

La Rioja Alta

Viña Ardanza Reserva from La Rioja Alta is a classic Rioja blend , combining Tempranillo and Garnacha to create a wine of balance, complexity, and elegance.

La Rioja Alta, S.A.



Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 80% Tempranillo, 20% Grenache

Vina Ardanza Reserva 2019

Rioja, Spain

Region and Vineyards

Viña Ardanza is produced in **Rioja Alta**, one of Spain's most prestigious wine regions. The **Tempranillo (80%)** for this wine comes from La Rioja Alta's **La Cuesta and Montecillo vineyards** in Fuenmayor and Cenicero. These vines are over **30 years old**, rooted in predominantly **clay-limestone soils**, which impart structure and elegance to the wine.

The **Garnacha (20%)** is sourced from **La Pedriza vineyard** in Tudelilla, located in **Rioja Oriental** at an elevation of **500 meters**. This 70-hectare site features deep, rocky soils and provides outstanding conditions for cultivating Garnacha, resulting in grapes with exceptional aromatic intensity and finesse.

Winemaking

Harvested manually at the end of September, the grapes underwent strict selection via optical sorting tables to ensure only the best fruit was used. After fermentation, the Tempranillo was aged for **36 months in four-year-old American oak barrels**, with **six manual rackings**, while the Garnacha aged for **30 months** in barrels that had previously held two to three wines, with **five manual rackings**. The final blend was bottled in **June 2020** after the components were aged separately.

This meticulous process preserves the distinct character of each varietal, ensuring a balanced and harmonious blend that reflects the vintage's exceptional quality.

Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Intense garnet red with a clear rim.
- **Aroma**: Aromatically intense, featuring notes of spices and balsamic touches such as liquorice, clove, nutmeg, and black pepper, complemented by ripe red fruit like brandied cherry and raspberry jam.
- **Palate**: Well-balanced and fresh, with a broad range of flavors, silky tannins, and a spicy, balsam-like finish. This wine is at its prime yet holds significant ageing potential.

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Did you know?

The 2016 vintage is celebrated as an **excellent year** in Rioja, marked by balanced acidity, ripe tannins, and high aromatic intensity. Despite the dry summer, the wines achieved exceptional quality, reflecting the resilience of the vineyards and the expertise of La Rioja Alta in managing challenging conditions.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Braised lamb shanks with rosemary**: The wine's structure and balsamic notes complement the richness and herbal tones of braised lamb.
- **Rioja-style oxtail stew**: The silky tannins and spice profile pair beautifully with the hearty, slow-cooked flavors of oxtail.
- **Chocolate-glazed desserts**: The wine's balance of fruit and spice adds depth and contrast to rich chocolate dishes.
- **Charcuterie and Manchego cheese**: A classic pairing that highlights the wine's versatility and depth.

96 JEB DUNNUCK

Jeb Dunnuck (JD) : 96 Points (2019)

The 2019 Vina Ardanza is a highly impressive, full-bodied blend of 80% older-vine Tempranillo and 20% Garnacha from two different parts of Rioja grown at the same altitude. The producer's own American oak was used to age the Tempranillo 36 months and the Garnacha 30 months, 20% new. The fruity nose of black cherry and plum complements beautifully against Garnacha's seductively spicy texture and mouthfeel. It's lively, complex, and lengthy, with melty tannins.

95 James Suckling

James Suckling (JS) : 95 Points (2019)

This has classic Rioja aromas of cherries, dried flowers, earth, spices and orange peel. The palate is medium- to full-bodied with firm, fine-grained tannins. Juicy, with opulent fruit. Drink or hold.

94

Robert Parker (RP) : 94 Points (2019)

No 2018 was produced, so after the 2017 I tasted last year, we jumped to the 2019 Viña Ardanza Reserva, produced with a blend of 80% Tempranillo and 20% Garnacha. It fermented destemmed in stainless steel and aged in American oak barrels, 36 months for the Tempranillo and 30 months for Garnacha, and was blended before bottling. 2019 is a very good year for them, a small crop of powerful and concentrated wines when they produced all their brands, an exception. This is spicy, structured, balanced and powerful in this warm year, reaching the customary 14.5% alcohol and keeping a pH of 3.54 and 5.5 grams of acidity. It's still very young and undeveloped, with the classical profile, generous in American oak aromas and flavors that should slowly integrate in the wine with years in bottle. For them, 2019 means a change in Ardanza, less spicy (but still quite spicy, with clove, vanilla and tobacco leaves) and with more fresh fruit from the Garnacha. But the year is a modern version of 2015.