

America's Leading Wine Authorities Select Their Favorite Rioja Wines

Although consumers in Spain drink the majority of their Rioja, some of the region's greatest wines reach the U.S. shores each year, recently garnering critical acclaim from the nation's leading wine critics and authorities. Here are a few of the more than 490 vibrant wines from Rioja and what the critics have to say:

Wine Critic Robert Parker, of The Wine Advocate and eRobertParker.com, gave two Riojas his coveted perfect 100 points and three 90 points or better:

- **Benjamin Romeo, Cantador, 2004: 100 points (\$373)**
- **Artadi, Viña el Pison, 2004: 100 points (\$190)**
- **Lealtanza Reserva Artistas Españoles 2001, Miró: 95 points (\$73)**
- **Lealtanza Reserva Selección 2001: 93 points (\$65)**
- **Santiago Ijalba Ogga Reserva 2001: 91 points (\$60)**

Parker also highlighted his experiences with Báron de Ley, a winery modeled on the Médoc châteaux and located on the left bank of the Ebro River:

Baron de Ley Reserva 2001: 91 points (\$20) "Easily offering the best bang for the buck of this trio is the 2001 Reserva from a great Rioja vintage. It is dark ruby-colored with a fragrant nose of spice, cedar, red currants, and cherry that jumps from the glass. In the mouth the wine is intensely flavored with a stylish grace and elegance that reflects traditional winemaking in a fine year. Drink 2007-2017"

Báron de Ley Reserva Finca Monasterio 2003: 90 points (\$40) "The 2003 Finca Monasterio is Baron de Ley's modern styled wine. The wine was aged entirely in new oak. It is dark ruby/purple with a splendid perfume of crushed violets, pain grille, black currants, and blackberry liqueur. The wine is mouth-filling while retaining a fine sense of balance. There is an attractive supple palate-feel, excellent depth, and a long, pure finish. Drink 2007-2015"

El Coto de Imaz Rioja Reserva 2000: 90 points (\$22) "The wines of El Coto de Rioja are traditionally styled. Dark ruby-colored, it reveals an attractive perfume of crushed flowers, mineral, tobacco, and black cherry. Medium to full-bodied, the wine has a solid layering of blackberry fruit and a seamless elegance to its personality. Drink this over the next 4-6 years."

El Coto de Imaz Rioja Gran Reserva 1996: 87 points (\$32) "The wines of El Coto de Rioja are traditionally styled. It exhibits classic, old-style aromas of cedar, spice, tobacco and red fruits. The wine is medium bodied and elegant. Drink it over the next 2-3 years."



Wine Spectator featured two Riojas in its April 2007 Great Value Wines issue:

- **Bodegas Palacio "Glorioso" Reserva 2001: 89 points (\$16)**
- **Haciendas Marqués de la Concordia Signa Crianza 2002: 87 points (\$19)**

Wine Enthusiast featured a Rioja in its 2006 Top 100 Best Buys issue:

- **Glorioso 2001 Reserva Tempranillo (\$15)**

No matter the day of the year or reason for popping a cork, there's a Rioja for every budget. For more information about this vibrant region, its wines and great food/wine recipes, please visit vibrantrioja.com.

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