

# Bodegas Palacios Remondo

*During the 1990's*, Alvaro Palacios became the most acclaimed Spanish winemaker of his generation, leading winemaking revolutions in regions on opposite sides of Spain—Priorat and Bierzo.

But with the turn of a new decade and century, he has returned to his roots in Spanish wine's heartland, Rioja. There, he has taken over his family's old Palacios Remondo estate and quickly—and completely—transformed this historic property.

## The Prodigal Son Returns

Alvaro Palacios had departed Rioja in 1988 to escape the traditional winemaking orthodoxy as practiced by his father, Jose, as well as by virtually every other winemaker in the region. He moved to Priorat, where he could seek his own vision.

But when his gravely ill father asked him to return twelve years later to take control, Alvaro agreed. He would have a free hand, unconstrained by how things had been done in the past. And, perhaps even more important, he would have some spectacular vineyards with which to work.

Back in the 1960's, his father had planted some 250 acres of vines on chalky, south-facing hillsides which were now producing amazing fruit. Alvaro knew that with these mature vineyards—mostly Tempranillo and Garnacha—he had the raw materials to *immediately* transform Palacios Remondo into one of Rioja's elite estates. Together with his sister and brother, Alvaro began his quest to fulfill this estate's vast potential.

## Change Begins

By the time of the 2000 harvest, Alvaro was firmly in charge and change happened at a breathtaking pace. Perhaps the most dramatic change was shutting down the bodega's *négociant* business, which in recent years had constituted 75% of its production. Alvaro believed that with 250 acres of great vineyards, he had no need for other growers' fruit.



He also immediately imposed drastic vineyard management changes. Organic viticulture was implemented, and yields were slashed. In the cellar, they began to phase out the existing cooperage, replacing them with superior French barrels.

Finally, the number of different cuvées produced was cut by more than half. There are now just four wines made:

**Rioja blanco “Placet”** — This gorgeous white wine was created in 1999. A pure Viura, grown on chalky soil, it is as precise and mineral as a fine Chablis.

**Rioja Tinto “Vendimia”** — A pure expression of the estate's incredible fruit quality, released young to maximize its explosiveness.

**Rioja Crianza “Montesa”** — Montesa is the name of the vineyard that Alvaro's father planted. This skillfully crafted red wine, released after one year in oak, is conceived as the estate's flagship blend - and it reflects the best of the the estate's past and future.

**Rioja tinto “Propiedad”** — A special selection of the estate's best fruit, this complex red reflects a further refining of Palacios Remondo's quality potential.

# BODEGAS PALACIOS REMONDO

Rioja, Spain

## OVERVIEW

Established: 1942

Proprietor: Alvaro Palacios / Conzeulo Palacios Muro

Winemaker: Alvaro Palacios

Alvaro assumed the helm at the family estate after father Jose passed away in 2000. He cut production from 200,000 cases (mostly purchased fruit), to about 70,000 cases, and instituted a program of revitalizing the family vineyard, including short pruning and organic viticulture.

Rioja Baja (Orientale) is more Mediterranean than Rioja Alta or Alavesa. Garnacha tends to shine the brightest here. Just as in the Rioja regions upriver, the great vineyard sites are located on the chalky hillsides. The gem that brought Alvaro back to the family estate is a beautiful 110 hA vineyard that Jose planted in the late 60s on a slope above Alfaro.

## VINEYARD INFORMATION

Fruit Source: Estate vineyard

Soils: Calcareous stones and clay

Appellation: Rioja Baja

Harvest: by hand

Elevation: 550 M

## VINTAGE NOTES

2005 – Another spectacular year. Large-scaled wines, with structure and balance.

2004 – An extended ripening season has yielded wines with great concentration, aromatic development, and finesse.

2003 – Extremely dry and hot vintage, with excellent potential for reds.

2002 – Rioja Baja largely avoided the rains that plagued Alta and Alavesa. The cool growing season resulted in elegant, mid-weight wines.

## ADDITIONAL WINEMAKING NOTES

No filtration or fining.

All harvesting by hand.

Organic viticulture.

## The Wines

### Rioja blanco “Placet”

Yields: ~35 hl/hA

Blend: 100% Viura

Oak Aging: Wooden uprights.

Some barrique in 2003.

Production: 3,000 cases.

U.S. retail price: \$20

### Rioja tinto “Vendimia”

Yields: ~35 hl/hA

Blend: 25% Garnacha, 70% Tempranillo, 5% Graciano and Mazuelo

Oak Aging: French barrel (100% new) 6-8 weeks.

Production: 5,000 cases.

U.S. retail price: \$15

### Rioja tinto Crianza

Yields: ~35 hl/hA

Blend: 40% Garnacha, 45% Tempranillo, 15% Graciano and Mazuelo

Oak Aging: French barrel

Production: 60,000 cases.

U.S. retail price: \$19

### Rioja tinto “Propiedad”

Yields: ~25 hl/hA

Blend: 40% Garnacha, 45% Tempranillo, 15% Graciano and Mazuelo

Oak Aging: 100% French Barrique

Production: 6,000 cases.

U.S. retail price: \$30