



Ribera del Duero

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To pique Tastet readers' curiosity about wine culture, as well as to appeal to their desire to discover new things—about vintages, wineries, wines, winemakers and much more—we decided to introduce you to a Spanish wine-producing region that is known for its exceptional, high-quality products: Ribera del Duero.

In collaboration with this fascinating part of Spain, we'll help you get to know not only the region itself, but also its superb products—especially the excellent wines that are produced there.





There's no doubt that adventurous foodies and fans of exceptional food and wine—people who are always on the hunt for the best products—will know how to appreciate this region. And when the time comes, they'll definitely want to visit for themselves. But while we wait for this happy day, we can head to an LCBO location and take a trip with a few good bottles from Ribera del Duero.

Because wine is intimately connected to the land where it's produced, we have to talk about Castile and León, the magnificent region where the vines of Ribera del Duero grow. Castile and León (or *Castilla y León* for those in the know) is an autonomous community in the northwest of Spain. The Ribera del Duero region falls within four of its provinces: Burgos, Valladolid, Soria and Segovia.

Far from the hustle and bustle of the big cities, Castile and León, with its nine provinces, is the largest of Spain's autonomous communities, as well as the historical heart of the Spanish state. The river Duero and its tributaries cut through the region, contributing to the richness of the area. The climate is continental and cold, which is a decisive factor in the growth and ripening of the vines.

Of course, the community's international reputation is due to many factors. In particular, the *Caminos francés*, one of the routes of the Way of St. James, draws thousands of pilgrims every year, and has done so for centuries. Cathedrals, museums, castles and monasteries are further proof of a rich local history.



To a lesser but ever-increasing extent, the wines of Ribera del Duero have been contributing to this international renown for the past 2 500 years. For a long time, these wines were seen as inconsequential and mostly consumed locally. Recently however, their standing has greatly improved—in 1982 the region approved their designation of origin—and they're highly sought-after by wine-lovers and connoisseurs of good wines and great vintages. Today, this popularity reaches far beyond Spain's borders.



Wines from Ribera del Duero can be found all around the world, from Europe to Africa, Russia to the Americas. Here at home, wine-lovers are spoiled for choice at the LCBO, which offers a wide variety of options.

With soils that are light, hot, dry and gravel-drained, the wineries of Ribera del Duero enjoy an exceptional terroir. They're mostly found in sheltered valleys with lots of sun, meaning they can take advantage of perfect soils and climactic conditions. Over the last 50 years, winemakers in the Ribera have developed their production methods by adopting the most modern growing techniques for harvesting, pressing, fermenting, clarifying and ripening. Throughout the entire process—even before bottling—strict quality-control measures are followed. These developments and all the efforts of winemakers have allowed wines from Ribera del Duero to reach new heights in terms of quality. As a result, these wines now boast the highest prices for Spanish wines, while continuing to offer entry-level options that are reasonably priced and perfect for modest budgets.



The wines of Ribera are exceptional because they're the product of everything but chance. Their high quality is actually the result of several important factors: firstly, a demanding high-altitude environment with a severe climate that features frigid nights and oppressively hot days. Then comes the talent, hard work and patience of winegrowers and winemakers who meticulously choose their vines, of which 227 hectares date from before the 1900s, and harvest almost 80% by hand to this day. This selection allows them to transform these extraordinary seeds into vintages that are just as special.

The immense respect that the winegrowers and winemakers of Ribera del Duero have for their land and the care that infuses their work all year long make it possible to develop unique wines that connoisseurs can find on LCBO shelves or anywhere in the world.

The traditional varietal in Ribera del Duero—as well as the most prevalent—is tempranillo, which is the most widely cultivated grape variety in Spain. The tempranillo varietal, also referred to as Tinto Fino or Tinta del Pais in Ribera del Duero, matures early; temprano means “early” in Spanish.



While they used to be known for their fleshy, full-bodied character, wines from Ribera del Duero today offer a whole range of elegant and subtle flavours. Given their excellent value for money and the variety offered by winegrowers and different bodegas, they’re accessible to everyone—from new consumers to experts.

Red wines are the hallmark of Ribera del Duero. They can vary from young, fruity wines with a good mouthfeel to elegant and powerful aged wines (crianzas, reservas and gran reservas), highlighting their complex aromas and their power and balance in the mouth.

With a market share of 15.5%, wines from Ribera del Duero occupy second place in the Spanish market for quality red wines. Canada is the tenth-largest market for Ribera del Duero’s exports, both in terms of volume and value.

Ribera del Duero wines are highly appreciated by Spanish consumers, who recognize the extensive expertise of the winemakers, the quality that comes with very strict production methods and the wide range of products that can be enjoyed by new consumers and experts alike. These wines are known around the world for their excellence.

Wines from Ribera del Duero are tannic wines; they release aromas of strawberry and prune, as well as chocolate, tobacco and even leather. They pair perfectly with a rib steak (a real treat grilled on the barbecue), lamb, pork, venison (that’s our deer, moose or other wild meats) or duck, and they go just as well with aged cheeses, pizza or a chorizo loaf (a classic tempranillo pairing).

Tastet’s Acknowledgements: In their extremely well-researched and interesting work, *Los paisajes vitivinícolas triunfantes de la Ribera del Duero*, authors Fernando Molinero and Cayetano Cascos provide a considerable amount of information about Ribera del Duero, its evolution, and the evolution of its vines.

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Click on the bottle of your choice to buy it on the LCBO website.

1. **Martin Berdugo Joven 2017**
Bodega Y Vinedos Martin Berdugo
16.70\$
2. **Escondido Tempranillo 2017**
La Milagrosa
16.95\$
3. **12 Linajes Reserva Tempranillo 2014**
D.O. 5 Hispanobodegas
29.95\$
4. **Emina Crianza 2016**
Bodega Matarromera SI
35.15\$
5. **Convento San Francisco
Special Selection Reserva 2014**
Bodega Convento San Francisco
49.95\$



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