



Wine in numbers

Ardogintzak gorakada handia bizi du azken urteotan Euskal Herrian. Produkzioak eta salmentek gorantz jo dute eta horren ondorioz munduko leku askotan da ezaguna euskal ardoa, batez ere Arabako Errioxako kupeletatik ateratzen dena. 2.000 lagun baino gehiagok egiten dute lan 270 milloi euro mugitzen dituen sektore honetan.

Over the past few years, the Basque wine industry has expanded so rapidly in terms of production and sales that it is now the most dynamic and internationally recognized sector of the Basque food and farming industry. In 2003 grape, wine and txakoli production accounted for total revenues of 270 million euros. According to data for the year 2002 from the Basque Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the industry provides 2,017 direct jobs. This is the equivalent of 12.68% of the entire Basque food and farming workforce (15,910 employees). These employment figures do not take into account the close to 2,000 seasonal grape pickers recruited on a temporary basis each year to bring in the harvest.

In 2003 the Rioja Alavesa region produced 79,724,174 liters of wine, or 27% of all the wine carrying the Rioja Designation of Origin label (*Denominación de Origen* or

simply "DO"). In 2003 a total of 71,995,520 liters were sold, 54,890,941 within Spain and 17,104,579 liters went to the export market. Only five years ago the volume stood at 56,435,072 liters, 39,682,979 to the domestic market and the rest, 16,752,093, was exported.

The rise in sales has been accompanied by vintage years officially categorized as "excellent" in 1994, 1995 and 2001, "very good" in 1996 and 1998, and "good" in 1993, 1997, 1999 and 2000. Young wines, harvested in one year and sold the next, used to monopolize production in this region. Today crianza, reserva and gran reserva wines make up nearly 50% of the total wine production, generating greater added value, international recognition and distinction.

Txakoli wine production is also up

The three txakoli wine producing areas with their own Designation of Origen—Arabako Txakolina, Bizkaiko Txakolina and Getariako Txakolina—have also increased their production each year. In Bizkaia close to one million kilos of grapes were picked last year—30% more than the 2002 harvest—yielding 725,000 liters of wine. In its third season since becoming a Designation of Origen, Arabako Txakolina produced 195,000 liters of wine. In Gipuzkoa volume was up 40% from 2002.



Rioja Alavesa municipalities	Wineries	Txakoli producers	
Baños de Ebro	25	Bizkaia	70
Cripán	2	Álava	37
Elciego	18	Gipuzkoa	17
Elvillar	13		
Labastida	12		
Laguardia	48		
Lanciego	17		
Lapuebla de Labarca	41		
Leza	6		
Moreda	1		
Navaridas	11		
Oyon	7		
Samaniego	13		
Villanueva de Álava	43		
Yecora	4		

Over the past decade the surface area set aside for planting grapevines in the Rioja Alavesa region has risen from 8,039 to 12,726 hectares (19,865 to 31,447 acres), according to data compiled by the Rioja Designation of Origin Regulatory Council (Consejo Regulador), accounting for an increase of 58.30%. 400 hectares or 988 acres of land has been planted with txakoli vines in Alava, Bizkaia and Getaria.

Between Rioja Alavesa's fifteen municipalities, 261 bodegas are associated with Denominacion de Origen Calificada (DOC), a higher level of classification with stricter quality controls. The highest concentration of DOC wineries are located in Laguardia, with a total of 48, followed by 43 in Villanueva de Álava and 41 in Lapuebla de Labarca.

The leading customers of Rioja wines are the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, the United States, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Mexico, Norway and France. The demand for Rioja wine over the past few years has experienced a steady incline in both the United States and Mexico, while exports to the remaining countries mentioned have remained on an even keel with a few fluctuations. In 2003 France was the only country whose Rioja wine imports turned sharply upward from the previous year.

The 2002 annual report drawn up by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, "Food in Spain," reports on wine consumption in the domestic market. Although the total per capita annual wine consumption was down 3% from the previous year, Designation of Origin wines increased 1% during the same period. In 2002 Designation of Origin wines accounted for 27% of total wine consumption (including table wines, sparkling wines, etc.). However,

if we look at wine prices, the opposite trend seems to be true: the cost of Designation of Origin wines dropped 1.5%, whereas the price of wines in general went up 5%.

LITERS OF RIOJA ALAVESA WINE MARKETED IN 2003	
Categorized by ageing period	
Young wine	27,496,248 liters
Crianza	29,147,449 liters
Reserva	12,981,098 liters
Gran reserva	2,370,725 liters
Total	71,995,520 liters

GLOSSARY	
Crianza:	wines that has been aged a minimum of two years, at least one year in barrel.
Reserva:	red wines that have been aged a minimum of three years at the winery, one year in bottle. White or rosé wines are also considered reservas if they have been matured at least six months in barrel and another 18 months in bottle.
Gran reserva:	red wines that have been aged a minimum of two years in barrel and another three years in bottle; white wines that have been matured a minimum of six months in barrel and at least four years total between bottle and barrel; and cava, or sparkling wine, that has been aged for a minimum of 30 months.