



FINCA ALLENDE

**PRESS BOOK
2013**

GUÍA PEÑÍN

DE LOS MEJORES
VINOS
DE
ESPAÑA

2013

FINCA ALLENDE

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ALLENDE 2009 B
90% viura, 10% malvasía

92 Color amarillo brillante. Aroma fruta fresca, hierbas de tocador, piedra seca, ahumado. Boca buena acidez, fresco, frutoso, dulcedumbre, retronasal ahumado.

ALLENDE 2009 T
100% tempranillo

91 Color cereza oscuro. Aroma tierra húmeda, complejo, elegante, especiado, cacao fino. Boca cremoso, potente, sabroso, frutoso, elegante.

AVRVS 2009 T
85% tempranillo, 15% graciano

96 Color cereza intenso. Aroma tierra húmeda, mineral, expresivo, complejo, cerrado, roble cremoso, tostado. Boca redondo, elegante, cálido, espirituoso, fruta madura, taninos maduros.

CALVARIO 2009 T
90% tempranillo, 8% garnacha, 2% graciano

94 Color cereza, borde granate. Aroma fruta madura, mineral, especiado, roble cremoso, balsámico, expresivo. Boca sabroso, largo, redondo, especiado, equilibrado.

ALLENDE 2008 T
100% tempranillo

92 Color cereza oscuro. Aroma cacao fino, roble cremoso, tostado, fruta madura. Boca redondo, elegante, lleno, sabroso, taninos finos.

CALVARIO 2008 T
90% tempranillo, 8% garnacha, 2% graciano

92 Color cereza, borde granate. Aroma especiado, roble cremoso, tostado, fruta madura, terroso. Boca potente, sabroso, tostado, taninos maduros.

ALLENDE 2010 T

100% tempranillo

92 Color cereza, borde granate. Aroma fruta madura, especiado, roble cremoso, tostado, varietal. Boca potente, sabroso, tostado, taninos maduros.

MÁRTIRES 2011 B

100% viura

94 Color amarillo brillante. Aroma potente, fruta madura, especias dulces, roble cremoso. Boca graso, retronasal ahumado, sabroso, fresco, buena acidez.

AVRVS 2008

85% tempranillo, 15% graciano

94 Color cereza oscuro. Aroma fruta confitada, espirituoso, potente, complejo, especiado, especias dulces, roble cremoso. Boca espirituoso, potente, sabroso, taninos maduros.

MÁRTIRES 2010 B

100% viura

97 Color amarillo brillante. Aroma complejo, franco, expresivo, fruta madura, cítricos, flores blancas, especias dulces. Boca graso, sabroso, estructurado, fruta madura, buena acidez.

ALLENDE 2010 B

90% viura, 10% malvasía

93 Color pajizo. Aroma flores marchitas, hierbas silvestres, potente, expresivo, complejo, fresco. Boca sabroso, potente, graso, frutoso, complejo, retronasal ahumado, dulcedumbre, espirituoso.

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ALLENDE 2010 B

90% viura, 10% malvasia

★★★ 16€

93 Color amarillo brillante. Aroma fruta madura, cítricos, hierbas secas, floral, especias dulces, roble cremoso. Boca dulcedumbre, especiado, largo, equilibrado.

ALLENDE DULCE 2009 B

100% viura

30€

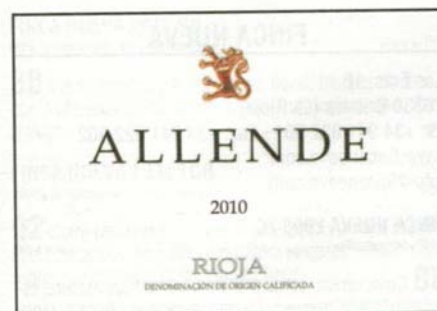
96 Color dorado. Aroma potente, floral, notas amieladas, fruta escarchada, hierbas de tocador, hidrocarburo. Boca sabroso, dulce, fresco, frutoso, buena acidez, largo, concentrado, equilibrado, elegante.

ALLENDE 2010 T

100% tempranillo

★★★ 16€

93 Color cereza, borde granate. Aroma fruta roja, fruta madura, balsámico, especiado, mineral. Boca equilibrado, elegante, sabroso, largo, taninos maduros.



AVRVS 2010 T

85% tempranillo, 15% graciano

175€

97 Color cereza, borde granate. Aroma fruta madura, fruta al licor, potente, piedra seca, terroso, con carácter, tostado, chocolate. Boca potente, sabroso, concentrado, largo, equilibrado, taninos maduros.

CALVARIO 2010 T

90% tempranillo, 8% garnacha, 2% graciano

105€

96 Color cereza, borde granate. Aroma fruta madura, fruta confitada, expresión frutal, terroso, mineral, especiado. Boca redondo, sabroso, potente, largo, taninos maduros.

MÁRTIRES 2012 B

100% viura

105€

96 Color amarillo brillante. Aroma fruta madura, especias dulces, terroso, equilibrado, elegante. Boca graso, retronasal ahumado, sabroso, fresco, buena acidez.



FINCA ALLENDE

**PRESS BOOK
INTERNATIONAL
2013**



Vintage guide to Rioja

Sarah Jane Evans MW explains how styles have shifted as Rioja producers move away from the official classifications, and suggests the vintages, and wines, to look out for

'Given this diversity, the official vintage classification ('Excelente, Muy Bueno, Bueno...') is too broad to fit all producers and zones reliably'

WITH A CELLAR of Rioja bottles to hand, one is never at a loss for something to drink, thanks to such a range of styles. If you are creating a cellar, then Rioja is an excellent place to start.

The difficulty is in the selection. Once upon a time, a formal system of crianzas, reservas and gran reservas prevailed. Effectively, gran reservas had a very long time in American oak, and reservas had less. Many were blends of grapes sourced from several parts of the DO. Moreover, they were bottle-aged in the winery so were more or less ready to drink when sold. Undoubtedly, a few of the gran reservas were tired wines, but the very best still have great vibrancy after 50 years.

Today, many producers ignore the rules. They prefer to focus on the expression of a single vineyard, and they choose the oak regime to suit the wine, not the regulation. The wines are released after 18-24 months in barrel, and will then benefit from a good rest in a quiet cellar. They are frequently called 'modern' as opposed to 'traditional', though this is a false division. Rioja is so much more diverse and original than the old categories suggest.

Given this diversity, the official vintage classification ('Excelente, Muy Bueno, Bueno...') is too broad to fit all producers and zones reliably. It has also been frankly too generous, especially to the poorer years.



Vintage profiles

2010 Excelente

This excellent vintage has the potential to stand alongside 2005. The vintage is also benefiting from Rioja's decision to reduce yields – by 10% for reds, 5% for whites – in order to improve quality. The weather throughout was very favourable. Fruit set was a little later than usual, in June, but the cycle through to harvest was healthy and even. Marcos Eguren, whose eponymous family group owns six wineries in Rioja, says it shows the balance, structure and freshness for long ageing. This is a year when attention will begin to focus on Palacios Remondo, the property in the Rioja Baja that Alvaro Palacios returned to in 2000 to run. His interest in single vineyards and in reviving Garnacha's status in Rioja are beginning to show results. Drink 2016–2025.

2009 Muy Bueno

This year saw a throwback to the heat of summer 2003. Before that, there were heavy winter rains, and a very damaging hailstorm in Rioja Baja in May. After some brief rain in mid-September, the harvest was dry, sunny and disease-free. Yields were reduced and results are uneven, but many producers are satisfied with the results of the ➤

smaller, carefully selected harvest. The joint Vega Sicilia/Rothschild Rioja project Macán is launching this year with the 2009 vintage. Drink 2015–2022.

2008 Muy Bueno

A cool year, with plenty of rain across Spain; the advantage is that it is one where Tempranillo can reveal its linear citrus freshness. The best producers are showing elegant, finely structured wines, though they will come to drinkability sooner. Also a noteworthy year for the (improving) reputation of Rioja whites as Finca Allende launched Martires, showing what the much-maligned Viura can achieve. Drink 2014–2022.

2007 Muy Bueno

The weather may not have been promising – a cold vintage and a late one. However, the benefit was long, slow ripening with a late (21 September) start for the 'early' (temprano) Tempranillo grape. The wines show lower alcohols and good freshness, certainly better than 2006. They might not have

'The authors of The Finest Wines of Rioja and Northwest Spain say 1995 was a turning point in Rioja's stylistic transition'

Evans' top Riojas through the ages

Finca Allende, Calvario 2006 19 (96)
£77-£85 AG Wines, Berry Bros & Rudd, Good Wine Shop, Swig



Miguel-Angel Gregorio's Calvary vineyard was planted in a suitably apocalyptic year, 1945, and the vines are delivering intense minerality. The wine spends 20 months in 100% new French oak. At present, it is dense, with black cherries and plums, and a slick of liquorice and roasted coffee.

Drink 2015-2027 Alc 14%

Far left: Jesús Madrazo, chief winemaker of Contino. Left: underground crianza and reserva barrel tunnels at the Viñedos de Párganos winery

the depth and richness of some outstanding vintages, but they have a fine elegance. Look for balanced alcohols, not more than 14%. Jesús Madrazo ranks this vintage as third in quality at Contino after 2001 and 1996. Drink 2013-2020.

2006 Muy Bueno

A warmer year than 2007. While there was good rainfall, the summer led to uneven ripening, and selection was needed in the vineyard. The result is that some wines are frankly just a little flabby. By contrast, the dancing freshness of the 2007s is much more promising. Drink 2013-2017.

2005 Excelente

Eight years, 2005 has been revealed as a great vintage. No temperature extremes, just the right contrast between day and night temperatures ➤

throughout the season. Many of these wines are approachable now, but the best will continue for 10-20 years and more. It's an interesting year when both the classical styles of Rioja, and the more 'modern' styles, show equally well. If you want to explore the characters of wines such as Calvario and Cirson, this is a great year to do it, but they are babies, and really need another decade to show their best. Drink 2013-2025.

2004 Excelente

A fantastic year, and in a different way from 2005. It's fascinating to taste 2004 and 2005 from the same producer side by side. 2004 offers supple fruit and warmth, and has been overshadowed by 2005. In 2010, when the wines were still young, I remember a comparative tasting at Roda of 2004 and 2005, and Roda was describing 2004 as the 'miraculous harvest'. It was hair-splitting to decide between them. Some will prefer the velvet roundness of 2004; others the fresh elegance of 2005. Invest in both. Drink 2013-2025.

2003 Bueno

Remember this hot summer? The spring started well, but in August there was a heat spike going up to 40-50°C in Rioja. With that came the inevitable risk of over-ripeness. If creating a collection, best to leave this out. Drink 2013-2015.

2002 Bueno

Remember the rain? It meant botrytis in the vineyards. This was what's known as an Atlantic vintage, with the cold winds coming from the west rather than the warming influence of the Mediterranean, as was the case with 2003. The year started at -15°C with low water reserves, which certainly harmed the Tempranillo, though the Garnacha was, as always, more tolerant. ➤

Producers making 100% Tempranillo wines were most at risk. Yields were reduced – in the village of San Asensio they were 60% lower than in 2001. Drink 2013–2014.

2001 Excelente

A superb vintage. The climate was perfect across the year. Many are lovely to drink now, but top wines have easily 10-20 years and more ahead. Guillermo de Aranzábal of La Rioja Alta puts 2001 at the same level as 1964: 'Outstanding for reservas and gran reservas.' In this year, La Rioja Alta declared its Vina Ardanza a 'Reserva Especial', only

the third time it had been so qualified. Viña Real, too, showed beautifully, probably at its best for this decade. Drink 2013–2025.


2000 Bueno

The year started well, but the harvest was damaged by significant amounts of rain, which meant that it was down to the individual producer to select the best. Undoubtedly many did, particularly those who were building reputations in single-vineyard management, such as Benjamin Romeo, Artadi, Finca Allende and the Eguren. Definitely overshadowed by 2001. Drink 2013–2020.

1990s

The three great vintages of the 1990s run back-to-back: 1994 (Excelente), 1995 (Excelente) and 1996 (Muy Bueno). 1996 was also notable as the first year of Contino's single-vineyard Viña del Olivo, which continues to improve with every vintage. Of 1995, Jesús Barquín et al in *The Finest Wines of Rioja & Northwest Spain* say it was a turning point in Rioja's stylistic transition: 'Probably the last of the classic CVNE Imperial Gran Reserva vintages, and Viña El Pison from Artadi got 99 points from Robert Parker, which put Artadi, Rioja and Spain in the spotlight.' All drinking well now, the best will still give much pleasure to come. 1994 brought the arrival of names including Roda and Remírez de Ganuza, while traditional companies launched their own new-wave wines such as Muga and Muga Torre. Drink 2014–2020.

1980s

Look for 1981 (Muy Bueno) and 1982 (Excelente). 1982 matched the excellence of Bordeaux, though in general Bordeaux and Rioja do not coincide in good vintages. Guillermo de Aranzábal says '1981, 1982 and 1985 still impress us at every tasting', and there is no suggestion these wines are at the end of their curve yet. Drink 2013–2020. 

Decanter PANEL TASTING

Rioja

Different sub-regions with their soils and climates, plus modern or traditional styles and varied oak ageing makes this region a joy to discover, says Sarah Jane Evans MW

RIOJA IS A region of big numbers (see facts, below right). The statistics on barrels alone astonish: in 1992 Rioja held just over half a million barrels. Today there are 1.2 million. At the Decanter World Wine Awards this year, of the 1,600 Spanish wines tasted, no less than 460 were from Rioja.

Yet Rioja is diverse between those numbers. It lies between the Sierra Cantabria mountain range to the north and the Sierra de la Demanda and the Sierra de Cameros to the south, and is criss-crossed by seven rivers. The slopes and valleys with their different aspects and mix of soils give wines complexity. Rioja is owned by three different administrative regions, La Rioja, Alava and Navarra. The differences aren't just political – in Alava Basque is the language, and traditionally carbonic maceration has been popular with winemakers there.

Until comparatively recently there was no estate concept in Rioja, as producers bought in varieties from the different terroirs. This created the blends so typical of the DOC but meant that wineries had no control over grape quality. In time, fashions and practices changed, and Rioja veered from the risks of dilute wines aged in tired oak to the over-extracted 'SuperRiojans' of the 1990s.

Varied styles

Today Rioja is in a better place. There are concentrated wines aged in French oak, just as there are elegant, classic wines with US oak. Many producers still follow the rules of crianza (a minimum one year in oak, plus one year in bottle), Reserva (minimum one year in oak and three overall), and Gran Reserva (minimum two years in oak, five overall). Others, frequently those more concerned with expressing the individual vineyard, choose simply to give the vintage.

How do the wines differ? To give two extreme examples, classic Rioja, mainly made with Tempranillo, will show red cherry fruit with a dart of lemony acidity in a fresh year. American oak will mellow and accentuate the fruit's sweet appeal, adding to the aromatic charm of the fruit. Given their time spent ageing, tannins aren't exposed. The more modern style of Rioja, eschewing the ageing declaration, will almost certainly be 100% Tempranillo. The initial selection of the fruit and the winemaking ensure the concentration of cassis and black cherry fruit. Together with the use of French oak, the impression is balsamic, herbal and more savoury, with more precise structure and tannins. The days of excessive new oak are essentially over. This is driven by subtler winemaking as well as by financial pressures, which prevent 100% new oak.

There are sub-regional differences too. Rioja Baja, the most continental, and easterly region, has long been the poor relation. Its key variety, Garnacha, was equally frowned upon. Things are changing: Alvaro Palacios at Palacios Remondo, for example, is recuperating old-vine Garnacha. Rioja Alta, by contrast, is Atlantic, with chalk and clay soils, and a long reputation for quality. Meanwhile Rioja Alavesa, north of the River Ebro, protected by the Sierra Cantabria, generally produces warmer reds which are fuller-bodied and lower in acidity than Rioja Alta's.

The terroir differences are clear, which is why some are calling for Burgundy style 'village' appellations. But in a region with so many growers, that looks a distant prospect.



Rioja: know your vintages

2012 Drought after two dry years affected quality and quantity. Some very good wines. Approach from 2016

2011 Excellent year. Harvest brought forward by dry conditions. Drink 2015–2024

2010 Has the potential to stand alongside 2005. Drink 2014–2024

2009 Hot summer, preceded by heavy rain and hail in Rioja Baja. Careful selection. Drink 2013–2022

2008 A cool year,

with lots of rain. Top wines are elegant. Drink 2013–2021

2007 Cold, late year preceded by long, slow ripening. Lower alcohols and good freshness. Drink 2013–2020

2006 Good rain but uneven ripening. Some wines lack freshness. Drink 2013–2017

2005 No extremes of temperature. A classic vintage. Drink 2013–2025

2004 Another fine year in Rioja. Drink 2013–2025

Rioja: the facts

Production figures for the Rioja DOC (2012)

Area under vine 62,153 ha, of which 58,389ha are red grapes: Tempranillo 80.97%, Garnacha 8.31%, Mazuelo 2.29%, Graciano 1.66%, Maturana Tinta 0.08%

Wineries in La Rioja 307 (totalling 42,232ha)

Wineries in Alava 259 (totalling 13,296ha)

Wineries in Navarra 15 (totalling 6,624ha)

Total production 253.84 million litres of wine

Yield 39.53hl/ha the lowest yield since 1994

Sarah Jane Evans MW is the Decanter World Wine Awards Regional co-Chair for Spain and Sherry ➤

The results

Our tasters were stunned by the quality on offer from Rioja at under £20 in the UK, and particularly by the older vintages. No other region does complexity and value like it, they agreed. Tina Gellie reports

TO SAY OUR experts were impressed by these wines would be an understatement. 'If these wines cost up to £30, even £40, I'd still have been very impressed,' said Pedro Ballesteros Torres MW. 'The fact that they all retail at under £20 is truly amazing.' Ben Henshaw admitted to being 'blown away' by the quality. Annette Scarfe MW agreed: 'This is one of the best tastings I've been to at Decanter.'

Henshaw said the value for money these wines offer is unparalleled. 'They were really complex Riojas that will get better with age. Even the wines that were over 10 years old were still as fresh as anything.' Of the older wines, it was the 2001s that came in for the most praise from Scarfe. 'Stunning: still so youthful, showing lots of concentration and depth, with lovely acidity to keep them going for a decade or more.' Ballesteros Torres said he challenged anyone to find more complex wines for under £20. Henshaw agreed: 'Nowhere else on earth can deliver this sort of complexity and pleasure at this price point for aged wines.'

On other vintages, our experts were disappointed with the 2011 and 2012 wines in general, but Henshaw said this wasn't surprising given that they were difficult vintages. Scarfe found the 2010s 'mixed' and said the 2009s 'didn't

'If these wines cost up to £30, even £40, I'd still have been very impressed' Pedro Ballesteros Torres MW

show that well'. She found the 2008s 'consistent with lots of concentration and typicity' while Henshaw felt they were 'quite delicate'. He added: 'They're not the ones you could age for the longest but are drinking well now, with lovely red fruit and great acidity.' He and Scarfe both agreed the 2007s were 'riper, more serious and reliable'.

Ballesteros Torres said this tasting proved how different and important vintages are in Rioja and how with this variation, plus sub-regional differences and grape and oak choices, people should not expect Riojas to all taste the same. 'For example, Grenache-based wines should be flagged up as such on the label. Grenache wines from Rioja Baja come from a different climate and have a totally different expression than the Tempranillo-based wines from Rioja Alta and Alavesa, but are both under the banner

The scores

87 wines tasted
4
Outstanding
20
Highly recommended
41
Recommended
19
Fair
2
Poor
1
Faulty

The tasters' verdicts

Pedro Ballesteros Torres MW



Ballesteros Torres MW is a columnist at Spain's PlanetaVino and Vino y Gastronomía magazines, as well as Vino! magazine in Belgium. He works in four languages, is active in wine promotion and education, and is also on the governing board of the Spanish Taster Union.

Ballesteros' verdict

'During our day-long tasting, I felt as though I were in a suspense film, starting calmly, almost anodyne, increasing in

tension and interest as things unfolded, and finishing with lots of emotion. The rationale is because the wines were tasted from youngest to oldest.

'This proves a key feature of Rioja: its best wines need long ageing to express themselves. With very few (but great) exceptions, young Tempranillo-based blends tend to be simple and shallow. With age, new creatures emerge, more balanced, expressive, deep, elegant. The best old Riojas become a unique class of wines on their own, impossible to imitate.

'While managed oxidation in oak is beneficial to Rioja wines, new French oak is not necessarily the best solution. The top wines of this tasting were aged in classic used American oak barrels, which allow them to express their complexity without being made up by any oak tannins or banal spicy and toasty flavours.

'Last but not least, the most relevant conclusion of this tasting is that the wines are incredibly cheap, when considering their intrinsic quality. It was difficult for us to believe that the best 2001s (or 2005s or 2008s) could be bought at a shop in the UK for less than £20. It's amazing!'

Ben Henshaw



Henshaw joined the wine trade in 2002 to work with his family's newly acquired Languedoc vineyard. He set up Indigo Wine in 2003, focusing initially on importing artisanal wines from southern France. He has since built up the most diverse list of Spanish wines of any UK importer.

Henshaw's verdict

'In terms of consistency and value this was one of the best tastings I've been to and proves why Rioja is such a successful

region. Young Tempranillo is refreshing but not that interesting, so the excitement really started after we moved from the juvenes to the crianzas. My advice is to seek out some of our top-rated reservas and gran reservas, some of which will deliver unsurpassed pleasure for wines under £20.

'With regards to vintage quality, one surprise was how many good wines there were from the supposed "lesser" years of 2006, 2007 and 2008, the last being my favourite for freshness. Most of the 2001s, 2004s and 2005s were an absolute joy, but we already knew that should be the case. This offers further insight into the enduring popularity of Rioja; even in lesser vintages, the customer can be sure that the quality and consistency of the wines will be good. Compare this with Bordeaux!

'It was hard to find a pattern in style or quality from the sub-regions of Alavesa, Alta or Baja – all of them having their ups and downs. Much of this is due to the differing approach of each bodega in vineyard and cellar in terms of picking dates, extraction levels and use of oak. But there were a few sweeter fruit-style Garnacha-based wines from Baja that offered a different profile which consumers may not recognise as typical Rioja.'

"Rioja". To me, Rioja Baja should be a completely different appellation, but at the very least the buyer should see the distinction on the label."

Henshaw weighed in: "What people don't understand is that Rioja is a blending region: producers will take grapes from different areas so they can make the best wine possible in a particular vintage. Yes, there are single-vineyard wines, but they are much more expensive than those we tasted here. I like that we don't know where the fruit comes from – every wine is still an expression of Rioja but they're all unique."

Our tasters highlighted the fact that there were very few faulty wines – "not the case seven or 10 years ago," said Ballesteros Torres, who also praised improved oak management within the region. He added that while there was a trend in Rioja for French oak, "I'd like to defend what top-quality American oak can offer". Henshaw agreed: "Some of the best, most elegant wines with the most delicate fruit were the ones aged in almost 100% US oak. Not what you'd expect, but it was a revelation."

A key point made by the panel was how refreshing it was that Riojas at this price point were not trying to be too ambitious. Henshaw said: "Spain is a fascinating wine country and luckily Rioja does its own thing to a degree and doesn't try to copy others too much. It makes Rioja remain Rioja, and that's important."

Entry criteria:
Producers and UK agents were invited to submit their latest-release Riojas available in the UK market at between £8 and £20. Only one wine per producer was permitted.

Highly Recommended 17–18.25pts (90–94pts)



Finca Allende 2007 17.75 (92)

PBT 17 BH 18 AS 18

£17–£19 AG Wines, Berry Bros & Rudd, Bottle Apostle, Carruthers & Kent, Corks of Cotham, Fine & Rare, Secret Cellar

Toasted coffee beans with attractive balsamic notes and aromas of mint, blackcurrant and meat juices. Heady and ambitious but elegantly structured in the mouth with fresh acidity and a pure, focused finish. Drink 2013–2020 Alc 13.5%

Annette Scarfe MW



Scarfe consults for restaurants in London, Hong Kong and Singapore and runs regular training sessions at several restaurants in London. She is a certified wine educator and regular competition judge, including on the Spanish panel of the Decanter World Wine Awards.

Scarfe's verdict

"I came to this tasting with anticipation and hope as to what this popular category could deliver and was not

disappointed. Overall the quality was good with clear evidence of precise and careful winemaking, the oak was not overdone and faults were encouragingly at a minimum.

"The 2001, 2004 and 2005 vintages, all rated as excellent by the Rioja DOC control board, showed how gracefully top Rioja can age. The 2011 vintage, again rated as excellent, was disappointing here and the wines we tasted lacked depth and complexity. It was a very low-yielding vintage and I suspect the best fruit will show up in the reservas, so we need to be patient. The biggest joy and surprise was in the 2008s – all the wines I tasted were medalworthy. This is a vintage that readers can buy with confidence across all categories.

"Whether you prefer a traditional Rioja with creamy coconut oak or modern, more precise styles, there are wines here to please every palate. Rioja is a familiar name in every wine-loving household and, judging by this tasting, it deserves the following that it has."



 **Gold**
red

Allende, Aurus, Rioja 2008 (14%)
Beautiful and intense, with plenty of primary blackcurrant and plum. Spicy, invigorating, a bit brash and youthful, but exciting and meditative.
UK £130; BBR

 **Silver**
red

Allende, Rioja 2007 (13.5%)
Deep and forward brambly aromas, a pleasant acidity and well-judged oak. Palate is predominantly sloe with an earthy mushroom tinge. **UK £20; BBR, GWp, Han, Him, Smp. US \$28; USMiS, USPJW**

 **Silver**
white

Allende, Rioja 2010 (13.5%)
White chocolate and toffee notes provide suppleness to pure pear and apple flavours. Lemon and cream persist to a lingering finish. **UK £20; BBR, GWp, Him, HvN, Smp. US \$28; USMiS, USPJW**

 **Bronze**
red

Allende, Calvario, Rioja 2006 (14%) **E**

Red cherry with a hint of balsamic followed by nutty, smoky notes and a spicy intensity on the finish. **UK £95; BBR, F&M, GWp, Him, Smp. US \$140; USBBD, USMiS, USPJW**

El 'niño terrible' del vino de Rioja

Charla con Miguel Ángel de Gregorio, cabeza de Finca Allende y uno de los mejores enólogos de España.

Victor Manuel Vargas Silva
Editor de Domingo

Uno de los grandes de la enología española contemporánea estuvo de visita esta semana en Colombia. Un hombre innovador, soñador, simpático y transgresor que, sobreponiéndose a sus orígenes de "hijo de familia humilde", como le gusta su bray, fundó en 1995 su propia bodega para poder trabajar "con libertad".

Miguel Ángel de Gregorio es una suerte de *enfant terrible* de Rioja. Un hombre que rompe reglas y esquemas para hacer el vino que cree correcto. Y los aplausos que ha cosechado dentro y fuera de España en estos años han demostrado lo claro que tenía las cosas cuando bautizó a su bodega Allende: una palabra que en nuestra lengua significa "más allá". Baste con señalar que su Mártires (un 100 por ciento viura) ha sido por años el vino blanco mejor puntuado de España, que en la Guía Peñín ninguno de sus vinos baja de los 92 puntos y que la afamada crítica Jancis Robinson dijo que el Finca Allende 2003 es el mejor blanco de Rioja que ha probado en su vida.

EL TIEMPO habló con este manchego de nacimiento y riojano por adopción, que se crió entre barricas, pues su padre trabajó en la mitica Marqués de Murrieta.

Usted tiene fama de ser un "transgresor". ¿Qué es lo más atrevido que ha hecho en su carrera como enólogo?

Abandonar desde el comienzo el sistema de clasificación de crianza, reserva y gran reserva. Lo cual supuso un auténtico shock en Rioja, porque fue un cuestionamiento muy fuerte al sistema imperante.

¿Y por qué lo hizo?

Un vino no es mejor por estar 12 o 16 meses en una barrica. El sistema crianza, reserva y gran reserva de lo único que había es del tiempo en barrica, pero nosotros no vendemos tiempo, vendemos vinos, y si tu quieres sacar un buen vino tendrás que tenerlo en barrica el tiempo que ese vino deba estar. ¿Alguien puede imaginar un Petrus Crianza y un Petrus Gran Reserva? Pero además, si yo me esmero en hacer un vino extraordinario y en conseguir las mejores barricas, porque voy a ponerme en la misma categoría que un individuo que está haciendo un vino mediocre dentro de una barrica vieja y mohosa? Me niego a entrar en ese juego.



Dos de los vinos iconos de Allende y una foto de sus viñedos en Briones, Rioja.

¿Y el Consejo Regulador de Rioja no intentó excomulgarlo?

Claro. Tenía a los inspectores dos veces por semana en mi bodega, intentando encontrar cualquier irregularidad para cerrarme el garito. Pero lo que estaba haciendo era totalmente legal. Simplemente me acogí a la categoría más baja: vino genérico, con el año de cosecha y punto. Cumplí las normas, pero no quiero sus apellidos.

Si le digo a alguien que va a probar un Allende blanco del 2007, seguramente pensará dos cosas: uno, que en Rioja no hay blancos notables; y dos, que ya debe estar completamente oxidado... ¿Cuál es el secreto de sus blancos y de su gran potencial de guarda?

No hay secreto. Quien se extraña por esto padece una de las mayores enfermedades de nuestro tiempo: la falta de memoria histórica. Hasta el año 1974, en Rioja y en Burdeos también, se producía más vino blanco que tinto. Los grandes blancos de España, hasta los 70, son de Rioja y eran vinos que se envejecían 8, 10 y hasta 20 años en barrica y que vivían por décadas. Y de viura. De modo que yo no he inventado nada, lo único que he hecho es rescatar aquello que la gente había olvidado: recuperar una tradición que solo una bodega, López de Heredia, mantuvo. De hecho, ahora están vendiendo su cosecha 1964.

¿Qué puso en el olvido a esos grandes blancos?

En los años 70 llegaron algunos comerciantes bordele-

"Antes me decían heterodoxo, pero ahora me llaman integrista, por mi defensa de las uvas tradicionales".

"Solo obtienes la grandeza cuando asumes riesgos. Y en el vino es igual".

ses a Rioja y empezaban a vender los blancos sin pasarios por barrica y todos descubren lo obvio: que se gana más dinero vendiéndolo en el mismo año que teniendo los 8 o 10 años en barricas. Todo el mundo se apunta a

ese carro y es allí donde la viura pierde terreno, porque la grandeza de esta uva está en su capacidad para envejecer muy bien.

¿Qué lo hizo lanzarse a tener su propia bodega?

Solo puedes aspirar a hacer vinos grandes cuando no tienes que darle explicaciones a un consejo de administración, porque ningún consejo de administración va a permitir el riesgo, y solo llegas a la grandeza cuando asumes riesgos. No puedes ser conservador, tienes que rozar el precipicio, porque si no, terminarás haciendo un vino más. La fuerza creativa necesita libertad y eso solo era posible en mi propio proyecto.

¿Qué quiere subrayar cuando afirma que le gustan más los vinos de corte atlántico que de corte mediterráneo?

Lo que he dicho es que, dentro de Allende, me gustan más las añadas atlánticas que las añadas mediterráneas. El vino es básicamente una bebida refrescante y si un vino no es fresco, pierde su razón de ser. Y las añadas mediterráneas, las más cálidas, producen vinos menos frescos. Las añadas atlánticas, por el contrario, proporcionan la acidez suficiente para que esos vinos sean más frescos y longevos. Y mientras más longevo un vino, más complejo, más mágico puede llegar a ser. La contrapartida es que estos vinos necesitan más tiempo en botella para madurar y alcanzar la grandeza. Hay que tener paciencia.

¿Qué vino de su bodega le brinda mayor satisfacción?

El Allende tinto (tempra-

nillo). Es fácil alcanzar la grandeza con viñedos como Mártires o como Calvario: la uva está ahí y lo único que tienes que hacer es no estropearlo. Por eso da más satisfacción profesional hacer 300 mil botellas anuales de calidad, de nivel. Porque ahí tienes que planear, coordinar y ejecutar muy bien cada paso que das en 92 parcelas diferentes.

¿Qué es el viñedo para usted?

Una partitura musical que hay que saber interpretar. ¿Sabes la cantidad de viñedos maravillosos que deben estar sueltos por toda España esperando a que alguien llegue y los intente interpretar? Pero, claro, hay que saber leer la partitura, porque si un terruño no es longevo y te empeñas en darle mucha barrica, al final obtendrás una auténtica carroña de vino envejecido.

En el debate entre Rioja clásica y Rioja moderna, ¿dónde se ubica?

¿Qué es lo clásico? Según las grandes compañías, lo clásico es un modelo de vino que se empezó a hacer en los 70. Y es que la gente olvida que esto de crianza, reserva y gran reserva es algo que se implantó en 1978, hace muy poco. La idea de clásico, entonces, nace en los 70 para producir muchas botellas e inundar los supermercados de Europa con un vino bueno, bonito y barato. Pero si pruebas las riojas históricas, de los años 20, 40 y 50, encontrarás otra historia. Nosotros apostamos, de muchas maneras, por un retorno a ese estilo por todos sus lados y se sirve con salsa de champiñones cortados en láminas, arroz blanco y papas a la francesa.

Réquiem por el 'filet mignon'



Margarita Bernal
Especial para EL TIEMPO

Dice el escritor Fernando Vallejo: "Todo lo que un día el hombre hizo bien después lo desconfiaba, o por novedad lo cambia y lo daña". Así mismo ha venido sucediendo con deliciosos platos que fueron el hit del momento, los protagonistas del mapa gastronómico de Bogotá y que poco a poco se han esfumado de las cartas de los restaurantes sin aparente explicación, como es el caso del *filet mignon*.

Esta exquisita preparación, que bien podría llamarse en vía de extinción, ya no se asoma ni por equivocación en las cartas de los restaurantes capitalinos. Sin ton ni son fue enviada al olvido, a acompañar a muchos otros platos que seguramente jóvenes de la nueva generación de *juppiys* y ejecutivos ni conocen.

De la receta, ni hablar; tampoco en los nuevos libros de cocina aparece la fórmula para prepararlo. Para los que no tienen idea de lo que aquí se habla, les comento: consiste en un medallón de lomo, cubierto con una tira de tocina que se debe amarrar con un palillo, el cual se dora bien por todos sus lados y se sirve con salsa de champiñones cortados en láminas, arroz blanco y papas a la francesa.

Hasta donde se sabe y por si fuera poco, semejante creación culinaria puede ser un invento de estos lares. *Filet mignon*, en la técnica culinaria francesa, se refiere a un corte preciso del lomo. Y aunque no sepamos el nombre y el origen del genial cocinero, quien decidió hacer tan brutal combinación, bien vale la pena hacerle un homenaje, regresándolo a nuestras mesas.

Qué dizque los colombianos no tenemos memoria, y tal vez en materia culinaria diría que menos, nos dejamos contagiar por las tendencias, tirando al olvido los sabores y recuerdos con los que nos sorprendieron años atrás. Porque fue con platos como este como aprendimos a comer en los restaurantes.

Acaba de terminar la semana de la moda, y siempre dicen que lo retro vuelve; entonces, voto porque regrese el *filet mignon* a la variada oferta gastronómica de la ciudad. ¿Será que alguno de los nuevos chefs, tan creativos y llenos de talento, se aventura a ofrecer nuevamente este clásico de siempre?

Con la teoría de que todo debe evolucionar, seguramente pasará lo mismo con el *steak* pimienta. Vaya uno a saber qué comerán y ahorrarán los niños de hoy, en el futuro. Porque, como dice la canción: "Cambia todo cambia".

www.eltiempo.com/margarita



De Gregorio, en su bodega, con dos botellas de Allende y una de su vino tinto icono: Aurus. Foto: Carlos Erazo Bland.

BREVES

PARA LA AGENDA

Festival de vinos y carnes en Casa Fuego

Del 1 al 3 de agosto, el restaurante Casa Fuego, de Usaquén, celebra su primer Festival de Carnes y Vinos. Además de las cenas con maridaje, usted podrá comprar los vinos de 40 bodegas distintas a precio de importador. Vale la pena. Informes: Tel. 637-6954.

UN TRAGO

Un whisky que vale la pena probar

Gracias a Diageo, llegó al país el whisky Johnnie Walker Platinum Label: el más sofisticado 18 años que jamás haya elaborado esta casa. Prueba de su enorme calidad es que bebiendo solo, sin hielo ni agua, es una fantástica experiencia.



Archivo: Pathfinder

Las lecciones del 'otoño español'



Patricio Tapia
Especial para EL TIEMPO

El consumo de vinos en España ha caído de forma dramática: de 50 litros per capita al año en los 80, a menos de 20 litros hoy. Incluso, se habla de que anda por los 15.

La gente ya no bebe vino, sobre todo los jóvenes. Están más por la cerveza o por el gin, bebidas que se presentan de una manera más entretenida, más refrescante. Pero tam-

bién, que se comunican de una forma diferente. No es necesario tener un paladar privilegiado para entenderlas; no se necesita un PhD en análisis sensorial para beberlas. Lo que necesitas es ganas de beber y de pasarla bien. Punto.

Puede, claro, que parte de la caída del consumo en uno de los países vitíferos más tradicionales del mundo se deba a la crisis que los golpea. Pero creo más en que la gente, simplemente, se aburrió. Se aburrió de vinos que ya no se pueden tomar de lo dulces y maduros que son; se aburrió de que lo antes era sólo un alimento más en la mesa, de prom-

to se haya convertido en un símbolo de estatus.

Por estos lados debíamos aprender de esas cosas; debíamos observarlas con atención. En Colombia en solo diez años se ha pasado de 0,3 litros per capita al año a 1,5, lo que significa que los colombianos están bebiendo 5 veces más. Eso es una noticia excelente, pero, sobre todo, un resultado que se debe mimar, cuidar y acariar como si se tratara de un bebé recién nacido.

Ya de por sí, las cifras, que se ven pequeñas, en realidad son espectaculares. Un crecimiento enorme. Pero también un punto de inflexión en don-

de la comunicación del vino, la forma en la que se percibe, la manera en la que llega, es fundamental para que las cosas no se vayan al tacho de la basura. Nada de misterios en el vino, nada de pavadas con el lujo y los partidos de polo y las fiestas glamorosas acompañadas de una botella de champagne. No.

El vino, como ya lo hemos dicho, es solo una bebida más que se disfruta con las comidas. Solo en ciertas ocasiones es algo más "intelectualizable". La mayor parte del tiempo es otro alimento sobre la mesa. No hay que darle más vueltas al asunto, porque si se las dan, vamos a terminar bebiendo cerveza como en España. Rica la cerveza allí, aunque yo me quedo con los vinos.

Finca Allende

ISSUE 170, SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2013

Josh Reynolds

2012 Martires Rioja Blanco (\$153) (100% viura, from a single vineyard that was planted in 1970; fermented in new French oak and then aged for nine months on its lees in new French oak): Green-tinged gold. Heady aromas of musky citrus fruits, smoky minerals, iodine and sweet butter. Stains the palate with densely packed orange, pear and mineral flavors, showing uncanny vivacity. Rich, sweet and powerful, offering a suave combination of power and elegance. Finishes with serious length, leaving mineral and iodine notes behind. I can't recall ever tasting a Spanish white wine that delivered this kind of depth, power and energy; it would make a great ringer in a high-end white Burgundy tasting. **94**

2011 Rioja Blanco (\$31) (90% viura and 10% malvasia; fermented in French oak barrels of varying age and then aged in new French oak for 14 months): Bright yellow. Lively smoke- and mineral-accented aromas of tangerine and pear, with a hint of melon adding depth. Juicy and smooth in texture, offering sappy orchard fruit flavors and a hint of bitter citrus pith. Finishes dry, nervy and very long, with a bracing jolt of minerality and excellent focus. **91**

2009 Aurus Rioja (\$263) (85% tempranillo and 15% graciano, from vines planted in the 1950s; aged for two years in new French oak): Opaque purple. A suave, highly perfumed bouquet evokes dark berry preserves, cola, incense and smoky minerals, with an exotic Indian spice overtone. Silky, deeply pitched blackberry and bitter chocolate flavors become sweeter with air, picking up candied lavender and cocoa powder qualities. Fine-grained tannins give shape to the finish, which lingers with outstanding clarity and persistence. **95**

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90
 points
 Drink: 2014-2021


2011 Finca Allende Blanco

The 2011 Allende Blanco is produced from vineyards planted on clay-rich soils with deep gravels averaging 55 years of age in Briones, the village where most of his vineyards are. The wine is composed of mostly Viura and a touch of Malvasia harvested after September 27. The hand-harvested grapes are pressed on a vertical press after selecting bunches on their arrival at the winery. The must is fermented in new French oak barrels for 28 days at 20°C where the wine stays for 14 months, the first seven in contact with their lees and with battonage twice a week. It's very pale bright yellow-colored, with a seductive nose of beeswax, spices, dry hay and balsamic notes, the new oak incredibly well-integrated. The palate shows great intensity, the fruit comes through with pungent flavors, great acidity and length. Drink 2014-2021.

Miguel Ang...

- Luis Gutierrez (December, 2013)

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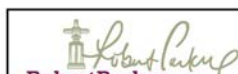

96
 points
 Drink: 2016-2030

2010 Finca Allende Aurus

The 2010 Aurus is what De Gregorio considers the golden formula (aurus is gold in Latin) for blending 85% Tempranillo and 15% Graciano from a number of head-pruned vineyards in Briones averaging 60 years of age, which fermented in French oak vats, carried out its malolactic fermentation in new French oak barrels, and completed its upbringing over two years with rackings every four months before being bottled unfiltered and unfined. The difference here is that these are north-facing vineyards, with clay and gravel soils that produced austere wines. This is a much more serious wine, closed in the nose, elegant, subtle, with balsamic notes, mint, more mineral than fruity (produced with stones instead of fruits, I joked, but in a way it was true!). The palate reveals a tight, compact wine, with fine-grained tannins, straight and vertical, wit...

- Luis Gutierrez (December, 2013)

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93
 points
 Drink: 2014-2025


2010 Finca Allende Calvario

The 2010 Calvario is produced from 90% Tempranillo, 8% Garnacha and 2% Graciano from a vineyard in Briones, which names the wine, planted in 1945. The destemmed but uncrushed grapes fermented in a French oak vat for 14 days at a temperature of 28°C, were transferred to new French oak barrels where malolactic fermentation was carried out and the wine matured for one and a half years being racked every six months. It has a very strong imprint from the soil, savory notes of meat broth (umami?), peat and a core of ripe, aromatic fruits, damsons, black cherries, blackberries and balsamic aromas. The palate displays sweet tannins and great acidity, very approachable and gentle, with great balance that would make the wine age gracefully. Drink 2014-2025.

Miguel Angel de Gregorio, proprietor and alma mater of Finca Allende, was born in La Ma...

- Luis Gutierrez (December, 2013)

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91
 points
 Drink: 2014-2020

2010 Finca Allende Allende

The 2010 Allende Tinto is pure Tempranillo harvested after October 18 from vines averaging 45 years of age in Briones, fermented in inox (including malolactic), aged for 14 months in French oak barrels (one-third new) and racked every four months before being bottled unfiltered and unfined. It displays a very ripe nose with notes of peach and violets, raspberries and morello cherries, with a touch of licorice and iron. The medium-bodied palate is round, the wood is perfectly integrated and the wine ends with precise flavors of violets. This is delicious. 320,000 bottles were produced of this great value wine. Drink 2014-2020.

Miguel Angel de Gregorio, proprietor and alma mater of Finca Allende, was born in La Mancha, but at the tender age of six months he moved to Rioja, as his father was in charge of viticulture at the Ygay estate f...

- Luis Gutierrez (December, 2013)

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2012 Finca Allende Martires

The 2012 Martires, from a very dry year, was harvested after October 6. This is 100% head-pruned Viura from a vineyard in Briones called Martires, fermented in new French oak barrels for 24 days at 20°C where the wine ages in contact with its lees with battonage twice a week and is bottled after a light filtration. It has a Burgundian nose with clean notes of honeysuckle, pollen, beeswax, white peach and minerals. It's subtle and complex, round and intense, with plenty of glycerin but still light on its feet, with clean minerality and a great finish. It is a great white Rioja that is halfway between tradition and modernity. It should age brilliantly. Drink 2014-2027.

Miguel Angel de Gregorio, proprietor and alma mater of Finca Allende, was born in La Mancha, but at the tender age of six months he moved to Rioja, as his father was in ...

- Luis Gutierrez (December, 2013)

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