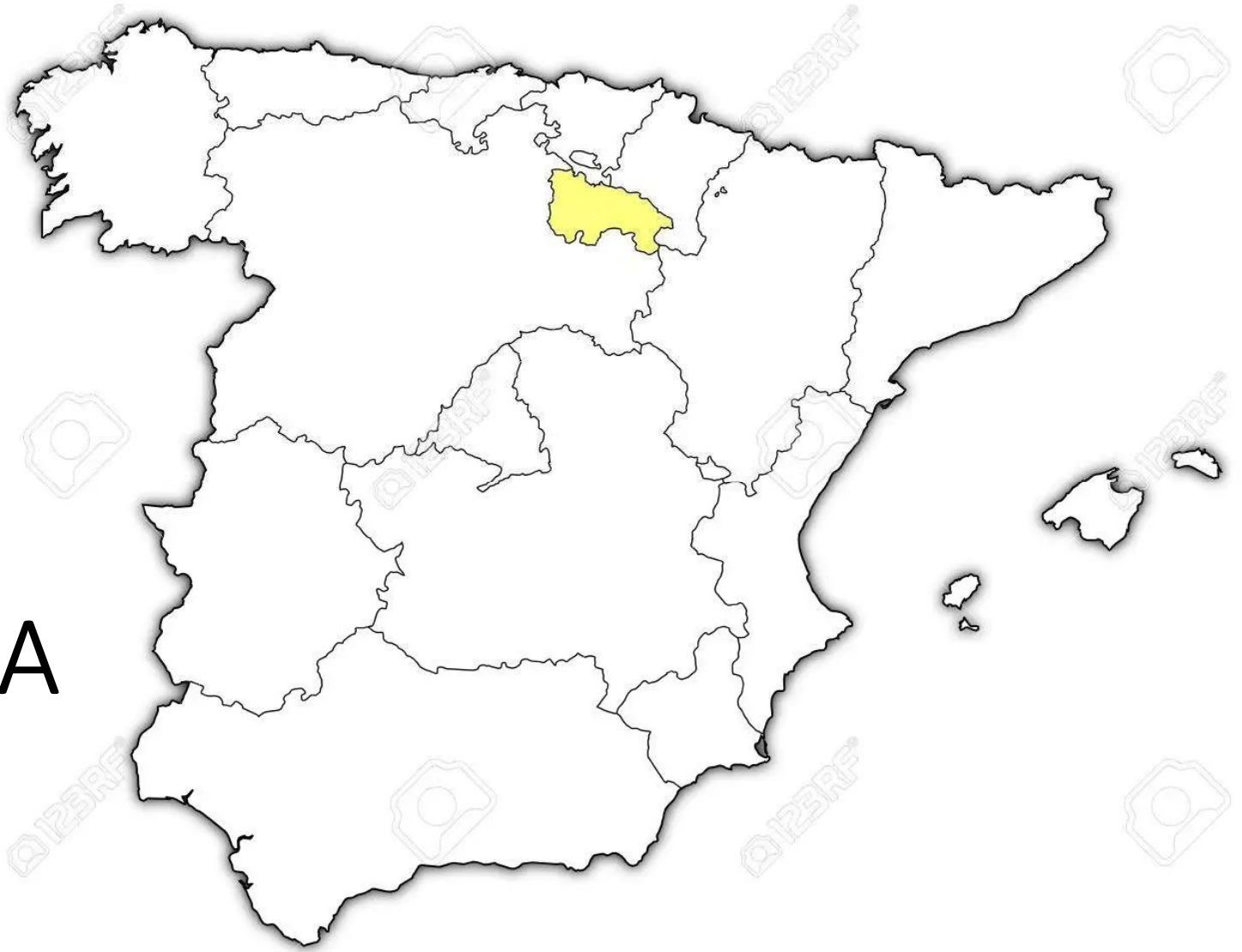


The wines are identified, and prices are disclosed.



Participants select 'best value' wine.

II. LA RIOJA



THE PROVINCE OF LA RIOJA: WINE HISTORY

- **Phoenicians** sailed up the Ebro River (11th century BCE) and introduced winemaking.
- The **Romans** took over the region (2nd century BCE) and planted vineyards and produced wine for local consumption.
- **Moors** incorporated La Rioja into the Muslim territory of Al Andalus (winemaking was tolerated).
- 13TH century: wine brought to Bilbao and Santander to be exported

LA RIOJA: WINE HISTORY MIDDLE AGES TO 18TH CENTURY

- Middle Ages: expansion of viticulture and viniculture (Monks)
- 1560: Local authorities created safeguards to protect the quality and reputation of Rioja wines
- 1787: *Real Sociedad Económica de Cosecheros de Rioja* (monitoring and regulation of vine cultivation, wine production and exportation).

LA RIOJA: WINE HISTORY 19th CENTURY

- 19th century: many people in La Rioja took exile in Bordeaux during the three Carlist Wars (1833-1839).
- Marqués de Murrieta and Marques de Riscal: shock of quality.
- 1850/1860: devastation of vineyards in Galicia (powdery mildew) and France (phylloxera).
- Railway system constructed: allowed for quick shipment of wine.
- French winemakers made their way to Rioja.
- 1899: phylloxera arrived, but remedy was known (swift recovery).

THE PROVINCE OF LA RIOJA: WINE HISTORY

20TH CENTURY

- 1925: Officially recognized as a Designation of Origin
- 1926: establishment of the Consejo Regulador
- 1932: Spain's Wine Statute officially created the Spanish Denominatio
of Origin (DO)
- 1991: Denominación de Origen Calificada (DOCa)

LOCATION AND CLIMATE

- Autonomous community of La Rioja: north-central Spain.
- Second-smallest region and sits at the western end of the Ebro River Valley.
- Climate: Predominantly Continental with hot, dry summers and ample sun. Autumns are generally mild. Winters are cold and frost is common in spring.
- Wine producing zones have unique mesoclimates based on their individual proximity to the mountains, the Ebro River, or the northern coast.

The image shows a wide-angle landscape of a vineyard in Rioja, Spain. In the foreground, there are rows of green grapevines planted in a dry, hilly area. In the middle ground, a hill rises with a small, square, stone castle or fortress perched on its peak. The background features a range of rugged, rocky mountains under a clear blue sky. The text "III. RIOJA: DENOMINACIÓN DE ORIGEN CALIFICADA (DOCa)" is overlaid in the center of the image.

III. RIOJA: DENOMINACIÓN DE ORIGEN CALIFICADA (DOCa)

DOCa RIOJA PRODUCTION AREAS

- Provinces: DOCa Rioja does not occupy the entire autonomous community of La Rioja nor is confined within it.
 - Álava province of Pais Vasco (20% of the vineyard area)
 - La Rioja (69%)
 - Navarra (11%)
- DOCa Rioja 3 zones:
 - Rioja Alavesa (21% total vineyard area)
 - Rioja Alta (42%)
 - Rioja Oriental (37%)



RED GRAPE VARIETIES

- **Tempranillo:** produces wine moderate in alcohol, moderate to low in acidity, with significant tannins and not particularly fruit forward (72% of the total area under vine in DOCa Rioja).
 - **Garnacha Tinta:** adds red fruit and alcohol to the blend.
 - **Mazuelo (Cariñena) and Graciano:** add color, tannin, acidity, and spicy notes.
 - **Maturana Tinta**
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- Vineyard area in the DOCa: Red 91% and White 9%.
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- More information on Tempranillo grape and wines can be seen on recent tastings: Tasting #239 March 29, 2022, Wines from Castilla y Leon: Ribera del Duero vs Toro and Tasting #242 June 28, 2022, Spanish Tempranillo Wines

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.

TASTING 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.

DOCa Rioja Aging Requirements for Red Wines

- **Genérico** (*Joven* or *Cosecha*): No minimum aging requirement.
- **Crianza**: 2 years before release (Minimum 1 year in barrel).
- **Reserva**: 3 years before release (Minimum 1 year in barrel and 6 months in bottle).
- **Gran Reserva**: 5 years before release (Minimum 2 years in barrel and 2 years in bottle).

White and Rosé wines have different aging requirements.

CRIANZA: STYLE, AROMAS & FLAVORS, AND FOOD PAIRING IDEAS

- Easy drinking style, tend to emphasize fresh fruit above all else and spend less time in oak barrels and bottle than Gran Reserva.
- Aromas of strawberries, cherries with varying degrees of toasty, vanilla flavors and aromas from the oak depending on producer and the type of oak. Typically fruity, clean and super quaffable.
- Rioja`s everyday wine. As an aperitif on its own, but great with spicy food, whole roasted fish and lasagna. Great with aged sheep`s milk cheeses like Manchego.



GRAN RESERVA: STYLE, AROMAS & FLAVORS, AND FOOD PAIRING IDEAS

- Made only in the best years. Many bodegas choose to age them much longer than required. Wines of superlative elegance and finesse, ready to drink upon release or cellar.
- A complex blend of subtle spice and soft fruit: blackberries, dried cherries, and cinnamon overlain with very developed tertiary flavors: cigar box, leather, wet earth, mushrooms, truffles, and faded flowers.
- A special occasion wine. Excellent with fall and winter stews, sautéed mushrooms, duck confit, and chestnut soup. This is wine to linger over and return to over the course of a meal, offering the patient drinker something different with each visit to the glass.

IV. THE WINES

BODEGAS MARQUES DE LA CONCORDIA

- The name Marques de la Concordia is a tribute to Don José Abascal (1743 -1821), appointed Marquis of the Spanish Concord of Peru, in 1812, by King Ferdinand VII. He was the Vice-king (Virrey) of Peru between 1812-1861
- Producing wine since 1870, their grapes come from the oldest (1929) and highest quality vineyards in **Rioja Alta**, with their wines aged in French oak.
- Rioja Alta extends through the territories between Haro and Logroño, south of the river, Ebro. It is a humid and mountainous zone due to its higher elevation above sea level, with a totally Atlantic climate. Most of its soils are of alluvial earth, and limestone-clay-ferrous.
- This altitude slows down the maturity of the grape, a grape that has more acidity, more freshness, less alcoholic strength, and a low average color intensity.





MARQUES DE LA CONCORDIA, VINA ALARDE, CRIANZA, 2016

- Composition: 80% Tempranillo, 20% Garnacha
- Vintage in La Rioja 2016: “Very Good”
- The grapes arrive to the winery at the optimum point of ripeness. After a careful selection, the obtained must is fermented at temperature below 28 °C.
- Once the fermentation is complete, the wine is transferred to American oak barrels where it is aged for a minimum of 18 months.

TASTING NOTES

- Appearance: Ruby red, clean and bright color.
- On the nose: Ripe red fruits with coconut and vanilla aromas. On the palate: Well balanced and structured with oak nuances. Long and persistent.

FOOD MATCH & TEMPERATURE

- Ideal companion white and red meats, sausages, eggs and cured cheeses.
- Serving temperature: 16 °C

VINHEDOS Y BODEGAS SIERRA CANTABRIA



- Winery located in San Vicente de la Sonsierra between the foothills of the Sierra Cantabria mountain range and the Ebro River
- The Sierra protects the estate from the cold north winds.
- Fundada en 1870, ha sido de la misma familia a lo largo de 5 generaciones.
- Tienen las bodegas: Sierra Cantabria, Viñedos Sierra Cantabria, Señorío de San Vicente y Viñedos de Párganos, todos en Rioja

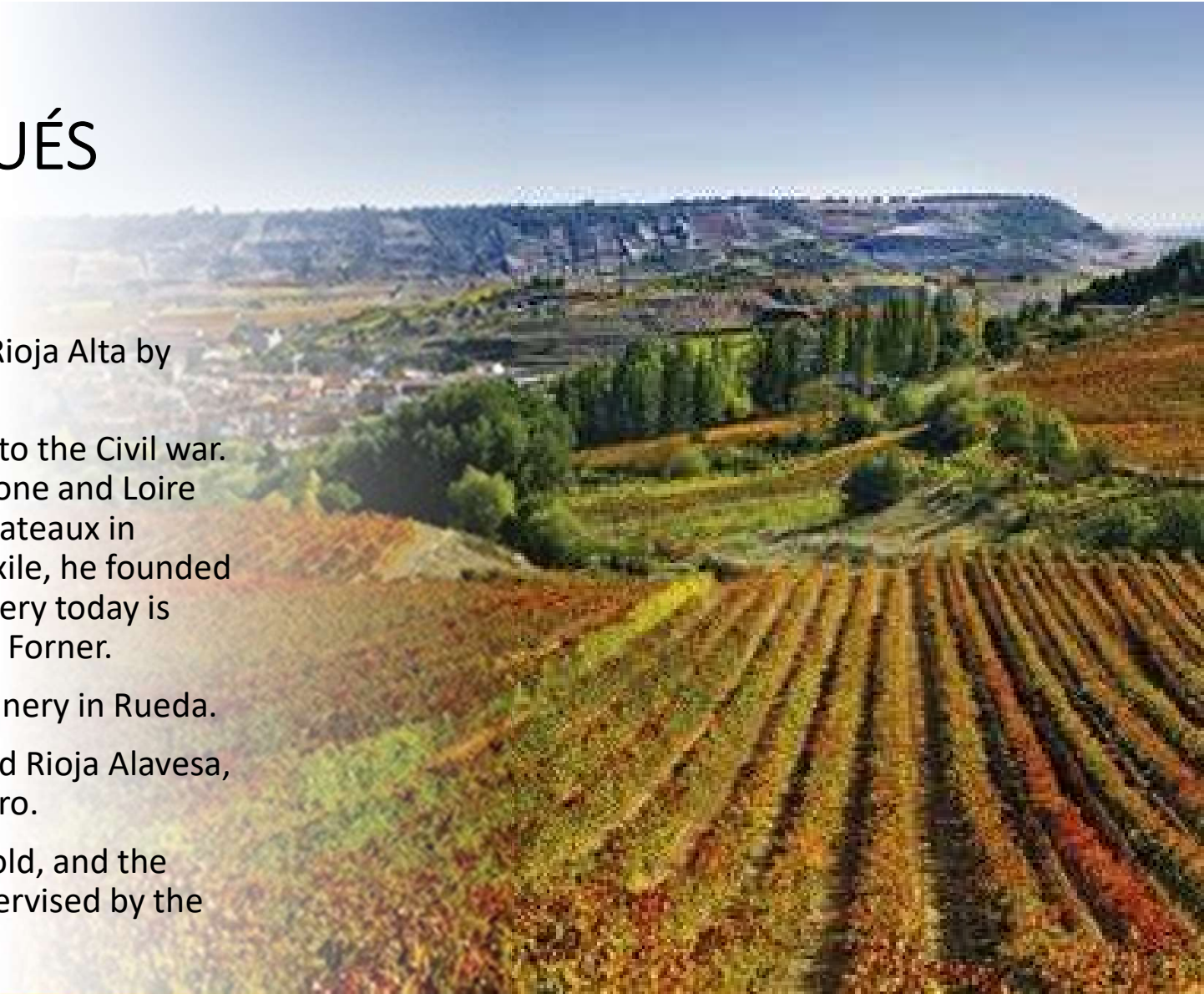


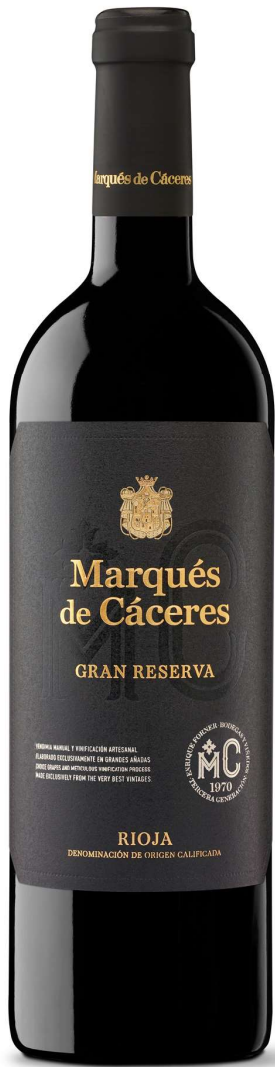
SIERRA CANTABRIA, CRIANZA, 2017

- Variety: 100% Tempranillo
- Vintage 2017 in La Rioja: “Very Good”
- Vineyard: San Vicente de la Sonsierra - Organic
- Ageing: 14 months in French and American barrels.
- Alcohol: 14.5%
- Tasting Notes: Intense Cherry. Fine toasted notes (cocoa and coffee) and ripe fruit expression. Strong at palate, smoky with well balanced toasty notes of oak and fruit

BODEGAS MARQUÉS DE CÁCERES

- Founded in 1970 in Cenicero, La Rioja Alta by Enrique Forner.
- Enrique was exiled in France due to the Civil war. He had a wine business in the Rhone and Loire valleys. In 1963 he bought two chateaux in Bordeaux. After returning from exile, he founded the Marqués de Cáceres. The winery today is managed by his daughter Cristina Forner.
- Marqués de Cáceres has also a winery in Rueda.
- Vineyards located in Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa, particularly in the town of Cenicero.
- Many vines are over thirty years old, and the vineyards are monitored and supervised by the winery technical teams.





MARQUÉS DE CÁCERES, GRAN RESERVA, 2012

- Variety: Tempranillo (85%), Garnacha Tinta (8%), and Graciano (7%)
- Vintage 2012 in La Rioja: “Very Good”
- Special selection of old vines of Tempranillo from Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa, aged between 65 and 85 years old. Very low yields of between 3,000 and 4,500 kg/ha. Garnacha from vineyards in Rioja Alta and Graciano is mostly harvested in Elciego.
- Harvest: 100% manual
- Fermentation: Stainless Steel
- Malolatic Fermentation: new French oak barrels
- Aging: 24 to 26 months in new French oak barrels and second wine barrels.
- Aging in bottle: 4 years minimum before release
- Alcohol: 14.5%

LA RIOJA ALTA Group

- Founded in 1890 in Haro's Station District (*Bairro de la Estacion*).
- The La Rioja Alta group has other 3 wineries: Torre de Ona (Rioja Alavesa), Lagar D Cervera (Rias Baixa), and Aster (Ribera del Duero).
- The Group has 660 ha. of estate-owned vineyards.
- Production of grapes under 5,000 kilos per hectare.
- Produce own barrels with wood imported from the US (in Haro).
- Only winery in the world with two of its wines listed in the Decanter Wines of the Year list (2021).





LA RIOJA ALTA, GRAN RESERVA 904, 2011

- Variety: Tempranillo (89%) and Graciano (11%)
- Vintage 2011 in La Rioja: 'Excellent'
- Blended from different plots of Tempranillo from vines over 60 years old and from one vineyard for Graciano
- Fermentation: Stainless Steel
- Natural Malolactic Fermentation: 75 days
- Aging: 33 months in four-and-a-half-year-old American oak barrels
- Final blend bottled in November 2016
- Alcohol content: 14.5%

V – MENU

THE MENU: CAPRI RESTAURANT

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