

“Carmenere spreads its wings, and Rioja’s promising 2019: Weekly tasting report (May 18-24),” James Suckling:

<https://www.jamessuckling.com/wine-tasting-reports/carmenere-spreads-its-wings-and-riojas-promising-2019-weekly-tasting-report-may-18-24/>

## Highlights

The Spanish wine we rated highest over the past week was the [CUNE Rioja Imperial Gran Reserva 2016](#), a blend of 85 percent tempranillo, 10 percent graciano and 5 percent mazuelo. James Suckling described it as one of the greatest modern gran reservas today, with refined and bountiful tannins backed by intense and layered flavors.”

“The [CUNE Rioja Real de Asúa 2019](#) and [Contino Rioja Vina del Olivo 2019](#) are among the top wines we tasted that demonstrate the huge potential of 2019. We’re hoping to uncover more great bottles from 2019 as our tastings continue.”

## RIOJA

### IMPERIAL GRAN RESERVA 2016

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      98  
**Vintage** 2016

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Polished and structured with firm, very fine tannins. Lots going on here, with layers of black fruit, dried spices, graphite, coconut and cracked pepper. Full-bodied and so intense. Keeps going. Long. The tannins are so fine and so numerous. One of the greatest modern gran reservas. 85% tempranillo, 10% graciano and 5% mazuelo. Try in 2025.



### REAL DE ASÚA CARROMAZA 2019

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      97  
**Vintage** 2019

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A full-bodied, ripe and delicious red with firm, lightly chewy tannins. Lots of cherries, dried flowers, coconut and rosemary. Lavender and white roses, too. Firm and very well structured. Tight and fresh at the end. First year with single vineyard on the label. 100% tempranillo. Try this after 2025.



### CUNE RIOJA GRAN RESERVA 2016

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      95  
**Vintage** 2016

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I like the medium-velvety tannins with firmness, brightness and freshness. Full-bodied, racy and energetic. Elegance with structure. 85% tempranillo, 10% graciano and 5% mazuelo. Needs four to five years in the bottle, but already impressive to taste.



**RIOJA**

**VIÑA REAL GRAN RESERVA 2016**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      95  
**Vintage** 2016

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Attractive nose of dark cherries, dill, thyme, coconut and chocolate. Some salted caramel, too. It's medium-to full-bodied with firm, silky tannins and vibrant acidity. So balanced and fresh with a long, refined finish. 95% tempranillo and 5% graciano. Better from 2024.



**BAKEDER 2020**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      93  
**Vintage** 2020

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This has aromas of wild thyme, licorice, peppercorns, blackcurrants and cloves. Spicy, supple and delicious with silky tannins and a juicy, bright palate. Slightly chewy. So drinkable now, but better in two or three years. 100% tempranillo. Drink or hold.



**CONTINO VIÑA DEL OLIVO 2019**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      96  
**Vintage** 2019

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Medium-to full-bodied, creamy and ripe with silky tannins. Lovely, savory character with herbs, smoked meat, salted olives and cherries. Orange peel, too. Very approachable with a long, supple finish. 67% tempranillo, 23% graciano and 10% mazuelo. From the oldest vineyard of Contino. Drink after 2023.



**CONTINO GRAN RESERVA 2017**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

**Country** Spain      **Score**  
**Region** La Rioja      94  
**Vintage** 2017

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A fruity and juicy red with round tannins and savory fruit. Medium to full body and a creamy texture. Hints of caramel and meat to the dark fruit. 85% tempranillo, 10% graciano, 5% mazuelo and garnacha. Enjoyable now.



**RIBERA DEL DUERO**  
**BODEGA BELA**

**ARANO MORADILLO DE ROA 2019**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

<b>Country</b>	Spain	Score
<b>Region</b>	Castilla y León	95
<b>Vintage</b>	2019	

Seductively spicy nose of spiced plums, nutmeg, peppercorns and coconut. Full-bodied with creamy, velvety tannins. Rich and delicious. All integrated and polished. Long. 100% tempranillo. Drink or hold.

[CHECK PRICE](#)  
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# VALDEORRAS

## VIRGEN DEL GALIR

### **VIRGEN DEL GALIR VALDEORRAS A VILLEIRA ERMITAS 2020**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

<b>Country</b>	Spain	<b>Score</b>
<b>Region</b>	Galicia	94
<b>Vintage</b>	2020	

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This is a delicious, medium-bodied and elegant red with plenty of wild berries, purple flowers, stems and seashells. Mineral and vibrant. Very bright with sleek tannins. Wild and racy finish. Field blend of mencia, garnacha tintorera, brancellao, souson and merenzao. Drink now.



CAVA  
ROGER GOULART

**ROGER GOULART CAVA JOSEP VALLS GRAN RESERVA  
EXTRA BRUT 2018**

Thursday, May 26, 2022

<b>Country</b>	Spain	<b>Score</b>
<b>Region</b>	Spain	91
<b>Vintage</b>	2018	

[CHECK PRICE](#)  
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A very fresh and crisp sparkling with sliced apple, seashell, lemon and white grapefruit. Some biscuit, too. Medium-bodied with a lightly frothy mousse. Nicely dry and saline at the end. 35% chardonnay, 35% xarel-lo, 15% macabeo and 15% parellada. Drink now.



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