

## 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 respect and adheres to core principles taught by their ancestors.



photograph courtesy of Viña Tondonia

**"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 wine-making 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 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 by Eric Asimov, *The New York Times***

### THE WINERY

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 137 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.

Fermentation takes place in their 72 large oak vats, some of which are 139 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 Heredias' 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.

**THE VINEYARD TONDONIA** - Don Rafael López de Heredia acquired Viña Tondonia from a group of clergy 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 Tondonia vineyard also 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.

**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 with an average vine age of 40 years. 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".

**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".

**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 and the average age of the vines is 45 years. 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".

## THE WINE

### VIÑA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA, 1995 (red)



- **Grapes:** 75% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 10% Mazuelo, and Graciano.
- **Aging:** 9 years in American oak barrels and at least 9 years in bottles. Racked twice per year, and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Prolonged aging in old oak has lent this Gran Reserva a complexity and wealth of mysterious nuances. On the palate the wine retains its vitality as if it wanted to conceal its true age.
- **Gastronomy:** Excellent with all kinds of meat.
- **Color:** Vibrant red leading slightly towards amber.

#### CRITICS & REVIEWS:

-James Suckling, "The Alluring Freshness of Spain" July '17 gave 96 points to Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva 1995. "Sweet tobacco, orange zest, and hints of balsamic with dried fruits on the nose. Full body, soft, silky, with a tangy, and fruity combination that gives such pleasure. Very balanced and refined. Aged ten years in cask..."

-eRobertParker.com, The Wine Advocate, April '15 gave 97 points to 1995 Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva. "This light-colored, ethereal 1995 is the essence of Viña Tondonia. It has developed aromas and complexity gained with time in bottle of incense, leather, cured meat, cherries in liqueur, cold bonfire, and spices. The palate is super-tasty, with fully-resolved tannins, and very good acidity. The texture is super-fine, sophisticated, and ethereal with gob-smacking balance. Intense, powerful, and elegant, too."

## VIÑA BOSCONIA GRAN RESERVA, 2001 (red)

Will be released in 2020 !!!



- **Grapes:** 80% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 5% Mazuelo, and Graciano.
- **Aging:** 10 years in American oak barrels and at least 9 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Its nose is persistent, with complex tertiary aromas. 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** gave **95 points** to **1995 Viña Bosconia Gran Reserva**, "Dark red. A kaleidoscopic bouquet evokes candied red fruits, incense, pipe tobacco, and potpourri, with hints of woodsmoke, 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."

## VIÑA TONDONIA RESERVA, 2006 (red)



- **Grapes:** 75% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 10% Graciano, and Mazuelo.
- **Aging:** 6 years in American oak barrels and at least 4 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Terrific nose of leather, oak, vanilla, citrus, and spice. Full palate and complex development, very dry, and very well balanced.
- **Gastronomy:** All kinds of meats and grilled fish.
- **Color:** A darker, vivacious, deep garnet.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

-**Wine & Spirits Magazine, Dec '18** gave **90 points** to **2006 Viña Tondonia Reserva**. "This vintage of Tondonia is elegant and fully developed, its cool dill scents and zesty flavors of wild strawberry and pomegranate still firm, but beginning to yield to the touch. Lovely to drink now, this is the kind of versatile Rioja that can match most anything, from sautéed hake cheeks to winery roasts, and even the cheese course."

-**A View From The Cellar, May-June '18** gave **93 points** to **2005 Viña Tondonia Reserva**. "...The bouquet is pure, old school, and stellar, jumping from the glass in a mix of black cherries, raspberries, Rioja spices, a refined base of soil elements, incipient notes of cigar smoke, fresh nutmeg, and a lovely bass-line of coconutty, old American oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied ..."

-**eRobertParker.com, The Wine Advocate, March '18** gave **95 points** to **2006 Viña Tondonia Reserva**. "... It always matures in used American oak barriques for some six years. The oldest of all the reds I tasted, it was also the one with more freshness, which speaks to the quality of the vineyard..."

-**Wine & Spirits, The Restaurant Top 50 The Most Popular Wines in America's Top Restaurants, April '18** gave **#1 ranking** to **Viña Tondonia Reserva**.

## VIÑA BOSCONIA RESERVA, 2006 (red)



- **Grapes:** 80% Tempranillo, 15% Garnacho, 5% Graciano, and Mazuelo.
- **Aging:** 5 years in American oak barrels and at least 4 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Its nose is persistent, full bodied, and showing a lot of mature fruit, being dominated by the Tempranillo grape. 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:

-eRobertParker.com, *The Wine Advocate*, March '18 gave **94 points** to 2006 Viña Bosconia Reserva. "...These are amazing wines, clean and complex, with polished tannins, and surprisingly good acidity... There are some dusty tannins and some flavors that still remind you of fresh fruit..."

-A View From The Cellar, May-June '18 gave **93 points** to 2005 Viña Bosconia Reserva. "...The red fruity aromatic constellation offers up a mix of raspberries, cherries, cloves, incipient nutskin, a complex base of soil and a fine base of coconutty American oak. On the palate the wine is full-bodied, focused, tangy and still a bit tannic, with a lovely core of fruit, great transparency and grip, impressive precision and a long, nascently complex, and extremely promising finish..."

## CUBILLO CRIANZA, 2009 (red)



- **Grapes:** 65% Tempranillo, 25% Garnacho, 10% Mazuelo, and Graciano.
- **Aging:** 3 years in American oak barrels and at least 3 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Fresh with a slight aroma of licorice with consistent texture and persistent aroma, comparable to any Rioja Gran Reserva!!!! This Crianza has all the seriousness of an older Reserva.
- **Gastronomy:** Good with tapas, vegetables, cold meats, and charcuterie.
- **Color:** Clear, bright ruby.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

-Wine & Spirits Magazine, Dec '18 gave **92 points** to 2009 Viña Cubillo Crianza. "...While the color looks mature for the wine's age, this 2009 has the resistance to oxygen that makes the family's Riojas so compelling. The texture is silky and soft, carrying notes of red plum skin and peach pit, tobacco and cedar, building generosity as it takes on air..."

-A View From The Cellar, May-June '18 gave **91 points** to 2009 Viña Cubillo Crianza. "...classic bouquet of cherries, red plums, fresh nutmeg, incipient notes of Rioja nuttiness, a fine base of soil, gentle notes of clove and a fine base of toasty coconut American oak. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied, focused and beautifully balanced, with a bit of backend tannin, fine complexity and grip and a long, classy and vibrant finish..."

-Wine & Spirits, *The Restaurant Top 50 The Most Popular Wines in America's Top Restaurants*, April '18 gave **#1 ranking** to Viña Cubillo Crianza.

-eRobertparker.com, *The Wine Advocate*, March '18 gave **92 points** to 2009 Viña Cubillo Crianza. "... It shows very good balance between fruit and more developed aromas, with hints of leather and cherries, spices and smoke, very clean, and with good volume in the palate..."

## VIÑA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA, 1996 (white)



- **Grapes:** 90% Viura, 10% Malvasia.
- **Aging:** 10 years in American oak barrels and at least 9 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Smooth, round and well developed, full of persistent aromas.
- **Gastronomy:** All kinds of fish, white meats, egg, and pasta dishes.
- **Color:** Gold evolve.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

-James Suckling, "Top 100 Wines of 2017" gave **98 points** to 1996 Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva. "Aromas of wax, lime zest, lemon curd and cooked apple. Dried mango, too. Full body, dense and rich with incredible depth of fruit, and intensity. Big and powerful, yet so fresh, and fruity. Texture of a top Montrachet."

-International Wine Review, July '15 gave **95 points** to 1994 Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva. "... has developed an incredible earthy mushroom and herbal complexity. It offers excellent concentration and acidity that has helped preserve this wine for 20 years. The finish goes on and on with notes of undergrowth, tea, and almonds."

## VIÑA TONDONIA RESERVA, 2005 (white)



- **Grapes:** 90% Viura, 10% Malvasia.
- **Aging:** 6 years in American oak barrels and at least 6 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Fresh rich nose, elegant, and complex. The results of bottle aging are to be felt on the palate and this white Reserva exhibits all the qualities of a well-rounded, densely, sophisticated wine.
- **Gastronomy:** Perfect with all kinds of fish and grilled seafood.
- **Color:** Natural gold develop.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

-Wine & Spirits Magazine, Dec '18 gave **96 points** to 2005 Viña Tondonia Reserva. "...wine quickly finds its balance, a smoky, lemony chicken-broth scent, a pale earthy savor, a gentle beeswax character, and lovely textural give. But it doesn't show itself until a day later, when scents of salty peach and crisp green pear begin to layer into the yellow fruit, refreshing the wine, bringing along a scent of roses and beautiful detail to the richness. This wine appears to be ageless and will likely live for decades."

-eRobertParker.com, The Wine Advocate, March '18 gave **95 points** to 2005 Viña Tondonia Reserva "... this showed higher ripeness and a lot more developed aromas, nuttier with hints of hay and straw, honey, and also chamomile, and dried flowers. But the oak is never obvious in the wine, it only adds spiciness, but no wood aromas..."

-Wine & Spirits, "Year's Best Rioja", Dec '17 gave **96 points** to 2004 Viña Tondonia Reserva. "... Open the bottle and you might taste tart lemon, juicy almond, and touches of oxidation, bringing to mind wood oils. Those flavors integrate with air, so that the wine saturates the palate with freshness, the scent turned heady, toward croissants and almond blossoms, the flavors savory, salty, and bright... Leave it in the decanter, and it gives off the energy of the cool sun at harvest, delicious memory of an ideal autumn day in 2004."

## VIÑA GRAVONIA CRIANZA, 2008 (white)



- **Grapes:** 100% Viura.
- **Aging:** 4 years in American oak barrels and at least 5 years in bottles.
- Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Time transformed a fruity young wine into a mature wine with an oaky nose and retains an echo of white Viura grapes. Traces of grape 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:** Paler gold.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

-**Wine Spectator, "Top 100 Wines of 2018" Dec-Jan '19** gave **93 points** to **2008 Viña Gravonia Crianza**. "Rich and firm, this white shows complex flavors of dried apple, creamed pear, heather, white tea, coconut, and vanilla. Juicy acidity and light tannins keep this focused, providing structure for the long haul. A lovely example of the traditional style."

-**A View From The Cellar, May-June '18** gave **91 points** to **2008 Viña Gravonia Crianza**. "To my mind, the Viña Gravonia bottling from López de Heredia is the finest value in classically-styled Rioja Blanco that one can find on this wide earth...On the palate the wine is crisp, complex and full-bodied, with a superb core, excellent soil signature, bright, zesty acids and superb focus and grip on the long and complex finish. Great juice and a superb value."

-**eRobertParker.com, The Wine Advocate, March '18** gave **94 points** to **2008 Viña Gravonia Crianza**. "It has the right balance between youth and freshness and the more-developed aromas. The notes of dried flowers, honey, nuts, and petrol, are intermixed with aromas of quince, medlar, and other yellow fruit, with hints of saffron and spices, quite developed. The palate is very tasty, and it ends with a salty finish..."

## VIÑA TONDONIA GRAN RESERVA, 2008 (rosé)



- **Grapes:** 30% Tempranillo, 60% Garnacho, and 10% Viura.
- **Aging:** 4 years in American oak barrels and at least 5 years in bottles. Racked twice per year and no added yeast.
- **Taste:** Has a "vineux" bouquet, fresh and fruity, with suggestions of bitter almonds, and hazelnuts. Light, with a full taste in the mouth.
- **Gastronomy:** Goes very well with spicy, hot food. Perfect with sausage, charcuterie - a versatile and unique wine.
- **Color:** Onion skin, velvety, hints at becoming tawny.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

-**Wine & Spirits Magazine, Dec '18** gave **96 points** to **2008 Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva Rose**. "... you can feel the heat of the sun, which ripened the grapes to a mellow sweetness, now faded to notes of Cognac-drenched berried and flamed orange zest. There's the scent of cedar trees and the cool earth beneath them, as well as the brushy herbs that toast in the summer's heat. And there's a salinity, a savor that joins with the breezy acidity to urge more energy from the wine even days after it's uncorked. It's remarkably vivacious, and will continue to evolve with cellar time..."

-**Wine & Spirits Magazine, Aug '18** gave **96 points** to **2008 Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva Rose**, wine is listed "Year's Best Rosés"

-**Vinous Media (Rosé New Releases: No Slowing Down in 2018), Jun '18** gave **93 points** to **2008 Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva Rose**. "Pale copper-tinged orange. A powerfully scented bouquet evokes orange zest, red currant, rose oil, cinnamon, and smoky minerals. Juicy and precise on the palate, offering intense red berry, and citrus fruit flavors, along with hints of honey, vanilla, and candied flowers... an impressively long finish that displays outstanding clarity and spicy cut."