

Wine&Spirits

Year's Best Ribera del Duero Wines

90 | Portia

2016 Ribera del Duero Crianza Perhaps it's the influence of Portia's owners, the Riojanas behind Faustino: This is an elegant style of Ribera del Duero, light in color, brisk and cool in its high-elevation character. Scents of violets, rosemary and thyme follow its spicy acidity in a long line. It's ready to decant for jamón Ibérico. *Reviewed by Joshua Greene.*

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2016 Ribera del Duero Prima La Encina From Portia's Finca La Encina, in Gumiel del Mercado, northeast of La Horra, this is a powerfully concentrated Ribera. It rested 15 months in French oak barrels while Portia's Crianza, also recommended here, spent ten months in French oak and three in American. Stylistically, they are polar opposites. Prima shows its oak influence in chocolate-brownie richness and lasting vanilla scents. The fruit needs bottle age to absorb that oak, but the fruit itself is rich and substantial, with black-cherry and anise scents and mineral-tinged fruit-skin tannins. A modern Ribera to cellar three to five years. *Reviewed by Joshua Greene.*

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2014 Ribera del Duero Triennia Tempranillo This wine has a wholesome roundness to its juicy blueberry fruit, rich without weight. Oak fills out the flavors but doesn't diminish the rosemary and dried herb notes, or the meaty depths of the fruit. An elegant, mineral-inflected red from Grupo Faustino's 395-acre vineyard project, started in the 1990s in Ribera del Duero's northern reaches, this grows at the Pago Carronda in Gumiel de Mercado, where the vines rise above 3,000 feet. *Reviewed by Joshua Greene.*

