

**From:** Debbie debbie@santiamwine.com  
**Subject:** Wine flight: Tempranillo, Special: Chile Relleno with cilantro rice  
**Date:** April 12, 2018 at 8:20 PM  
**To:** bwelsh@mind-over-media.com

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Good evening, Red wine & rainy weather seem to go together...Take a trip to Spain with us tomorrow night. The flight starts at 4 PM and we land at 8 PM. We will cruz by the Toro region & Ribera del Duero in the northern plateau and land in Rioja! Read more about Spain at the bottom of this page

Departing: Friday, April 13th fasten your seatbelts!

Time: 4-8 PM

Cost: Full pour: \$26 Half pour: \$15

Dinner Special: Chile Relleno with cilantro rice & beans

Reservations welcome: 503-589-0775

The Flight:

**2014 Bodega Numanthia Termes Toro \$30** A fruit-driven and balanced year, and should be released in the second half of 2017. The fermentation and élevage were similar to the 2013, but the wine already shows some of the changes that are being implemented in the winery. The wine started malolactic in barrel but was then transferred to stainless steel to finish it. They have also reduced the amount of new oak, because they want to show more fruit; however, this is only a transition year when the new team could only do some fine tuning. But I could already detect more freshness; 2014 was a very different year to the atypical 2013, and I see a more lively palate here. The tannins are fine-grained. 2014 is a balanced year, perhaps similar to 2010, and the wine shows good harmony and balance. **91 Points Wine Advocate**

**2012 Marqués de Cáceres Rioja Reserva \$23** Black cherry, currant and floral notes are expressive and alluring, balanced by loamy earth, tobacco and mineral elements that add a savory quality. Firm, well-integrated tannins give support to the polished texture, while orange peel acidity fuels the fresh finish. Drink now through 2027. **93 Points Wine Spectator Wine Spectator TOP 100 RANK 19 our of 100**

**2014 Luis Canas Rioja Crianza \$21** The Crianza from Luis Cañas is always a textbook example of the category. The 2014 Crianza is no exception, with those sweet lactic aromas, cinnamon and vanilla intermixed with Fruit of the Forest notes. The palate is silky, smooth and supple, a champion in drinkability. **91 Points Wine Advocate**

**2013 Señorío de P. Peciña Crianza \$20** The 2013 Señorío de P. Peciña Crianza is an attempt at a fresh and approachable red from the Sonsierra, with the usual house blend of Tempranillo with 3% Garnacha and 2% Graciano from their own vineyards. It fermented in stainless steel with indigenous yeasts and matured in used American oak barrels for 24 months, during which time the wine was raked every six months. It has a completely classical nose, with aromas from the élevage in American oak—mint, dill, vanilla and coconut—that transported me to the wines from yesteryear. **91 Points Wine Advocate**

**2015 Bodegas Hnos. Pérez Pascuas, El Pedrosal Ribera Del Duero \$25** Sight: Intense cherry-red with a violet rim, deep. Long purple legs. Smell: On the nose it has great intensity. Ripe fruit, balsamic, spicy aromas with a wonderful mineral backbone. The wood is very well integrated with the fruit and the wine shows great balance. Taste: On the palate it is powerful, fruity, with noble tannins that give the wine a great concentration and opulence. Vivid, with sensations of fruit, menthol, cocoa, toasted, coffee and minerals.

**2005 Muriel Gran Reserva \$28** Dried cherry, licorice, tobacco and tea flavors mingle in this maturing red. The texture is round and polished, with a light grip and bright, orange peel acidity. Harmonious and still vibrant. Drink now through 2018. 300 cases made. **90 Points Wine Spectator**

#### About Rioja:

Rioja is in North Central Spain. It's about 2 hours drive from Bilbao in a valley along the Ebro River. The entire valley is moderated by the *Sierra Cantabria*, a small but jagged mountain range that stops clouds from coming into the Rioja valley. Besides wine, the area is known for its delicious tiny artichokes, white asparagus and piquillo peppers.

For wine, the area is split into 3 sections: there's Rioja Baja, Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa (next to Alava). Most people will tell you that Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa are better than Rioja Baja but that's not always the case. You can find great Rioja wines from all over, just pay attention to producer and vintage.

#### 4 Styles of Traditional Rioja Wine

Rioja formerly "vin joven" Wines in their first or second year, which keep their primary freshness and fruitiness.

Rioja used to be called "vin joven" which literally means "young wine." Now when a wine is labeled 'Rioja' and it's the base-model Tempranillo, they are baby Tempranillo wines without all the tannin (or the richness) of the other classifications. What they don't have in structure they make up for in zippy fruit. Try this level of Rioja as a great example of the true varietal characteristics of Tempranillo wine.

Crianza: A minimum of one year in casks and a few months in the bottle. For white wines, the minimum cask aging period is 6 months.

Crianza is perhaps the most accessible level of Rioja wines, especially since most can be found for less than \$15. At the Crianza level, the wines are most commonly aged in used oak, so the oak flavors are not as strong. The goal of Crianza is a high-quality daily drinking wine. It's not too rich, but with Tempranillo's natural high tannin it has quite a bit more body than Merlot. It's like a great valued Cabernet Sauvignon.

Reserva: Selected wines of the best vintages with an excellent potential that have been aged for a minimum of 3 years, with at least one year in casks. For white wines, the minimum aging period is 2 years, with at least 6 months in casks.

This is where Rioja tastes serious. At the Reserva level, winemakers often age their wines longer than the minimum and select better grapes. Many Rioja wine enthusiasts swear by Reserva level because they are a medium between super fruity Crianza and oakey-bottle-aged Gran Reserva.

Gran Reserva: Selected wines from exceptional vintages which have spent at least 2 years in oak casks and 3 years in the bottle. For white wines, the minimum aging period is 4 years, with at least one year in casks. –

The Gran Reserva level of Rioja experiences the most oak-aging. This gives Rioja wine the most tannin structure and age-worthy potential. What's interesting about Gran Reserva is that most winemakers select the best grapes for this level and age them for as long as the wine needs. This means most of the new release Gran Reservas are around 10 years old or older when you first see them available. Gran Reserva Riojas are ideal wines to cellar up to 30 years.

Tempranillo is the classic red grape variety of Rioja, producing soft, supple wines with aromas of summer fruits which are well suited to aging, developing depth, character and elegance.

Mazuelo can be blended with Tempranillo to add color, weight and tannins which help the wine to age gracefully.

Garancha adds warmth and spice to a number of different styles of Rioja. This can also be found in a single varietal, with old vines producing refined, highly prized wines.

Graciano brings extra fruit flavors and elegance to Rioja blends. Also found in single varietal wines in which it produces great character and finesse.

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