

Written by

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Viñateros – bigger and even better



TASTING ARTICLES **SPAIN**

The second edition of a thrilling showing of some of the finest, and quirkiest, wines of Spain. See my overview on Saturday. See this result of a dip into our archives, [Where Spanish wine might go](#).

We're very blasé in London about wine tastings, being offered so many so often. But every now and then one comes along that really sets UK wine professionals alight. The [New Wave South Africa](#) tastings are fine examples, but so were the first two Viñateros tastings devoted to new-wave Spanish producers to judge from [Julia's reaction to the first version](#) last year, and my enthusiastic reaction to the much more ambitious second iteration last week.

There were nearly 300 wines on show – far too many for a single taster. Perhaps we should deploy extra troops next year. The wines were generally particularly refreshing, without obvious oak, and, often, with a particularly grainy texture on the finish. Three collections of free-pour wines were designed to illustrate key trends:

- *Atlantic reds* – unique, refreshing reds from local varieties
- *Mountain wines* – showcasing the exceptionally high elevations that are responsible for the vitality of many of these new/old wine regions
- *Rebels and reformers* – 'producers driving changes within Spanish DOs'. Prime among these is Telmo Rodriguez, whose chafing against the preoccupations, structure and regulations of the Consejos, generic organisations, led pretty directly to the formation of the Viñateros group.

My strategy for whittling down the opportunities to taste was to ask our estimable Spanish specialist Ferran Centelles to mark my card. And even then I ran out of time and didn't get a chance to taste the wines from the far south, which

nowadays include unfortified wines made from vineyards previously dedicated to sherry and Montilla (some of which Julia described in [Jerez unfortified](#)).

Talking of sherry, it is noticeable that we are seeing more and more table wines aged under a layer of [flor](#), the film-forming yeast that characterises so many sherries – not just in [Jura and Tokaj](#) and [Lombardy](#) but as far away as South America (see, for example the Volare Chardonnay in [Argentina 2020 – mainly whites](#) published yesterday).

As you can see below, Spain is now benefiting from an exciting cohort of producers, often pretty small-scale, who are seeking out old vines, indigenous grape varieties and interesting sites. Expressing the character of these sites is the prime objective of these new-wave producers and there is often a definite conflict between these aims on the one hand and the regulations of the local Consejos, particularly their demands for extended oak ageing, on the other.

As Luis Gutiérrez pointed out when presenting the wines under the heading [Masterclass](#) below, Viñateros represents a 'radical re-evaluation of the past'. In my picture at the top, Luis is seen on the left with Alvaro Ribalta of Indigo Wine, co-ordinators of the event, and Elisa Ucar of Domaines Lupier, who have been rescuing old Garnacha vines in Navarra.

The wines Luis chose were representative of those profiled in his book [The New Vignerons: A New Generation of Spanish Wine Growers](#) (Planeta Gastro, 2018) but tended to be older vintages than the ones shown in the main body of the Lindley Hall, where the event took place. The most outstanding wine for me was a 2011 pale red *clarete* from Ribera del Duero producer Dominio del Águila made from both red and white wine grapes and still going extremely strong in a Tondonia sort of way. Indigo are currently offering the 2016 vintage described below in the Duero and Ebro valleys section. There is absolutely no hurry to drink this unique wine style. Ribera del Duero has just extended DO status to white wines, incidentally.

Out of a total of 71 wines listed below, the first 61, from the walkaround tasting, are grouped by the geographical location of the wineries, starting in the [north-west](#), heading eastwards through the [Duero and Ebro valleys](#), and then south through [central Spain](#) and down towards the [Mediterranean](#) coast. These are followed by 10 wines presented by Luis Gutiérrez in a separate [masterclass](#). Within geographical groups the wines are listed alphabetically by producer (sur)name, and masterclass wines are listed in the order tasted, but you can reorder them using the menu below.

Atlantic and north-west Spain

Algueira, Pizarra 2015 Vino de España

17

From Ribeira Sacra but outside the appellation in this vintage. Mencía, their oldest vines.

Quite dense and juicy. Lots of excitement here. Real beginning middle and end with quite a firm structure but serious fruit in the middle.

Drink 2019 – 2029

Imported into the UK by Vine Trail

Dominio do Bibei, Lapola 2017 Ribeira Sacra

17

Godello, Doña Blanca and Albariño at elevations from about 300 to 800 m.

Light honeysuckle nose. Great tension and layers. Really well put together. Long. **GV**

Drink 2019 – 2024

£24.50 Vin Cognito

Dominio do Bibei, Lalama 2015 Ribeira Sacra

16.5

Mainly Mencía.

A little sourness on the nose rather than the usual mulberry fruit of Mencía. But it finishes crunchy and refreshing. Well done!

Drink 2019 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Castro Ventosa, Cepas Centenarias 2015 Bierzo

16.5

Rich and round. But with ripe rather than overripe fruit and a broad spread of flavour.

Drink 2019 – 2026

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Castro Ventosa, Rapolao 2015 Bierzo

17

Rich nose with tantalising grace notes. Transparent. Mulberries and real structure. Undertow of coffee bean. Very satisfying wine.

Drink 2020 – 2029

£41 RRP imported by Indigo Wine

Envínate, Albahra 2018 Vino de España

15.5

From Almansa but outside the DO. Moravia grapes mainly in concrete.

Dark crimson and very sweet, ripe fruit. Could be a little more refreshing. Just a bit heavy on the end. (Their many other wines ran out early.) Very chewy finish.

Drink 2020 – 2023

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Envínate, Táganan 2018 Vino de España

16

From Tenerife but outside the appellation. Blend from several vineyards.

Pale ruby. Lightweight and transparent. Non-classic flavours and rather hard on the end.

Drink 2021 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Guímaro, Camino Real 2017 Ribeira Sacra

16.5

Gentle and round. Really very pretty and yet not remotely wimpy. Fully satisfying. Good structure and appetising balance with sufficient acid and light tannin. Going by the trade price, **GV**.

Drink 2020 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Les Caves de Pyrène

Verónica Ortega, Cal 2017 Bierzo

15.5

Advertised on the front label as Godello on calcareous soils.

Tight and introvert. Arguably a tad too much so. Where's the fruit?

Drink 2021 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Vine Trail

Verónica Ortega, Roc 2017 Bierzo

15.5

Bright crimson. Could do with being just a little fresher. Sorry to be so picky! But it's a bit sandy and heavy and sweet.

Drink 2020 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Vine Trail

Borja Pérez, Vidueños Artifice 2017 Ycoden Daute Isora

17

Labels and nomenclature a bit confusing ... a blend of grapes of which Listán is just one.

Very lively and interesting and complete. Great stuff. Sufficient acidity and lots of fruit. Overlay of sweetness but not a sweet wine. **VGW**

Drink 2019 – 2023

£16.68 Justerini & Brooks

Borja Pérez, Artifice 2017 Ycoden Daute Isora

15.5

A little raw. Light and fresh and a little chewy. Something not quite vinifera about this.

Drink 2019 – 2022

£14.68 Justerini & Brooks

Silice 2018 Vino de España

17

From Ribeira Sacra but outside the appellation.

Very racy and lively – and floral! A real charmer. Transparent. Really kittenish and flirtatious. Even if perhaps not for a very long life. Should be **VGW**.

Drink 2020 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Modal Wines

Silice, Finca Lobeiras 2016 Vino de España

16 +

Intense nose – very concentrated. Quite demanding at the moment giving a sort of tart sherbet impression. It may well become gorgeous but at the moment it's a bit tart.

Drink 2022 – 2028

Two rivers: Duero and Ebro valleys

Dominio del Aguila 2015 Vino de España

17.5

From Ribera but made from Albillo, which puts it (in this vintage at least) outside the appellation. Indigenous yeast, long ageing in French oak. No malo.

Strong matchstick notes on the nose. Dense and bone dry with massive tension. You would never believe this is five years old. Racy and chewy but with masses of complex fruit.

Drink 2020 – 2027

£59.80 RRP imported by Indigo Wine

Dominio del Aguila, Pícaro del Aguila Clarete 2016 Ribera del Duero

17

Mainly Tempranillo. No malo. Looks rather simple in terms of packaging – except for the wax seal.

Oak and seriousness on the nose. Like the 2011, it tastes like a mature rioja. Great fun and very distinctive. Pure sweet fruit and oak ageing but still refreshing.

Drink 2020 – 2026

£33.90 Hedonism

Dominio del Aguila, Reserva 2016 Ribera del Duero

16 +

Quite a bit of oak, cheesiness and dustiness. Hint of coconut – American oak? Not my style but certainly a lot of effort has gone into this.

Drink 2021 – 2028

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Dominio del Aguila, Pícaro del Águila 2018 Ribera del Duero

16.5

Deep vibrant crimson. Spectacularly healthy fruit with a fair whack of tannin. A bit of chew on the end but it's a good example of the character of Ribera unclouded by oak.

Drink 2020 – 2025

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Alvar de Dios Hernández, Vagüera 2017 Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León **16.5**

Doña Blanca grapes.

Delicate, fresh yet fruity. Very well done. Some real energy here.

Drink 2019 – 2025

Imported into the UK by IberianDrinks

Alvar de Dios Hernández, Tio Uco 2017 Toro **16**

Rich, sweet and ripe but massive delivery for the money – so long as you are not looking for something frail. Lots of acidity and tannin as well as all that fruit. Should be **GV**.

Drink 2020 – 2026

Imported into the UK by IberianDrinks

El Escocés Volante, Manda Huevos con Pielés 2018 Vino de España **14.5**

Quite dark tawny orange. Strange, rather oxidised nose. Not enough fresh fruit character.

Drink 2019 – 2020

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Goyo Garcia, Finca El Peruco 2014 Ribera del Duero **15.5 +**

Light and fresh with masses of acidity and a slight deficit of fruit. Tough finish. Pretty uncompromising with a sour note on the end.

Drink 2021 – 2028

Imported into the UK by Vine Trail

Goyo Garcia, Finca Valdeolmos 2014 Ribera del Duero **15.5**

A little more sweetness than the Peruco but not much. Severe! Though at least it's not masked by oak. Damson juice?

Drink 2020 – 2026

Imported into the UK by Vine Trail

Beatriz Herranz, Judas 2017 Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León **17**

Viura – in Rueda but they choose to use VdT Castilla y León on the label.

Rich – much richer than the average Viura – but still refreshing and exciting. Long. Good stuff!

Drink 2019 – 2024

Beatriz Herranz, Parajes del Infierno La Sillería 2016 Vino de España **17**

Another fine white from this producer. Real density with a lightly honeyed note and a green streak.

Drink 2020 – 2026

£31.10 RRP imported by Indigo Wine

Lupier, El Terroir 2015 Navarra **16.5**

Biodynamic. Very sweet and lively. Pure and complex. Lots going on here! Fine tannins and herbal fruit. **GV**

Drink 2019 – 2025

£22.25–£22.95 AG Wines, Berry Bros & Rudd

Lupier, La Dama 2016 Navarra **16.5**

Biodynamic. Sweet start and arguably less refreshing and still much more youthful than El Terroir.

Drink 2022 – 2029

Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Alfredo Maestro Tejero, El Marciano 2018 Vino de la Tierra **15**

Castilla y León

Garnacha from Sierra de Gredos.

Light, sweet and simple. A tiny bit rank and very pinched on the end.

Hard work!

Drink 2021 – 2023

Imported into the UK by Les Caves de Pyrène

Remelluri 2016 Rioja

16 +

Nine grapes of Rioja.

A little bit of honey underneath and lots of green fruit on top. No hurry to drink this!

Drink 2021 – 2026

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Remelluri, Reserva 2012 Rioja

17

Beautifully balanced and thoroughly satisfying and savoury. Tobacco-leaf finish. Complete and not a silly price. **GV**

Drink 2019 – 2030

£28.99–£33.30 Noble Green Wines, AG Wines, Forest Wines, Bottle Apostle, Hedonism

Telmo Rodríguez, Branco de Sta Cruz 2016 Valdeorras

16.5

Old vines of Godello, Treixadura and Palomino.

Very complex and refreshing. Lemon and some light mineral quality.

Drink 2020 – 2025

Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Telmo Rodríguez, Pegaso Granito 2015 Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León

16

Garnacha from Sierra de Gredos.

Pure sweet Garnacha. Lots to chew on and a dryish finish. A little heftier than some Gredos Garnachas.

Drink 2020 – 2026

Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Telmo Rodríguez, As Caborcas 2016 Valdeorras

16.5

A vineyard with vines of all ages.

Mulberry fruit and delicacy with a little apparent spritz on the palate. A historic local wine? With a beautiful label.

Drink 2019 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Viña Zorzal Graciano 2018 Navarra

16

Winemaker thinks 2018 is his best vintage yet.

Bright crimson. Fresh and fruity. Very clean and bracing. Likely to be **GV**.

Drink 2020 – 2023

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Central Spain

4 Monos, Tierra de Luna 2017 Vinos de Madrid

16.5 +

Project only since 2016. From three sites averaging 800m elevation.

Sweet and light on the palate – extremely refreshing. With that tension on the end. Racy and transparent. **GV**

Drink 2019 – 2024

£17.68 Justerini & Brooks

4 Monos, La Danza del Viento Molino Quemado 2017 Vinos de Madrid

16

Some rather intrusive oak impression (although apparently there is no new oak) on the nose, and damson, almost sour, fruit on the palate.

Seems to have a little hole in the middle.

Drink 2021 – 2027

£26.68 Justerini & Brooks

Bernabeleva, Camino de Navaherreros 2017 Vinos de Madrid

16.5

Some Garnacha is bought in for this wine.

Quite gamey and interesting on the nose. Really quite fine and delicate.

Very appetising. Maybe not for long ageing but great fun. **GV**

Drink 2019 – 2021

£13.75–£19.99 Worth Brothers Wines, Grand Cru Co, Kwoff, Thorne Wines

Bernabeleva, Navaherreros Garnacha de Bernabeleva 2017 Vinos de Madrid

17

Estate wine from this 97-year-old bodega (with interruptions). Aged in 500-litre old casks.

Rich and gamey on the palate. More ‘serious’ than the Camino bottling but not that much more expensive. **GV**

Drink 2020 – 2026

£19.49 Hay Wines

Daniel Gómez Jiménez-Landi, Las Uvas de la Ira Sierra de Gredos 2018 Méntrida

17

Pale cherry red. Not much nose but lots of lovely floral fruit on the palate. Long and fresh. **GV** 14.5%

Drink 2019 – 2024

£26 RRP imported by Indigo Wine

Marañones, Piesdescalzos 2018 Vinos de Madrid

16 +

Warm welcoming Albillo nose with perhaps slightly less tension than some of its peers. But the beeswax and citrus-peel flavours are certainly distinctive. Still pretty chewy on the end.

Drink 2021 – 2026

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Marañones Garnacha 2016 Vinos de Madrid

17

Pale Garnacha. Aromas in the animal spectrum. Sweet, light and fresh.
Very exciting and pacy. Exceedingly long despite the light body.
Drink 2019 – 2025

Mustiguillo, Finca Calvestra Merseguera 2018 Vino de España **16.5**

Quite a haunting, crystallised flowers sort of nose. Medium body with a hint of turpentine(!) but lots of interest and confident length.
Drink 2020 – 2024
Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Mustiguillo, Finca Terrerazo 2016 Pago El Terrerazo **15.5**

Round, ripe fruit and deep crimson. A little more mainstream than some reds with quite a sour, drying finish.
Drink 2019 – 2023
Imported into the UK by Fields Morris & Verdin

Ponce, Estrecha 2018 Manchuela **15**

Pale ruby. Very reduced nose. Then pretty astringent. 12.5%
Drink 2021 – 2023
Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Ponce, Pino 2018 Manchuela **15.5**

Slightly reduced and very tingly. Dry finish. Just a little more generosity of fruit wouldn't go amiss. 13%
Drink 2020 – 2023
Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Mediterranean

Alemanya i Corrió, Principia Mathematica 2018 Penedès **15.5**

Xarel·lo fermented in large untoasted oak.
Just a little low in acid with that waxy aroma I found on older dry

Furmints. Great name and label though.

Drink 2019 – 2021

Imported into the UK by Alliance Wine

Alemany i Corrió, Sot Lefriec 2015 Penedès

16.5

Carignan with Bordeaux varieties from their best parcels, identified by soil analysis in 2003.

Deep crimson. Well melded and appetising. Ripe fruit and a dry, appetising finish. Impressively long.

Drink 2019 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Alliance Wine

Alta Alella, Celler de Les Aus Merla 2019 Alella

16

Mataro (Mourvèdre) from Alta Alella. This had very few months in acacia and chestnut. It had to be rushed to market because they ran out of 2018.

Tasted from magnum. Clean and fresh – much fresher than most wines from this grape variety. But also a little simpler. Fun and perhaps more like a mouthwash than a wine in its healthy vitality.

Drink 2020 – 2023

Imported into the UK by Carte Blanche

Casa Castillo, El Molar 2017 Jumilla

16.5

Garnacha at 800 m.

Quite meaty and deep crimson for a Garnacha. Big and beefy with some pretty evident tannins, and alcohol. Barbecue wine? Should be **GV**.

Drink 2020 – 2025

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Casa Castillo, Las Gravas 2017 Jumilla

17

Monastrell. Smooth and flattering with a rather haunting perfume.

Pretty sophisticated.

Drink 2020 – 2026

£37.60 RRP imported by Indigo Wine

Castell d'Encús, Ekam 2018 Costers del Segre

16

Riesling and Albariño.

Interesting blend that must seem extremely unusual in Spain. Works quite well and has a core of fruit with real refreshment. Relatively delicate until a bit of astringency on the end.

Drink 2020 – 2023

Imported into the UK by H2Vin

Castell d'Encús, Taleia 2018 Costers del Segre

16.5

Sauvignon and Sémillon.

Not sure I would guess the varieties blind on the nose but the Sauvignon asserts itself on the palate. And then it has a little Sémillon breadth. I think if I lived in Barcelona I would actively seek this out. Perhaps not if I lived in Pessac or Léognan. But it's very well made – good balance.

Drink 2020 – 2025

Imported into the UK by H2Vin

Castell d'Encús, Quest 2016 Costers del Segre

16.5

The Cabernets and Petit Verdot fermented outside in amazing ancient stone lagares.

Correct, slightly sweet Cabernet Sauvignon dominates but it's quite delicate.

Drink 2021 – 2028

Imported into the UK by H2Vin

Castell d'Encús, Thalarn 2016 Costers del Segre

17

Syrah fermented outside in amazing ancient stone lagares.

Very delicate Syrah with a little sweetness but absolutely recognisable. Dry zesty finish. Very neat. It may not be 100% Spanish but it's awfully good – and well made.

Drink 2019 – 2024

Imported into the UK by H2Vin

Pardas, Rupestris 2018 Penedès

15

Xarello with 20% Malvasia de Sitges.

Attractively smoky aroma. Then slightly simple fruit on the palate and astringent on the finish.

Drink 2021 – 2023

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Terroir Sense Fronteres, Negre 2018 Montsant

16

Semi-négociant label under the same management as Terroir al Límit.

Garnacha with Cariñena.

Sweet start with a suggestion of treacle toffee and then the structure of Carignan. Lightly briary.

Drink 2020 – 2023

Imported into the UK by Armit Wines

Terroir Sense Fronteres, Vertebra-Figuera 2018 Montsant

16

All Garnacha at about 650 m on La Figuera from a vineyard they manage.

Smooth and sweet. Perhaps just slightly too ripe?

Drink 2021 – 2026

Imported into the UK by Armit Wines

Terroir al Límit, Pedra de Guix 2016 Priorat

16

Guix is gypsum.

Broad and fairly low in acid but with the saving grace of bitterness on the end. Citrus-peel flavours. But a bit overpriced.

Drink 2018 – 2022

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Terroir al Límit, Terroir Històric 2018 Priorat

16

Light, fresh nose. Fairly simple fruit. Great name!

Drink 2020 – 2024

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Terroir al Límit, Terra de Cuques 2017 Priorat

16.5

Very sweet start and quite marked grainy tannins on the end. A real mouthful of llicorella?!

Drink 2019 – 2025

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Terroir al Límit, Arbossar 2017 Priorat

16

Smooth but still pretty sweet with cocoa flavours.

Drink 2020 – 2027

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Masterclass

Wine writer Luis Gutiérrez presented these wines, some of his favourites, in a side room off the main tasting. The introductions in italics are synopses of Luis's comments but by the time we reached the Guímaro wine I realised that Luis was working his way so slowly through these wines that the masterclass would eat dangerously into the time I had available to taste the rest of the wines being shown by the Viñateros – so I tasted the last four wines without waiting for Luis's comments.

Raventós i Blanc, Mas del Serral 2007 Conca del Riu Anoia 17

The Raventós family basically created Cava. This is a library release after 10 years on the lees. Disgorged in January 2020. Made with grapes from very old – mainly Xarello – vines in Penedès. Pepe Raventós, founder of Raventós i Blanc, was the first big name to leave the Cava DO.

Very slightly pinkish deep gold. Very firm structure, good acidity and some autolysis in evidence. Some herbal quality but none of the cabbage flavour I associate with old-fashioned Xarello. Very appetising. Just a tiny bit astringent on the finish. 12.2%

Drink 2020 – 2025

Venus La Universal, Venus de Cartoixà 2016 Montsant

17.5

Made by Sara Pérez and René Barbier Jr, the second generation of Priorat. Five of the original remain: Mogador, Martinet, Dofi, l'Obac

and Erasmus. 'Priorat is a magnet for hippies; the children there have no shoes, there are chickens everywhere – it's all a mess.' Sara's father has trained some vines in a horizontal ring. Eventually the new Priorat group returned to the original rancio style of wines. René Barbier Sr bought some old wines from old families for inspiration and they have just released their first examples. This is 100% Cartoixà (Xarello) from 60-year-old vines.

Deep honey gold. Not crystal clear. Extremely strong struck-match character on the nose. Full bodied but bone dry. Light cooking-apple-skin character. Masses of chewy character and real zest.

Drink 2019 – 2024

Dominio del Aguila, Pícaro del Aguila Clarete 2011 Ribera del Duero

17

Jorge Monzón makes this pink wine nowadays. This is made from a mix of red and white grapes and is treated like a red wine. This particular wine was made by Jorge's father, so it's more rustic than his own clarete wines which began in 2013. He has more than 50 ha of old vines and sells to the top producers. There's no room for a destemmer in their tiny winery so it's all whole bunch. He had to fight the regulations because of the blend of red and white grapes, which was technically illegal. Clarete was not allowed officially in Ribera but it is now. His whites are great too. Indigo are currently selling the 2016.

Pale tomato colour. Something a little sweet and floral on the nose. Then very powerful oak influence with a hint of cheesiness on the palate.

Really rather like an old rioja apart from the colour. Lots of interest here.

No obvious tannin but there is quite enough acidity and interest.

Drink 2016 – 2025

Celler del Roure, Safrà 2018 Valencia

16

Made by Pablo Calatayud, a champion of local vine varieties. Safrà means saffron, which is so useful for the local paella. Mainly Mandó (aka Mandón), a local rediscovered grape, originally based on just four vines. There are almost 100 tinajas in this old winery.

Mainly young vines. Light bright crimson. Light bitter note on the end.

Relatively simple but this would be a nice, low-tannin red to drink without food.

Drink 2019 – 2022

Envínate, Táganan Parcela Margalagua 2016 Vino de España

16.5

Envínate, whom I first met at Suertes del Marqués on Tenerife, is a group of four university friends who had no wine tradition but now make wine all over Spain, including Canary Islands wines like this one. This is from their old forgotten seaside vineyard on Tenerife pictured in that 2014 article of mine. Two of them are still full-time winemakers in other bodegas.

Pale ruby. Very unusual nose: spicy and dried cut peel. Dry skin-contact sort of texture. Could be a very useful food partner. But if you were given it out of context you might find it a bit too astringent.

Drink 2018 – 2022

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Comando G, El Tamboril 2016 Vino de la Tierra Castilla y León

16.5 +

From the Sierra de Gredos. Joint venture of Dani Jiménez-Landi and Fernando Garcia. This is their newest release. Just 641 bottles produced. These Garnacha vines are at 1,200 m and are worked by horse.

Pale raspberry colour. Rather light nose, but very beguiling meld of sweet fruit and tannin. Sucky stony, granite(?) sort of texture. Needs a bit of time.

Drink 2021 – 2027

Guímaro, Finca Capeliños 2012 Ribeira Sacra

16.5

Quite a deep crimson. Leathery nose with lots of sweet ripe fruit on the palate. Very juicy indeed. Sour strawberry flavour? Polished tannins are still very much perceptible even at eight years old.

Drink 2017 – 2024

Bright mid crimson. Hugely aromatic and minerally nose. Great finesse with flavours reminiscent of raspberries crushed onto rock. Fine tannins again. Lots to get your teeth into. Clean and fresh.

Drink 2019 – 2028

Telmo Rodríguez, Las Beatas 2016 Rioja**17.5**

From their Bodega Lanzaga property, this is Telmo Rodríguez and Pablo Eguzkiza's revival of Rioja as it used to be, and could hardly be more representative of the Viñateros philosophy. Because of this, I reproduce the description of the wine from UK importer Indigo Wine's website: 'Telmo and Pablo see Las Beatas as "a memory of Rioja from long ago, before the industrial Riojas of the 20th century, for which the process is more important than the origin". It's been a labour of love – a tiny 1.9-ha plot – slowly assembled by acquiring smaller neighbouring parcels on the abandoned old terraces. They have spent 15 years reviving the vineyard by grafting on to old vines in mixed plantings. According to Telmo's research: "in the early 20th century Rioja was always a field blend". Their hard work seems to have paid off. Las Beatas has been hailed as a world class wine, a Grand Cru of Rioja.'

Young, vibrant, purplish crimson. Very 'cool' nose. Another very minerally wine. Atypical for rioja. Grainy, quite dry finish. Very energetic. Great finesse and ambition.

Drink 2020 – 2028

Imported into the UK by Indigo Wine

Casa Castillo, Pie Franco 2017 Jumilla**16.5**

Bright crimson. Very rich, sweet nose. Very obviously a warm-climate nose but with a savoury finish and sufficient acidity, though the opposite of delicate! Quite a lot of fine tannin on the end.

Drink 2020 – 2030