

## R. LÓPEZ DE HEREDIA VIÑA TONDONIA (D.O.C. Rioja, Spain)

Founded in 1877, López de Heredia stands out as one of the few worldwide wineries that respects and adheres to core principles taught by their ancestors.



photograph courtesy of Viña Tondonia

### THE WINERY

**“Perhaps no winery in the world guards its traditions as proudly and steadfastly as López de Heredia does... it is paradoxically a winery in the vanguard, its viticulture and winemaking, is a shining, visionary example for young, forward-thinking producers all over the world... At López de Heredia, there is serenity that comes with adherence to core principles...” August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 by Eric Asimov, *The New York Times***

There are few wineries in Spain, or in the world, whose name conjures the heritage and prestige evoked by R. López de Heredia. Little about this winery has changed in the 142 years since its founding by, Don Rafael López de Heredia. The family adheres to a winemaking doctrine blueprinted in the 1880s – to make wine only from their own vineyards.

When it comes to the winemaking process, the work in the vineyard has not changed since the 1880's. R. López de Heredia is a “traditionalist” through and through and keeping the traditions alive today is important to maintain not only the quality but the personality of the house. Working by hand with some of the best terroir, respecting the soil, and working with nature on what it needs is something R. López de Heredia is very proud of.

Fermentation takes place in their 72 large oak vats, some of which are 142 years old. After fermentation, the wines are ready to be aged in 14,000 handmade American oak barrels.

The wines will remain at R. López de Heredia's underground cellars, stored at perfect temperature and tranquility for a minimum of 3 to 10 years. Wines acquire their smoothness and bouquet during the bottle aging that follows, a minimum of 3 years for Crianzas, and 10 years for Gran Reserva wines. Aging wines should be seen as a pedagogic act; the wine is "educated", hence should never be rushed through sped-up improvisations which would destroy the biological process that give it its special character. Wines need to spend a minimum of three years in barrels to begin to manifest their "education" and their soul.

## Map of Rioja DOCa (Denominación de Origen Calificada) R. López de Heredia is in Rioja Alta in Haro



**THE VINEYARD ZACONIA** - Viña Gravonia wine comes from our vineyard called “Viña Zaconia”. The vineyard is 0.12 miles from the winery and close to the Ebro River. Its height is 1,116 feet above sea level. The soil is stony, the roots of the vines go deep, and ensure very balanced, ripe grapes. Viña Zaconia has a surface of 59 acres, all of them Viura grape. Historically, the wines coming from that vineyard were called “Viña Zaconia”.

## VIÑA GRAVONIA CRIANZA, 2014 (white)



- **Region/Sub- Region:** Spain, Rioja, Rioja Alta.
- **Grapes:** 100% Viura.
- **Harvest:** End September-early October, all done by hand, cutting with a curved knife "corquete", prevents the grape breaking causing fermentation prematurely. Bunches are placed in conical wood containers made at the R. López de Heredia cooperage.
- **Vinification:** Grapes are crushed immediately releasing their must with as little contact with skins as possible. Spontaneous fermentation in 16,000L vats.
- **Aging:** 4 years in 225L American oak barrels handmade by the López de Heredia coopers, racked twice per and at least 5 years in bottle before released.
- **Nose:** Dried tropical notes, citrus curd, and baking spice.
- **Taste:** Freshness on the palate overlaid by the tannins and lignins of older oak with a pleasing touch of acidity.
- **Gastronomy:** Tapas, any kind of fish, shellfish, and poultry.
- **Color:** Slightly developed pale gold.

### CRITICS AND REVIEWS:

**International Wine Report, Aug '22 gave 95 points, Viña Gravonia Crianza 2014** – “ The 2014 Viña Gravonia is simply outstanding in this vintage. This beautifully aged, one-of-a-kind white is made from 100% Viura and aged 4 years in American oak barrels followed by an additional 5 years in bottle before release. It begins with inviting aromas of lemon zest, overripe quince, honeysuckle, almonds, and hints of candied pineapple all emerging from the glass. The palate is gorgeous, displaying excellent balance with pretty acidity in lovely sense of freshness to complement the aged character. This is always a fantastic wine, but the 2014 is the most impressive release that I can recall.”

**Wine Advocate, Aug '22 gave 95 points, Viña Gravonia Crianza 2014** – “The 2014 Viña Gravonia Blanco always smells of the cellar with some mushroomy aromas and flavors, and it's very classical, with 12.5% alcohol, more vibrant than the 2015 I tasted next to it. To María José López de Heredia, Gravonia has to be very fresh with citrus freshness and some nuttiness but without the bitterness of the aged Tondonia, which they compare with the Carbonieux and such wines from Graves. These are ancient vines, and the grapes are pristine.” They bottled later because of COVID-19, and the extra time was spent mostly in oak vat but maybe some in barrel...”