



Tim Atkin MW



Fifth Growths

Wines of the Year

95

Hacienda López de Haro Blanco de Cárdenas en Tinajas 2016

(13.5%)
Cárdenas in the southern part of the Rioja Alta used to be considered a marginal climate for grapes, but is coming in from the cold with climate change. This brilliant oak- and amphora-fermented field blend of Viura, Malvasía, Jaen Blanco, Palomino, Calagraño and Garnacha Blanca is a stunning wine. Yeasty, spicy and crunchy with vivid acidity and just a hint of vanilla from older 500-litre barrels. 2019-28

94

Hacienda López de Haro Garnacha de Cárdenas en Hormigón 2016

(15%)
One of a pair of first-class wines from Cárdenas in the deep south of Rioja Alta, this demonstrates how exciting old vine Garnacha can be in the right hands. Intense, refreshing and aged in cement rather than wood, with pepper spice and zesty red cherry fruit, this is another boundary-pushing bottling. 2020-28

93

El Garnacho Viejo de la Familia Acha 2014

(15%)
The Acha family's 0.7-hectare parcel in Cárdenas was planted in 1906, making it one of the more venerable parcels in the village. Aged in foudres and 500-litre barrels, this is savoury and concentrated, with refreshing acidity and classic old vine concentration. 2020-26

92

QP vintage 2012

(14%)
Priced at the upper end of the bodega's range, this looks as good as it tastes. It's a three-way blend of Tempranillo, Garnacha and Graciano that spends 18 months in new French oak and is smooth, plush and creamy with aromatic black fruit and a toasty flourish. 2020-24

92

Bodega Hacienda López de Haro Classica Grandes Añadas Blanco Gran Reserva 2012

(12.5%)
One of a number of new projects at this restlessly innovative winery in San Vicente, this small lot white combines Viura with 20% each of Malvasía and Garnacha Blanca and spends 36 months in French oak. Rich and concentrated, yet comparatively low in alcohol, it has smoky wood, creamy lees and pithy acidity. 2019-23

90

El Pacto 2016

(14%)
Ever a person to try new things in the winery, Richi Arambarri ages this organic Tempranillo in mostly new French oak with a few additional barrels from Russia, Bulgaria and the United States. Juicy, modern and assertive with sweet dark berry fruit and a backdrop of tannin. 2020-26

90

Hacienda López de Haro Gran Reserva 2010

(14%)
The best of the regular López de Haro range for my money, this is a felicitous cuvée of Tempranillo and 10% Graciano that sees one-third new wood. Smooth, appealing and sweetly oaked, it has the supporting acidity that's typical of the 2011 vintage. 2019-23