



Bodegas Palacios Remondo

A graceful Rioja Oriental red, La Montesa 2021 captures Garnacha at altitude, offering luminous red fruit, mineral freshness, and polished oak in a beautifully drinkable style.



PALACIOS | REMONDO



La Montesa Rioja Crianza 2021

Rioja, Spain

Region and Vineyards

La Montesa 2021 comes from Alfaro in Rioja Oriental, the eastern sector of DOCa Rioja, where the Mediterranean influence is more pronounced, yet altitude and mountain exposure bring crucial freshness. The fruit is sourced from the La Montesa vineyard and surrounding village areas of Valtomelloso, Valfrío and Valviejo, on the slopes of Yerga Mountain at around 550 m. These elevated sites help preserve acidity and aromatic detail in Garnacha, a variety increasingly celebrated in Rioja Oriental for its perfume, suppleness, and mineral tension.

The vineyards are organically farmed, with mature Garnacha vines that deliver moderate yields and expressive fruit. **Clay-limestone slopes** give the wine its distinctive balance of red-fruit generosity and chalky freshness, while the mountain setting tempers Rioja Oriental's warmth. The result is a Crianza that feels both classically Rioja and unmistakably contemporary: elegant rather than heavy, vivid rather than over-oaked.

Winemaking

La Montesa 2021 is led by Garnacha, with a small proportion of traditional red varieties. Decanter lists the blend as 92% Garnacha with 8% field-blend varieties, while other merchant sources cite 95% Garnacha with 5% other red grapes, so the safest reading is that this is overwhelmingly Garnacha-based, supported by a small traditional blend.

Fermentation takes place in stainless steel vats with native yeasts, preserving the clarity of fruit and the fragrant herbal lift of the variety. Wine Advocate reports the use of 20% whole clusters, adding savoury nuance and aromatic complexity. The wine then matures for 12 months in oak, with sources noting French oak and, in Decanter's Rioja 2025 report, a mix of new and used French and American oak. **Oak is supportive rather than dominant**, shaping the texture while allowing red cherry, plum, blood orange, herbs, and stony minerality to lead.

Alcohol :14,30 %

Composition: 92% Grenache



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Bright ruby-red with purple and garnet reflections, transparent enough to suggest finesse, yet vivid enough to reveal ripe Garnacha fruit.
- **Aroma:** Red cherry, strawberry, plum, blood orange, pink grapefruit, rose petal, wild herbs, garrigue, soft cedar, sweet spice, and a delicate mineral edge.
- **Palate:** Juicy, fresh, and finely textured, with polished tannins, lively citrus-toned acidity, savoury herbal detail, and a long finish of red fruit, spice, and chalky minerality.

Did you know?

La Montesa has become one of the reference wines for the renaissance of Garnacha in Rioja Oriental. Álvaro Palacios, already famous for his work in Priorat and Bierzo, returned to his family estate in Alfaro and helped shift attention from heavier Tempranillo-led styles toward **high-altitude Garnacha** grown on the Yerga slopes. Decanter has described this area as one of Rioja Oriental's most exciting sources of elegant, affordable Garnacha.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Grilled lamb chops with rosemary:** Rioja and lamb are a natural match, and the wine's herbal, citrus-fresh Garnacha profile cuts through the richness beautifully.
- **Iberian pork presa:** The silky tannins and savoury spice complement the pork's succulence, while the wine's acidity keeps the pairing lively.
- **Mushroom and thyme risotto:** Earthy mushrooms echo the wine's herbal, mineral notes, while its red-fruit brightness refreshes the creamy texture.
- **Roast chicken with paprika and peppers:** The wine's red cherry, spice, and soft oak harmonise with sweet roasted peppers and gently smoky seasoning.

Decanter (DCT) : 96 Points (2021)



Sumptuous aromas of plump cherries, leading into equally succulent fruits on the palate. Fresh acidity arrives lightly, and then grows, leading to a long taut finish, with the slight echo of oak. Very young now, it will give much pleasure as it matures. A fine achievement: 100ha of certified organic vineyard, producing wines in quantity (some 500,000 bottles) and quality. Over the years Alvaro Palacios has transformed this from a 50% Tempranillo vineyard to firmly Garnacha-dominant, with a shift towards bush vines from double cordon. 95% Garnacha with 5% other traditional red varieties.





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Robert Parker (RP) : 94 Points (2021)

I had not yet tasted the 2021 La Montesa, and I'm glad I did. Álvaro Palacios was super proud of this vintage, and he told me that "many people consider it at the level of a very good Burgundy village at a fraction of the price!" It is indeed a great value, even more so in an exceptional year like 2021. But it was unmistakably Garnacha, with notes of garrigue and aromatic herbs, red cherries and flowers. It fermented with 20% full clusters in stainless steel with indigenous yeasts and matured in barrel for 12 months. It's clean and precise, with a lace texture, very fine tannins, flavors of red berries and herbs and a long, tasty, chalky finish. It has to be one of the finest vintages of Montesa to date. It has 14.3% alcohol, a pH of 3.5 and 5.3 grams of acidity. It's not a small cuvée; they produced 592,372 bottles! It was bottled in March 2023.



James Suckling (JS) : 94 Points (2021)

Beautiful berry-fruit purity with dark raspberries, pomegranate, some moss and subtle mineral and spices. Expressive and crunchy on the firm, medium-bodied palate with succulent berries and minerals. Pure and pithy finish. Drink or hold.



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