

THE CLASSIC RIOJA

of

R. López de Heredia

VIÑA TONDONIA



GRAN RESERVA VINTAGES 1964-1987

“Perhaps no winery in the world guards its traditions as proudly and steadfastly as López de Heredia does, especially in a region like Rioja, which has been swept by profound changes in the last 25 years. And yet, as fusty and as backward-looking as López de Heredia may seem, it is paradoxically a winery in the vanguard, its viticulture and winemaking a shining, visionary example for young, forward-thinking producers all over the world.”

-Eric Asimov, The New York Times

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tasting room
Zaha Hadid architect

“A visit to the venerable Bodega Lopez de Heredia, located in the Rioja Alta capital of Haro, is akin to entering a time machine taking you back 100 years.”
-Wine Advocate

“... Lopez de Heredia is one of the few remaining estates producing wines that typify Rioja's 19th century tradition in producing elegant red wines of finesse and nuance, released when ready to drink...”
-The Wine Gazette

“... as long as the family of Lopez de Heredia continues to fashion wines in the region, one can rest assured that classic Rioja reds, whites and roses’ will never face extinction”
-John Gilman, *A View from the Cellar*

If you haven’t tasted traditional style Rioja –no chemicals, no pesticides, no chaptalization, no machines, unfiltered, only hand-harvesting, only hand-racking with oak funnels, and 4 barrel-makers on staff, etc. – Lopez should be at the top of your list.

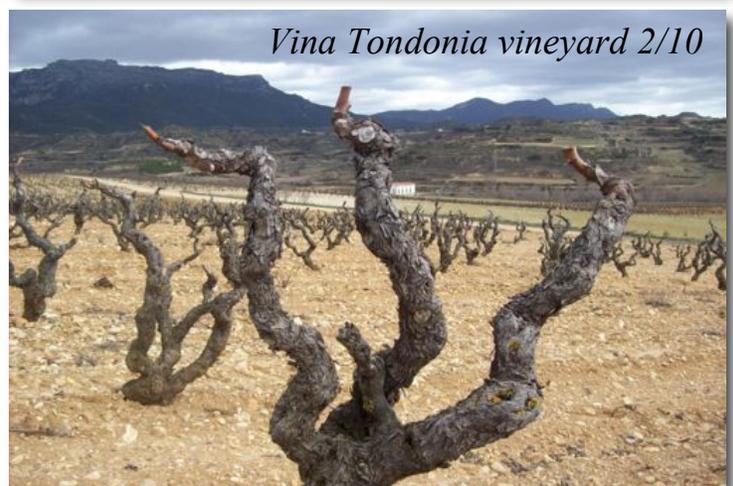


“The Cemetery”

“The wines of R. López de Heredia define traditional Rioja, and they set the standards by which the region's modern reds must be judged.”
-Wine Spectator

“...we don’t want to have to defend ourselves for the way we make our wines, for this style was what made the region of Rioja famous in the first place, and which has been the foundation for our family winery since my great-grandfather founded the bodega in 1877-why would we want to change anything?”
-Maria-Jose Lopez de Heredia

“All you have to do is taste one of its wonderful older white wines, like the 1991 reserva, to taste the hazelnut, coconut flavors of American oak beautifully integrated with the wine. And if you ever get a chance to taste a rare 1964 white, you will be rewarded with a rich, pure wine tasting almost entirely of minerals.”
-The Wine Blog, NY Times



Vina Tondonia vineyard 2/10

“It has been heartening in the past few years to see young sommeliers from the United States and other countries embrace these wines for what they are: the unique, finely crafted, wonderfully drinkable wines of another era.”
-Gerry Dawes

“Today Lopez de Heredia is the most authentically traditional winery. The current generations have made strenuous efforts to preserve their traditions, trying to do everything exactly as it was done originally...”
-Luis Guitierrez, *The World of Fine Wine*

Classic...Graceful...Haunting...



Mold encrusts the damp walls of the dimly-lit catacombs of Lopez de Heredia. Bottles of Gran Reserva Rioja lay in state, resting under decades-old blankets of cobwebs. There are few wineries in Spain whose name conjures the heritage and prestige evoked by R. Lopez de Heredia. Little about this winery has changed in the 132 years since its founding by Don Rafael Lopez de Heredia. The family adheres to a winemaking doctrine blueprinted in the 1880's — to make wine only from their own vineyards, using natural yeasts, long aging in wood, and no filtration at bottling.

Don Rafael Lopez de Heredia founded this bodega in 1877 at the age of 20 after training as a winemaker in Bordeaux. Rioja wine was experiencing a rise to international prominence at the time, when French winemakers, seeking a region not yet affected by the Phylloxera blight that was ravaging their vineyards, arrived in Rioja accompanied by their knowledge, experience and money. Don Rafael followed in the footsteps of the Bordelais, adopting many of their practices such as racking the wine off its lees and long aging in oak. These were “modern” practices in Spain and Lopez de Heredia pioneered their use.



The winery continues to use their own oak barrels, and continues to recondition them with hand adzes, just as it has done for more than a century. In fact, this is the only producer in Spain continuing the craft of producing all of the barrels used for the maturing of their wine. Heredia also continues to use the painstakingly slow process of hand racking the wines using bronze spigots and oak funnels and buckets, a technique which has been abandoned by all but the most fastidious Bordeaux winemakers. All these are entrusted techniques of wine production unaltered by fashion and preserved from one generation to the next.

Speed, it would seem, is not a virtue for the Heredia family, while patience may have been exalted to its highest form. The winemaking process in this winery is the most traditional style you can find in Rioja, from the care of the vineyards to long aging periods in oak and in bottle. Everything here is made in the same natural and artisan way employed 133 years ago, with the purpose of making the best wine possible - the mythical fine wine from Rioja. Unlike most of its competitors, now owned by outside investors, López de Heredia is owned—and every detail of its operation is handled—by the family who founded it. The bodega is now in the capable hands of the family's fourth generation, Maria-José, Mercedes, and Julio Cèsar. Preserving their traditions for so long has not been as easy as it may sound. Bodegas Lopez de Heredia has persevered through the many obstacles of the 20th century – phylloxera, global economic crises, a civil war and two world wars. However it has been the last twenty-five years that have been the most challenging, a period that has threatened the cultural heritage of the Rioja region. The modern wave of internationalization that has been sweeping the region has distorted the traditional styles in pursuit of high scores and higher prices. Even great estates like Muga, CVNE and Bodegas Riojanas have succumbed to the market pressure to produce wines that compete with other “high-scorers” from around the world, often at the cost of the wine's soul. But as long as the family of Lopez de Heredia continues to fashion wines in the region, one can rest assure that classic Rioja wines will never face extinction.



Maria-José Lopez de Heredia



The Vineyards and Wines of Bodegas R. Lopez de Heredia

Viña Tondonia

This vineyard, the most spectacular in Haro, is one of Spain's "Grand Cru" vineyards and the top source for classical, ageless Rioja wines.

The Tondonia vineyard has a few acres of white grapes tucked into a corner, from which R. Lopez de Heredia has made a Rioja Blanco for more than 50 years. Planted with Viura and Malvasia, this small section of the vineyard is widely regarded as some of the most definitive terroir for white Rioja.

Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva Red - Tempranillo, Garnacho, Mazuelo, Graciano. Nine years aging in barrel (the minimum for a Gran Reserva is six years), followed by five or six in bottle before release.

Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva White- Viura w/ 10-15% Malvasia, allotted the same aging time as the reds.

Viña Tondonia Reserva Red - Six years aging in barrel (the minimum requirement for a Reserva is one year oak, two years bottle). 80% tempranillo, 15% garnacho, mazuelo and graciano.

Viña Tondonia Reserva White – Same aging regiment as for red reserva. Mostly Viura with some Malvasia.

Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva Rosado – Four and a half years aging in barrel 30% Tempranillo 60% Garnacha 10% Viura.

Viña Bosconia

The vineyard El Bosque is situated beside the river Ebro. Height is 465 m. and it is one km. away from the winery. In the north it has the Mountains called Sierra de Cantabria. The vines are planted in the hills with south orientation which gives them the perfect climate to mature the grapes. The soil is clay and limestone. The age average of the vines is 40 years. It has a total of 15 ha.: 11 of Tempranillo, 2 of red Garnacho one of Mazuelo and one of Graciano.

Viña Bosconia Gran Reserva Red - Tempranillo (80%), Garnacho, Mazuelo, Graciano. Aged in oak barrels for nine years, it does not reach the market until at least another five or six years in the bottle

Viña Bosconia Reserva Red, Five years aging in barrel. 80% tempranillo, 15% garnacho, mazuelo and graciano.

Viña Cubillo

The wines of Viña Cubillo come from the vineyard called Viña Cubillas. Historically these wines were called "Special Harvest". This vineyard is 4 kms. away from the winery. Its height is 410 m. and the vines have an average age of 40 years. The soil is from the terciaria age and the soil clay and limestone. The surface is 24 ha. from which 16 are tempranillo, 4 Garnacha, 2 Mazuelo and 2 Graciano.

Viña Cubillo Crianza Red - Three years aging in barrel. (Crianza minimum requirement is one year barrel, one year bottle). 65% Tempranillo, 25% Garnache with Mazeulo and Graciano.

Viña Gravonia

The vineyard is 200 meters from the winery and close to the river Ebro. Its height is 340 m. and the average age of the vines is 45 years. The orientation is south. The soil is poor and stony, the roots of the vines go deep and ensure very balanced, ripe grapes . Viña Gravonia has a surface of twenty-four ha. all of them of Viura grape.

Viña Gravonia Crianza White - Very dry, four years aging in barrel. 100% Viura.

Lopez de Heredia Gran Reserva

VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA BLANCO

94+JG 93WA 93ST

1981 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA BLANCO

“... the 1981 is drinking brilliantly at twenty-seven... and it is a truly magical bottle of wine... I would not hesitate to keep this tucked away in the cellar for a few more years before drinking it with really wild abandon.

Of the younger vintages of Tondonia Blanco, the 1981 is the finest that I have tasted, and it clearly is my candidate to be the next legendary bottle of this wine after the surreal 1963 and 1957.” –JG

“The richly-colored 1981 Vina Tondonia Blanco Gran Reserva captures the essence of this house’s wines. It is a wine of great complexity as well as contrasts. At once mature yet seemingly ageless, full-bodied yet somehow also miraculously delicate.” – WA

“True gold, but remarkably youthful for its age. Wild, complex bouquet of pungent flowers, succulent herbs, orange peel, violet, vanilla, toasted nuts and baking spices. Rich, deep and beautifully concentrated, with surprising energy...” –ST

1976 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA BLANCO

91JG

“This elegant white still has plenty of backbone to support its rich yet dry flavors of almond, vanilla, mineral and dried pear. It marries intensity and harmony with distinctive character. An assertive wine that is still evolving...” –WS



VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA RED

1987 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA

93JG 93W&S

“...an excellent wine that has now reached its apogee of maturity and is now drinking splendidly... I might be tempted to give it even a few more years in the cellar to see if an additional layer of complexity will emerge with more bottle age. An excellent vintage for this consistently excellent bottling” –JG

“Though the color is taking on a coppery cast, this wine is still bold and powerful in flavor. Its aromas of piquillo peppers could come only from Rioja, surrounded by a cloud of cherry and mushroom scents. The flavors trail off into a smoky finish, mouthwatering acidity bringing out the detail. An elegant steakhouse red.”

– W&S

1985 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA

95ST

“Deeper orange-red. Knockout perfumed nose of great purity and complexity: strawberry, milk chocolate, loam and an intriguing muskiness. Great clarity and grip in the mouth thanks to brilliantly harmonious acids. Has buns of steel but also a wonderful penetrating sweetness. Tannins are suave and resolved. An extremely elegant, very intensely flavored Rioja with superb persistence on the palate.” - ST

1981 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA

94JG

*“To my mind the 1981 vintage in Rioja is analogous to the 1982 vintage in Bordeaux, and will be one of the great classic years of our lifetimes... The 1981 Vina Tondonia Reserva is an utterly refined and youthful wine that is beginning to be drinkable at age twenty-six, but is still emphatically on its way up. The superb bouquet offers up a melange of strawberries, blood orange, citrus zest, lovely soil tones and coffee. On the palate the wine is fullish, bright, tangy and beautifully complex, with a lovely core of fruit, bright acids and a very long, classy and intensely-flavored finish. Delicious now, I would still give this wine a few years to reach its zenith.”
- JG*

1976 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA

92WA

“Thirty years after the vintage the two 1976 Gran Reservas still fully express the qualities of their unique terroirs. The outstanding 1976 Vina Tondonia Gran Reserva offers a multitude of tertiary nuances in its suggestions of leather, licorice, coffee beans, earthiness and dried prunes on a medium-bodied frame of notable elegance. It is sweeter and riper than the Bosconia Gran Reserva, with a resonating note of alcoholic warmth that frames the long, lingering finish.” -WA

1973 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA

93JG

“The bouquet is deep, pure and vibrant, as it jumps from the glass in a blaze of cinnamon, singed wood, coffee, strawberry, orange zest, a touch of white pepper and a lovely base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and tangy, with lovely elegance and focus, sound mid-palate depth, and excellent length and grip on the silky and complex finish. Just an excellent bottle in the prime of its life.” - JG

VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA RED

1987 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

92ST

“Intensely floral nose offers a complex bouquet of dried red berries, wilted rose, smoked meat, anise and baking spices. Strawberry and cherry flavors are light in body but deceptively concentrated, and there are no tannins that I can detect. Finishes brisk and clean, with pleasing mineral lift and excellent sappy persistence. Ready to drink, but the track record here says that this will age for years to come.” – ST

1981 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

94+JG 94ST

“Faded red. Gorgeous , multidimensional aromas of dried red fruits, white flowers, spicecake, leather, underbrush, graphite and lavender sachet. Silky and seemingly weightless, with a haunting crystalline purity to the sweet strawberry and redcurrant flavors. Sweetly insinuating on the finish, with lingering mineral and strawberry flavors. A remarkable wine that's completely out of step with today's styles : this is the stuff that gets die-hard Rioja traditionalists all weepy.” ST

1976 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

96ST

“Pale-edged red. Multidimensional nose of raspberry, black plum, orange zest, coffee, milk chocolate, game and a superripe whiff of raisin. Uncanny sweetness in the mouth, with a strong spine of acidity framing and intensifying the fruit flavors. Really remarkable acid/fruit balance. Big, rich, powerful and deep. Finishes extremely long and magically fresh. Contains about 80% tempranillo, a bit high for Bosconia, which is always higher in tempranillo (and spends less time in barrel) than Tondonia.”-ST

1973 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

92JG

“...now fully into its apogee of maturity and is drinking with great complexity and charm. On the nose the wine offers up a perfumed and classy melange of cherries, strawberries, nutmeg, a delicate touch of fresh herbs and a complex base of soil tones. On the palate the wine is medium-full, complex and light on its feet, with lovely intensity of flavor, tangy acids, faded tannins and lovely length and grip on the bouncy and beautifully balanced finish, A lovely wine.” - JG

1970 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

93WA

“The 1970 Vina Bosconia Gran Reserva is a captivating effort, with endless, well-defined nuances of pine, minerals and sweet red fruits that emerge from the glass in a breathtaking display of purity and class. It shows the extraordinary length, great expression and the pure breed of a truly great wine.” - WA

1968 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

94+JG

“1968 is a really lovely vintage for Rioja, without perhaps the added depth and dimension found in a vintage such as 1958, but with all of the aromatic and flavor complexity that Rioja is renowned for coupled to medium-full, silky and elegant structures. The most recent bottle I have tasted is the finest I have tasted to date, as it couples the suave profile of the '68 Rioja vintage today with the bounce, grip and tangy intensity of flavor of Bosconia at it's best. The bouquet is a superb melange of cherries, red plums, fresh nutmeg, soil tones, a nice touch of woodsmoke, nutskins and gentle autumnal overtones in the upper register. The wine is full-bodied, pure and impressively sappy at the core, with melting tannins, bright acids, and excellent length and grip on the peacock's tail of a finish. Superb juice.” – JG

1964 VINA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA

95WA 93JG

“The red wines began with two 1964s, a vintage widely thought to be one of the great years of the 20th century in Rioja. The 1964 Vina Tondonia is cherry red in color with fragrant spice and cassis notes in the complex perfume. Sweet, savory, elegant and impeccably balanced, it is a wine of great finesse and character. The 1964 Bosconia is slightly more succulent but otherwise similar ... Both wines are fully intact with many years of life ahead.”-WA

“... offers a complex bouquet of red and black cherries, a bit of charred wood, cigar smoke, walnuts, plenty of soil and a delicate touch of herb tones in the upper register. The palate is fullish, round and complex, with a good core, impressive complexity, and nice length and grip on the still slightly chewy finish. A bit more old-fashioned in profile than the surreal '68, but the '64 is certainly a terrific bottle as well.” - JG

PLEASE CONTACT GENUINE WINE SELECTIONS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON CURRENT AVAILABILITIES OF THE LISTED WINES AS WELL AS THE “YOUNGER” WINES FROM BODEGAS R. LOPEZ DE HEREDIA

2005 VINA CUBILLO CRIANZA (RED)
2001 VINA GRAVONIA CRIANZA (WHITE)
2000 VINA TONDONIA RESERVA (RED)
2002 VINA BOSCONIA RESERVA (RED)
1998 VINA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA ROSADO
1991 VINA TONDONIA RESERVA (WHITE)

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CRITICS

WA-WINE ADVOCATE ST-STEVEN TANZER (INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR)
JG-JOHN GILMAN “A VIEW FROM THE CELLAR”
WS-WINE SPECTATOR W&S-WINE & SPIRITS