



# RIOJA

**ANNUAL REPORT |**  
QUALIFIED DESIGNATION  
OF ORIGIN RIOJA  
REGULATORY BOARD |

**2021**

**EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY**

## WELCOME MESSAGE

# TOGETHER, WE'RE STRONGER

The year 2021 was a turning point for the Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja. With optimism and hope, we've seen how the coronavirus pandemic, which paralysed the world in 2020, has begun letting up a bit on the sector. This has allowed us to gradually go back to direct contact with our consumers and bring them closer to our wines, history and heritage which is no doubt a wonderful reason for joy.

In this scenario, we've continued to do what we know best which is emphasizing the immense wealth and professionalism of our region, sharing with an ever more extensive public our collection of wines and the new developments coming out of a Designation of Origin which, despite being the oldest in Spain, is more vibrant and alive than ever.

Likewise, the favourable winds have boosted the wine tourism sector – an important economic engine for the region with figures that have slowly returned to their pre-pandemic levels. We're working to strengthen our leadership as the primary Spanish tourism destination and, therefore, we're offering a different kind of proposal that adapts to the needs of all publics with unique experiences that allow us to share the legacy, tradition and greatness of Rioja.

Once again this year, all of us who are a part of the Designation have demonstrated our efforts and commitment to continue adapting to consumers, to the new times and market trends. Moreover, we've reinforced our commitment to our environment by becoming more and more sustainable all the time because, together, it is the only way we'll remain strong. We know that, in order to be successful

with our long-term aims, we must first look after our present. Our new 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is thus an essential roadmap for guaranteeing the future of the Designation of Origin with the definition of six lines of work which will help us be better every single day. In order to do so, we'll be focusing on aspects like quality, the revalorisation of our brand and products, promoting wine tourism and, of course, sustainability as a common tie.

**"ALL OF US WHO ARE A PART OF THE QUALIFIED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN RIOJA HAVE MADE A COMMITMENT TO CONTINUING TO BRING VALUE TO OUR WINES AND IMPROVING THE PROFITABILITY OF OUR VALUE CHAIN"**

Another outstanding milestone in 2021 was the renovation of the Regulatory Board Council which I will have the pleasure and honour of presiding over for the next few years. All of us who are part of it have made a commitment to continuing to bring value to our wines and improving the profitability of our value chain. Thus, we shall continue the extraordinary work done by the previous Council led by Fernando Salamero.

We have gone through a complicated period of great uncertainty, yet I'm convinced it has also been an opportunity to learn, understand ourselves better and keep on growing with renewed energy. We are determined, confident and believe we can make it so our Designation of Origin will continue to be the Spanish and international reference it has become after nearly a century of history. It is our goal and our responsibility.



**FERNANDO EZQUERRO,**  
Chairman of the Qualified Designation  
of Origin Rioja Regulatory Board

## A UNIQUE BRAND

Because of its tradition and history, along with values like quality, professionalism and leadership, **Rioja is the reference Designation of Origin in Spain** and one of the most prestigious around the world. It's the oldest of Spanish designations of origin and, since 1991, its wines have

been protected by **the country's first Qualified DO**. It's a flagship brand that has become a source of pride for the 144 municipalities comprising the Designation of Origin territory, a model for the rest of the sector and a **symbol of Marca España** (Spain Brand) beyond our borders.

## DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN RIOJA IN FIGURES (2021)

### VITICULTURE

**66,240**

hectares of REGISTERED VINEYARDS



**14** AUTHORISED GRAPE VARIETIES

**3** PRODUCTION AREAS

High Rioja = 27,871 ha.  
Eastern Rioja = 25,191 ha.  
Alavese Rioja = 13,178 ha.

**14,300**  
WINEGROWERS

**144** MUNICIPALITIES

118 La Rioja  
18 Alava  
8 Navarra



OLD VINEYARDS: more than  
**15,000**  
HECTARES with VINES

**799**  
registered wineries



**571**  
with bottling registration

more than **35** YEARS OLD

### HARVEST

Rating: **VERY GOOD**



From 25<sup>th</sup> August  
to 6<sup>th</sup> November

**403,129,046**  
kilogrammes of PROTECTED GRAPES



**281,644,103**  
litres of wine produced

**254,174,525**  
litres sold  
(+8.34% compared to 2020)



**340** MILLION BOTTLES marketed

### SALES



TOTAL SALES GROWTH in 2021:

**8.34%**

### SPAIN



**+13.58%**  
in VOLUME

MARKET SHARE:

**27.31%**  
in volume\*

**32.22%**  
in value \*

### EXPORTS

**+1.75%**  
in VOLUME

SHARE OF BOTTLED SPANISH NON-SPARKLING WINES WITH A PDO:

**34.7%**  
in volume\*\*

**41.5%**  
in value\*\*

**+7.76%**  
in VALUE



More than  
**40%**  
OF SALES  
outside Spain



**129** COUNTRIES

\*Source: NielsenIQ. \*\*Source: Spanish Wine Market Observatory.

## REGULATORY BOARD: A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF RIOJA

The Regulatory Board is the entity responsible for **ensuring compliance with the Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja standards**. Its main duties are to certify protected wines, promote its image and defend the sector's interests.

Under the auspices of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA), it is comprised of 32 members who represent five winery associations and nine winegrower

associations; in other words, all of the sector's associations. They are the same members of the Rioja Wine Interprofessional Organisation Management Board, the chairman of which also presides over the Regulatory Board in virtue of the regulations in effect. The respective representatives of MAPA and the administrations of the autonomous governments of La Rioja, the Basque Country and Navarre also participate on the Council by express invitation with speaking but not voting rights.



**THE BOARD HELD SIX MEETINGS IN 2021**



### A NEW ERA

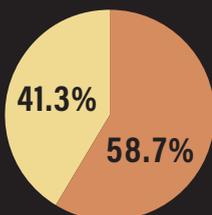
In June 2021, new members were appointed to the **Rioja Wine Interprofessional Organisation Management Board** and the members representing the sector were sworn into office so the new Council could be constituted with an identical composition for **the next four years**. The 32 members voted for **Fernando Ezquerro as the new Chairman**, in substitution for Fernando Salamero.

## 2021 BUDGET

### 2021 BUDGET FOR THE DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN

TOTAL: €15,347,021.16

Production sector  
€6,339,519.60



Commercialisation sector  
€9,007,501.56

### ITEMISATION

Promotion  
**61.6%**

Current assets, investment services  
**9.0%**

Personnel  
**21.2%**

Back labelling and harvesting oversight  
**7.9%**

RWIO\* expenses  
**0.3%**

\*RWIO: Rioja Wine Interprofessional Organisation.

## THE GOAL OF BECOMING BETTER

The Regulatory Board is committed to ensuring our future and, therefore, **we must look after our present.** And we must do so by supporting the quality of Rioja wines, offering consumers guaranteed products that generate the utmost trust and using innovation as the path towards **reinforcing our leadership.**

The new strategic plan will be key to achieving our goals. It will help us **ensure the future and success of the Designation** and drive us towards a new era in which sustainability will be an essential cornerstone. We will be able to rejuvenate our brand, conquer a younger public and continue strengthening our reference position in the market.

### FOCUSING ON SUSTAINABILITY

▲ In a sector like ours, sustainability has become a conditioning factor. The Regulatory Board **has set the goal of being references in this area as well**, establishing a series of objectives and initiatives in line with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** and aimed at reinforcing Rioja's position in this area.

### OUTSTANDING INITIATIVES:

- ▲ The creation of an **operational group to work on protecting the landscape** of the Designation of Origin territory against projects that are not compatible with the value and wealth of our wine growing heritage.
- ▲ Invigorating the **'old and hundred-year-old vineyard', a distinctive and differentiating element for QDO Rioja** with the idea of reaching 20% in Designation production hectares with vines more than 40 years old.
- ▲ The constitution in 2022 of the **Sustainability Expert Committee**, the mission of which is to boost the Designation's positioning in this field.

### STRATEGIC LINES

The new Regulatory Board strategy is based on **six lines of work:**

- ▲ Line 1: Seeking a **profitable balance** and offering incentives for quality.
- ▲ Line 2: Seducing consumers and **revalorising our brand and products.**
- ▲ Line 3: Promoting **wine tourism.**
- ▲ Line 4: Leading in **sustainability.**
- ▲ Line 5: Establishing mechanisms for **risk mitigation.**
- ▲ Line 6: Boosting digitalisation, **innovation, collaboration and knowledge.**

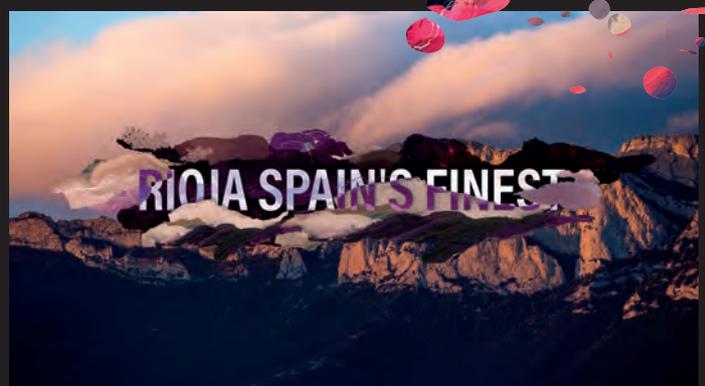
## NEW COMMUNICATION POSITIONING TO REVALORISE RIOJA

The 2021-2025 Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja Strategic Plan set forth **understanding and seducing Spanish and international consumers** as one of its key goals, thus revalorising the brand and products through marketing and promotion. To do so, reinforcing the value arguments to be transmitted with regard to Rioja in the different markets and defining powerful and strategically focused communication messages are essential. In 2021, the Regulatory Board Marketing team led a **storytelling definition project** with collaboration from all winery associations represented on the Regulatory Board. As a result, the Rioja brand will transmit a **new positioning and new line of communication** which will lead it towards that ambitious horizon for 2025.

The new messages are focused on the idea of **diversity, rigour and prestige and the culture and roots** our wine has in the region. The slogan the Designation of Origin will be using in the coming years is **'Rioja is the origin'** with an English version which will be **'Rioja, Spain's finest'**. Both expressions aim to encapsulate storytelling that shows how **wine connects everything** in our region. It connects the

passion and resilience of the people and their obsession for doing things well along with its impressive vineyard and winery legacy and incredible environment of diversity and contrasts which we have undertaken to preserve for future generations.

*Rioja, es el Origen.*  
**Rioja, Spain's finest.**



## RIOJA WINE ACADEMY

**E**ducation is a significant tool in promoting our Designation of Origin around the world. Since 2020, the Rioja Wine Academy platform has made it possible to enrich knowledge with regard to our wines and Rioja for an ever more diversified and international

public. To this end, particularly outstanding is its immense capacity to create a dense **network of alliances with schools of international prestige** such as the Napa Valley Wine Academy, the Culinary Institute of America and Florida International University.



### RIOJA WINE ACADEMY, IN DATA:

Educational offering:  
**4 PROGRAMMES**



Students trained:  
**+16,000**



Nationalities:  
**+125**



Official trainers:  
**+100**



### OFFICIAL RIOJA WINE TRAINER

▲ The most prestigious Rioja Wine Academy programme again sparked great interest in its 2021 edition. More than 200 applications were received from 24 different countries. The Regulatory Board selected 15 top-level professionals including several Masters of Wine and Wine & Spirit Education Trust diploma holders.

### ALUMNI PROGRAMME

▲ One of the most outstanding new developments of the Rioja Wine Academy in 2021 was the creation of the 'Alumni Programme', a **forum for meeting and knowledge** for all of the platform alumni. Besides providing access to **ongoing training** and sharing all new developments related to the Designation of Origin, the initiative aims to generate a **sense of community among Rioja enthusiasts**.



## WINE TOURISM: A YEAR OF RECOVERY

After going through the year 2020, which was marked by all the restrictions deriving from COVID-19, wine tourism—an economic driver for the region of Rioja which brings in more

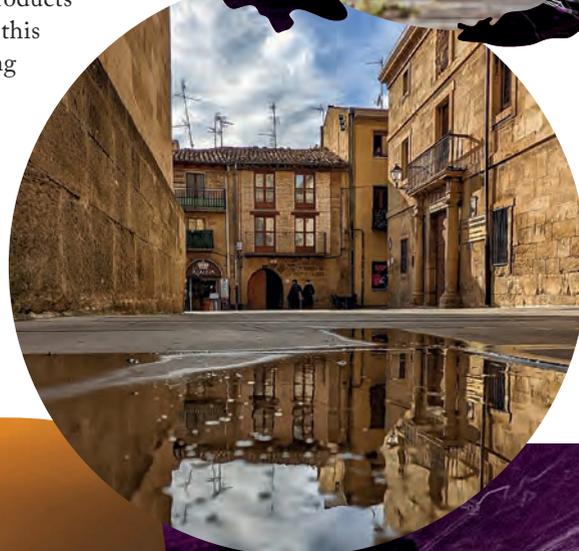
than 100 million euros a year—started the path towards recovery in 2021 with figures near pre-pandemic levels as demonstrated by the data from the fourth edition of the 'Wine Tourism Monitor', published by the Regulatory Board.

### THE THREE KEYS TO REACTIVATION

- ▲ The excellent results of the summer and autumn months which saw visitor figures quite close to those seen in the same months of 2019.
- ▲ Strong reactivation of national visitors who, despite the continued restrictions, generated business of around 68% of what was recorded in 2019.
- ▲ International visits were recovered with respect to 2020 and, although they only accounted for 20%, the outlook for growth is quite positive.

### A DIFFERENT KIND OF OFFERING

With a view to continuing to be the leading wine tourism destination, the sector is enhancing its offer of novelty, quality and highly specialised products for different types of visitors. To this end, it is developing everything from family activities to an attractive wine gastronomy offering as well as other more active models with a heavy outdoor activity and vineyard component.



### WINE TOURISM IN RIOJA



**200**

WINERIES that can be visited

TOTAL ECONOMIC  
IMPACT IN 2021

**€103.7 M**



**460,137**

VISITORS

+103.5% compared to 2020

20.3% visitors from  
FOREIGN COUNTRIES

**€30.27**

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE  
in the winery shop  
+1.22% compared  
to 2020



# RIOJA

## QUALIFIED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN RIOJA REGULATORY BOARD

### HEADQUARTERS:

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**READ THE REGULATORY BOARD'S 2021  
ANNUAL REPORT ON VITICULTURE  
STATISTICS, WINERIES AND  
COMMERCIALISATION (SPANISH)**

