

ESTD 1842



# TANNERS

WINE MERCHANTS



Autumn vines in Ribera del Duero

## Reach for Ribera

### *Mixed Six*

#### INTRODUCTION

Ribera del Duero DO is a somewhat undiscovered but captivating wine region, intertwining traditional practices, passionate people and an utterly unique growing environment which translates into world-class wines.

Sleeping in the mountains of Castilla y León, about an hour and a half north of Madrid, acres of ancient bush vines spread over the high plateau, forming a region in which more than a quarter of the vines are over fifty years old and with significant plantings even older than a century. Antiquity is palpable from vines of this age; broad, grey-black branches snarl around the freshest of leaves and bunches every summer, almost as though they are imparting their wisdom into the fruit. Don't, however, be fooled into thinking this makes Ribera del Duero archaic and old-fashioned, the people who foster these vines understand their potential.

Daughters Maria José and Carmen Basconcillos, inherited their particular love of wine and their surroundings from their father, farming their 50 ha of vines 1000m above sea

level with great respect for their environment; fostering practices promoting biodiversity within the vines and showcasing a deep understanding of how this will create superior wines. Their Crianza (1) is one of my personal favourite wines to drink; spending 12 months in new French oak barrels which lends a clove and woodsmoke complexity to the dense core of ripe blackberry and Victoria plum. The family also produces an unoaked Tempranillo (2) which almost tastes of bramble jelly and is a beautiful illustration of the effects of altitude on grapes. Light, not warmth, is the driver behind photosynthesis and excess heat can actually slow the process down and also lead to a loss of acidity; cold nights paired with increased light intensity in the day at altitude, creates beautifully ripe grapes which have taken their time to gather complexity without losing their freshness. If you have ever tried Hebridean or Scandinavian strawberry, then you'll understand the mind-blowing effect ripening time can have on flavour!

Another wine family we have fairly recently discovered is Abadía de Acón. This estate, too, is in the clouds, sitting 800m above sea level and boasting an impressive gravity-fed winery, lessening the environmental impact – they even go so far as to only spread manure from local sheep to avoid the introduction of foreign diseases and chemicals. José Antonio Carrasco Llorente, who is the firm head of the family, inherited vineyards planted by his father, Norberto, and looks after 48 ha of mostly Tempranillo, known as Tinto Fino in Ribera (whilst Cabernet Sauvignon is the interloper occupying 2.5 ha). The vines sit on complex layers of limestone, chalk and other calcium-based minerals mixed in with clay, which wouldn't be able to sustain agriculture for any other crop but retain the perfect amount of water for grape vines, which in this arid, extreme climate is very important, especially when in most cases, watering the vines is forbidden. Their three wines, Roble Tempranillo (3),

Crianza (4) and Reserva (5) showcase the different faces of Ribera del Duero. From the sweetly-fruited, raspberry and strawberry delight that is the Roble, to the intense, broody showstopper in the Reserva. Cabernet Sauvignon supports the Tempranillo in this wine adding tannin and herbal lift, elevated by 18 months in new oak throwing liquorice, vanilla and toastiness into the mix. A superb wine fit to grace the finest of dinner tables! I can't help but draw parallels between Ribera del Duero and Mendoza, Argentina – with the altitude, the semidesert dryness and the rich, spicy, full-bodied wines the two produce. Given the massive success of Malbec from Mendoza in recent years, I also can't help but expect the same from Ribera del Duero, as consumers grow tired of the same old thing and begin to look for pastures new. I thoroughly hope you enjoy your exploration of this region, unearthing these and other gems. Now is the time to Reach for Ribera...


## THE WINES

- 1. Viña Magna Crianza, Ribera del Duero, Dominio Basconcillos x 1** Bin No: SR302  
A lovely, balanced wine with plenty of red fruits on the palate which has, good intensity and some hints of chocolate. Elegant and fresh on the finish. Aged for 15 months in oak.
- 2. Viña Magna Tempranillo, Ribera del Duero, Dominio Basconcillos (organic) x 1** Bin No: SR301  
Packed full of crunchy black fruit flavours, this characterful wine is a blend of Tempranillo with small amounts of Mazuelo and Cabernet. It is full bodied with ripe tannins and a long finish.
- 3. Acón Roble Tempranillo, Ribera del Duero x 2** Bin No: SR304  
A juicy, accessible wine displaying good cherry fruit, chocolate and liquorice notes, accented with hints of spice. This spends five months in oak which is well integrated.
- 4. Acón Crianza Tempranillo, Ribera del Duero x 1** Bin No: SR305  
A wine with substance, depth and concentration. Red fruit flavours are overlaid with notes of vanilla, liquorice and leather from 14 months of ageing in oak.
- 5. Acón Reserva Tempranillo, Ribera del Duero x 1** Bin No: SR306  
This is meaty and intense with silky black fruits backed up with hints of toast, liquorice and smoke. Balanced and long, this wine spends 18 months in oak.


## Ordering from Tanners

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Tanners Sales Team

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