

R. LÓPEZ DE HEREDIA VIÑA TONDONIA (D.O.C. Rioja, Spain)

Founded in 1877, López de Heredia stands out as one of the few worldwide wineries that respects and adheres to core principles taught by their ancestors.



photograph courtesy of Viña Tondonia

THE WINERY

“Perhaps no winery in the world guards its traditions as proudly and steadfastly as López de Heredia does... it is paradoxically a winery in the vanguard, its viticulture and winemaking, is a shining, visionary example for young, forward-thinking producers all over the world... At López de Heredia, there is serenity that comes with adherence to core principles...” August 12th, 2009 by Eric Asimov, *The New York Times*

There are few wineries in Spain, or in the world, whose name conjures the heritage and prestige evoked by R. López de Heredia. Little about this winery has changed in the 142 years since its founding by, Don Rafael López de Heredia. The family adheres to a winemaking doctrine blueprinted in the 1880s – to make wine only from their own vineyards.

When it comes to the winemaking process, the work in the vineyard has not changed since the 1880's. R. López de Heredia is a “traditionalist” through and through and keeping the traditions alive today is important to maintain not only the quality but the personality of the house. Working by hand with some of the best terroir, respecting the soil, and working with nature on what it needs is something R. López de Heredia is very proud of.

Fermentation takes place in their 72 large oak vats, some of which are 142 years old. After fermentation, the wines are ready to be aged in 14,000 handmade American oak barrels.

The wines will remain at R. López de Heredia's underground cellars, stored at perfect temperature and tranquility for a minimum of 3 to 10 years. Wines acquire their smoothness and bouquet during the bottle aging that follows, a minimum of 3 years for Crianzas, and 10 years for Gran Reserva wines. Aging wines should be seen as a pedagogic act; the wine is "educated", hence should never be rushed through sped-up improvisations which would destroy the biological process that give it its special character. Wines need to spend a minimum of three years in barrels to begin to manifest their "education" and their soul.

THE VINEYARD BOSCONIA - The vineyard “El Bosque” is situated beside the Ebro River, with a height of 1,527 feet above sea level, less than a mile from the winery. The soil is clay and Limestone. It has a total of 37 acres: Tempranillo, red Garnacho, Mazuelo, and Graciano. Originally, the founder, due to his French influence, gave the wines names inspired by French wines. Viña Bosconia comes from a Burgundy-style wine that he used to make with a high percentage of Pinot Noir, which he called “Rioja Cepa Borgoña”.

VIÑA BOSCONIA RESERVA, 2007/08 (red)



- **Region/Sub- Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 80% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 5% Mazuelo and Graciano.
- **Soil:** Clay and Limestone.
- **Harvest:** End September-early October, all done by hand, cutting with a curved knife "corquete", prevents the grape breaking causing fermentation prematurely. Bunches are placed in conical wood containers made at the R. López de Heredia cooperage.
- **Vinification:** Hoppers de-stem bunches and gently break skins. Spontaneous fermentation in large 25,000L vats.
- **Aging:** 5 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per year and at least 4 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Its nose is persistent, full bodied, and showing a lot of mature fruit, being dominated by the Tempranillo grape, red cherries and cranberries, red apple skins, game blood and leather, and clove.
- **Taste:** Its taste is round, smooth, fresh, full of body, and persistent.
- **Gastronomy:** The perfect partner to roasted and highly-flavored meats.
- **Color:** Evolved perfectly, showing a deep ruby color, with shades of orange.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

A View From The Cellar, Oct '19 - 94 points - "...the bouquet wafts from the glass in a lovely and wide-open blend of red plums, raspberries, cloves, cinnamon, complex soil tones, a touch of toasted coconut. On the palate the wine is fullish, refined and intensely flavored, with lovely soil signature, tangy acids, fine focus and grip and a long, moderately tannic and beautifully balanced, complex finish."

Wine & Spirits, Dec '19 - 93 points – “The vine age averages 40 years; the blend includes Tempranillo (80 percent) with Garnacha and a little Graciano and Mazuelo. Aged for five years in American oak barrels, then in bottle at the winery before release, it’s a completely Spanish red, friendly and jaunty, spicy in its delicate fragrance of tart cherries and strawberries.”