

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 TONDONIA - Don Rafael López de Heredia acquired Viña Tondonia from a group of clergies in 1913. The Tondonia vineyard is a beautiful vineyard of over 247 acres, 1,600 feet above sea level, situated on the right bank of the Ebro River in Rioja Alta. The soil is Alluvial clay with a high concentration of Limestone. There are 4 varieties of red grapes planted in this vineyard: Tempranillo, Mazuelo, Graciano, and Garnacho.

VIÑA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA, 1995 (red)



- **Region/Sub-Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 75% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 10% Mazuelo and Graciano.
- **Soil:** Alluvial 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:** 10 years in 225L American oak barrels, handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per year and at least 9 years spent in bottle before release.
- **Nose:** Delicate fragrance, complex and developed. Leather and cured meats, cherries, dried apple skins.
- **Taste:** On the palate the wine retains its vitality as if it wanted to conceal its true age. Freshness of the wine showing the acidity, full tannins.
- **Gastronomy:** Excellent with any grilled meats, Iberico Ham, octopus, paprika and smoked spice, hard cheeses.
- **Color:** Vibrant red and sparkling ruby leading slightly towards amber.

The Vintage:

There are very few vintages of Gran Reserva ever made in the history of the winery. The year 1995 was a particularly good year with early maturation, very good bud break, and pollination. Two weeks of sun shining before harvest gave the wines exceptional concentration in the fruit. This wine developed fantastically over the years showing more beautiful with bottle age.

CRITICS & REVIEWS:

James Suckling, "The Alluring Freshness of Spain", July '17 - 96 points - "...sweet tobacco, orange zest, and hints of balsamic with dried fruits on the nose. Full body, soft, silky, and fruity combination that gives such pleasure..."

THE VINEYARD TONDONIA - Don Rafael López de Heredia acquired Viña Tondonia from a group of clergies in 1913. The Tondonia vineyard is a beautiful vineyard of over 247 acres, 1,600 feet above sea level, situated on the right bank of the Ebro River in Rioja Alta. The soil is Alluvial clay with a high concentration of Limestone. There are 4 varieties of red grapes planted in this vineyard: Tempranillo, Mazuelo, Graciano, and Garnacho.

VIÑA TONDONIA RESERVA, 2007/08 (red)



- **Region/Sub-Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 75% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 10% Graciano and Mazuelo.
- **Soil:** Alluvial 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:** 6 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, raked twice per year and at least 4 years spent in bottle before release.
- **Nose:** Rich nose of leather, black cherry, dried raspberries and spices.
- **Taste:** Full palate and complex development, very dry, well balanced with firm tannins.
- **Gastronomy:** All types of meats and grilled fish, leg of lamb stuffed with rosemary and garlic, cured meats, anchovies and fatty fish.
- **Color:** A darker, vivacious, deep garnet.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

Wine & Spirits, Dec '19 - 94 points - "There is something magical about well-aged Rioja, and there is often something magical about Viña Tondonia, suggest by this wine' gentle, lasting touch of bright, sunny cherry notes and deep earth tones, the flavors delicately saturated. Get some."

Wine & Spirits, October '19 - 90 points - "Tondonia is the estates most prized vineyard, a 247-acre site that founder Rafael López de Heredia began developing in 1913. He hoped to create a wine in the manner of Bordeaux, but with local grape varieties. The wine remains a blend of Tempranillo, Garnacha, Mazuelo and Graciano with extensive aging in barrel and in bottle. The 2006 is mature and elegant, the fruit firm and zesty, gentled by age."

THE VINEYARD TONDONIA - Don Rafael López de Heredia acquired Viña Tondonia from a group of clergies in 1913. The Tondonia vineyard is a beautiful vineyard of over 247 acres, 1,600 feet above sea level, situated on the right bank of the Ebro River in Rioja Alta. The soil is Alluvial clay with a high concentration of Limestone. Tondonia vineyard has a few acres of white grapes (Viura and Malvasia), from which R. López de Heredia makes their Tondonia Blanco. This small section of the vineyard is widely regarded as some of the most definitive “terroir” for white Rioja.

VIÑA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA, 2001 (white) **Expected Release 2021 !!!**



- **Region /Sub- Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 90% Viura, 10% Malvasia.
- **Soil:** Alluvial 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:** Grapes are crushed immediately releasing their must and with as little contact with skins as possible. Spontaneous fermentation in 16,000L vats.
- **Aging:** 10 years in 225L American oak barrels, handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per year and at least 9 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Bees wax, citrus zest and stewed apple, with notes of mushrooms and dried flowers.
- **Taste:** Smooth, round and well developed. Rich but still fresh on the palate, black tea and tree nuts.
- **Gastronomy:** All kinds of fish, white meats, egg dishes, truffle pasta and cheese dishes.
- **Color:** Rich gold and evolved oxidative amber rim.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

James Suckling - 98 points - "Top 100 Wines of 2017"- "Aromas of wax, lime zest, lemon curd, cooked apple and dried mango. Dense and rich with incredible depth of fruit, and intensity..."

THE VINEYARD TONDONIA - Don Rafael López de Heredia acquired Viña Tondonia from a group of clergies in 1913. The Tondonia vineyard is a beautiful vineyard of over 247 acres, 1,600 feet above sea level, situated on the right bank of the Ebro River in Rioja Alta. The soil is Alluvial clay with a high concentration of Limestone. Tondonia vineyard has a few acres of white grapes (Viura and Malvasia), from which R. López de Heredia makes their Tondonia Blanco. This small section of the vineyard is widely regarded as some of the most definitive “terroir” for white Rioja.

VIÑA TONDONIA RESERVA, 2007 (white)



- **Region/Sub-Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 90% Viura, 10% Malvasia.
- **Soil:** Alluvial 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:** Grapes are crushed immediately releasing their must and with as little contact with skins as possible. Spontaneous fermentation in 16,000L vats.
- **Aging:** 6 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, raked twice per year and at least 6 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Fresh complex nose, pear, stone fruits, floral.
- **Taste:** The results of bottle aging are to be felt on the palate, yellow pears and dried apples. Wet rocks, white flowers, earthy notes.
- **Gastronomy:** Perfect with all kinds of fish and grilled seafood. Well-seasoned white meats.
- **Color:** Natural gold, developed.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

A View From The Cellar, Oct '19 - 93 points to - "...The complex and classic bouquet wafts from the glass in a mix of lemon, a touch of fig, salty soil tones, paraffin, white flowers, hints of the browned butter tones to come, orange peel and coconutty American oak. On the palate the wine is bright, focused and full-bodied, with excellent depth at the core, zesty acids and a long, well- balanced and very complex finish. This is gorgeous."

Wine & Spirits, October '19 - 96 points - "... no wine is released here before its ready: All the releases we tasted this year had aged for more than a decade, and all will continue to evolve for many more years, if allowed. Last year, López de Heredia placed number one as the most popular brand in our annual Restaurant Poll; this is the winery's seventh appearance in the Top 100."

THE VINEYARD TONDONIA - Don Rafael López de Heredia acquired Viña Tondonia from a group of clergies in 1913. The Tondonia vineyard is a beautiful vineyard of over 247 acres, 1,600 feet above sea level, situated on the right bank of the Ebro River in Rioja Alta. The soil is Alluvial clay with a high concentration of Limestone. There are 4 varieties of red grapes planted in this vineyard: Tempranillo, Mazuelo, Graciano, and Garnacho. The vineyard has a few acres of white grapes (Viura and Malvasia).

VIÑA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA, 2010 (rosé)



- **Region/Sub-Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 30% Tempranillo, 60% Garnacho, and 10% Viura.
- **Soil:** Alluvial clay and Limestone.
- **Harvest:** End September-early October, all done by hand, cutting with a curved knife "corquete", prevents the grape from 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 releasing the must and skin contact soaking period. Must is transferred to 25,000L vats where spontaneous fermentation takes place.
- **Aging:** 4 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per year and at least 5 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Fresh and fruity, with suggestions of bitter almonds, and hazelnuts.
- **Taste:** Smooth, and fresh with body and complexity due to the aging conditions.
- **Gastronomy:** Great with spicy foods, Indian, Mexican, and Chinese style cuisine. Perfect with sausage, charcuterie.
- **Color:** Onion skin, velvety, hints.

The Vintage:

There are very few vintages of Gran Reserva ever made in the history of the winery. The 2009 vintage was a very good year. There was good fertilization and absence of spring frost followed by a dry hot summer free of fungal diseases, which produced an abundant harvest. White grapes were harvested at the end of September and the reds were harvested in October.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

Wine Spectator, March '20 - 93 points – "...distinctive offering tangy acidity and light, firm tannins that frame the rich texture, giving this plenty of structure for food. Orange peel and tarragon, iodine and beeswax notes frame the dried cherry and tangerine flavors. Unique."

A View From The Cellar, Oct '19 - 92 points - "...strawberries, orange peel, a touch of watermelon, gorgeous spice tones, salty soil tones and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is bright, full-bodied, focused and complex, lovely balance and grip and a long, classy finish."

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 GRAN RESERVA, 2001 (red) **Expected Release 2021 !!!**



- **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:** 10 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, raked twice per year and at least 9 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Nose is persistent, with complex tertiary aromas showing a lot of mature fruit, being dominated by the Tempranillo grape, red cherries, dried cranberries, leather and cured meats, red apple skins, dried red rose.
- **Taste:** Round in the mouth, smooth and elegant, with a very long finish.
- **Gastronomy:** Excellent with roasted meat, especially lamb, pork, and game.
- **Color:** Red ruby color with a brick red rim.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

International Wine Cellar, Sept/Oct '12 - 95 points - “A kaleidoscopic bouquet evokes candied red fruits, incense, pipe tobacco potpourri, with hints of wood smoke, leather, and Asian spices gaining strength in the glass. Tangy acidity adds lift and focus to a strikingly long, sappy finish. This wine belies its age with its vivacity.”

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.”

THE VINEYARD CUBILLAS - The Viña Cubillo wine comes from the vineyard “Cubillas”, which is 2 miles away from the winery. Its height is 1,348 feet above sea level and the vines have an average age of 40 years. The soil is from the terciaria age, composed of clay and limestone. The surface is 59 acres: Tempranillo, Garnacho, Mazuelo, and Graciano. Historically, the wines from that vineyard were called “Special Harvest”.

VIÑA CUBILLO CRIANZA, 2010/11 (red)



- **Region/Sub-Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 65% Tempranillo, 25% Garnacho, 10% Graciano and Mazuelo.
- **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:** 3 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per year and at least 3 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Terrific nose of leather, black cherry, dried raspberries and spice.
- **Taste:** Full palate and complex development, well balanced with firm tannins, red black fruits with earthy undertones.
- **Gastronomy:** All kinds of meats and grilled fish, leg of lamb stuffed with rosemary and garlic, cured meats, anchovies and fatty fish.
- **Color:** Dark deep ruby with garnet rim.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

Wine Spectator, March '20 - 90 points - “Lively and expressive, this red delivers berry, dried cherry, orange peel and vanilla flavors. The supple texture is fueled by mouthwatering acidity and backed by well-integrated tannins. Traditional style. Garnacha, Tempranillo and Viura. Drink now through 2024.”

Wine & Spirits, Dec '19 - 91 points - “An estate-grown blend of Tempranillo (65 percent), Garnacha (25 percent), Graciano and Mazuelo, this is a classical, earthy Rioja with scents of anise and cool, lasting spice. It’s lean, peppery and gentle, deliciously mature, ready to serve with roast fish in a mushroom and Rioja reduction.”

THE VINEYARD ZACONIA - Viña Gravonia wine comes from our vineyard called “Viña Zaconia”. The vineyard is 0.12 miles from the winery and close to the Ebro River. Its height is 1,116 feet above sea level. The soil is stony, the roots of the vines go deep, and ensure very balanced, ripe grapes. Viña Zaconia has a surface of 59 acres, all of them Viura grape. Historically, the wines coming from that vineyard were called “Viña Zaconia”.

VIÑA GRAVONIA CRIANZA, 2011 (white)



- **Region/Sub- Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 100% Viura.
- **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:** Grapes are crushed immediately releasing their must with as little contact with skins as possible. Spontaneous fermentation in 16,000L vats.
- **Aging:** 4 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per and at least 5 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Dried tropical notes, citrus curd, and baking spice.
- **Taste:** Freshness on the palate overlaid by the tannins and lignins of older oak with a pleasing touch of acidity.
- **Gastronomy:** Tapas, any kind of fish, shellfish, and poultry.
- **Color:** Slightly developed pale gold.

CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

The Wine Advocate, June '19 - 94 points - “Simply stunning. This is from a cooler and very balanced year that is perfectly reflected in the wine. The wine is developing slowly, with noted of lemon curd, dried yellow flowers, saffron and spice. The palate revels real energy, great balance and very tasty, almost salty finish...”

Wine Spectator, June '19 - 94 points - “This white rich and expressive, a fine example of the traditional style. Bold flavors of quince, dried pineapple, lemon confit and vanilla mingle in a polished texture, supported by firm acidity and fine tannins...”