

Hermanos Peciña

The New Jewel of Traditional Rioja

Rioja's traditional school of winemaking reigned from the 1850s until the 1980s, producing some of the world's most consistently complex, soul-satisfying wines.

But few of the historic bodegas have remained purely traditional. And today, apart from López de Heredia and La Rioja Alta, who is left to carry the torch of the past's silky, Burgundian reds?

But there is one *very* important example that didn't even exist 25 years ago: **Hermanos Peciña.**

A La Rioja Alta Alumnus

Peciña was founded in 1992 by La Rioja Alta's long-time vineyard manager, Pedro Peciña. Pedro comes from a long line of grape growers, and grapes are in his blood. His family held 20 ha of great old vineyards around San Vincente, and they would form be the basis of his new estate.

In 2002, after 18 years at La Rioja Alta, Pedro left to devote himself entirely to his bodega. By now, he knew where all the best vineyards were, acquiring additional prime parcels exclusively on the left bank of the river, with its high elevations and chalky soil.

From the beginning, Pedro's winemaking has been utterly classic, and he uses his American oak barrels subtly. With an average age of 5-6 years, the wood is largely neutral, providing textural richness, but only background flavor notes.

In fact, the style of Pedro's best wines reminds us of no less than the great Cune Viña Reals and Riojanas Monte Reals of the past in their warmth, generosity and velvety textures.

The Rewards of Patience

He ages far longer than is required by law, from a minimum of two years in barrel for Crianza to



Pedro Peciña

"The resulting wines have made Peciña a new classic."

*Luis Gutierrez,
The Wine Advocate*

four or more years for Gran Reserva. And his cellar speaks volumes, with line after line of barrels, stacked four and five high. It's a scene that was commonplace in Rioja forty years ago—but one that has now all but vanished.

Pedro's wines age with incredible grace, in part due to meticulous twice-a-year rackings—moving the wine from one barrel to another to let the wine breathe. Most large bodegas rack by pumping the wine from barrel into big stainless steel tanks and then back into barrel, limiting the wine's development.

Pedro racks as earlier generations did. Each barrel is gently drained by hand into a clean barrel beneath it. This vestige of the past is made possible not only by Pedro's proud traditionalism, but also by his artisanal scale of production.

This practice, combined with avoidance of new wood, results in Rioja of breathtaking silkiness and irresistible richness. His work—and his wines—beg to be compared with the great traditionalists of Piedmont.

Extraordinary Vineyards

Pedro is preserving the diversity of the old vineyards, keeping varieties that others are ripping out.

He uses no chemical fertilizers, nor does he induce fermentation. And he respects the traditional idea of blending to produce more complex, complete wines. Drawing on nearly a dozen different sites, he can create a diverse range of wines with remarkable consistency from vintage to vintage, which is one of the hallmarks of Rioja's glorious past.

Many of the great bodegas of the past have abandoned the classic approaches that made Rioja so singular. Pedro Peciña has joined the few surviving traditionalists in giving hope that this highly important school of winemaking will endure.