

Bodegas Viña Olabarri, Anguciana

Olabarri is a family-owned property, with a bodega near Haro in la Rioja Alta. Founded in 1985 by Pablo Olabarri, Pablo's son Luis Olabarri Bikandi now owns and runs the winery. For 20 years, Fernando Salgado has been winemaker to the Olabarris.



Vina Olabarri's vineyards are in three locations: they grow red grapes outside Haro at Anguciana and also in Fuenmayor on the way to Logrono on the 'Bikandi' farm, and Viura white (along with small amounts of Garnacha blanca and Malvasia) is grown in the village of Cenicero. They work with 40 hectares in total, half owned, half rented, half organic, growing on terraces overlooking the Ebro River. The soil is a stony sandy loam over an alluvial substrate.

The bodega in the tiny village of Anguciana is in fact two wineries, one extremely old cellar and a recently built one; in one US oak is used, and in the other, French. For fun, they have a cellar club, where you can taste from barrel, buy the barrel you prefer and have it bottled exclusively.

Vina Olabarri, Rioja Blanco, Viura



Historically, Rioja Blancos made from Viura have had to be heavily and oxidatively worked-and-wooded to get positive flavour from this relatively neutral variety. Olabarri's wine has a pleasing natural depth without obvious winemaking to force style and flavour from bland grapes. It results from a cool stainless steel fermentation at 14 degrees over 25 days, wild yeast, free run juice with minimal lees/skin contact.

Simple pleasures.

A nose of jackfruit flesh, curry leaf, a bit spicy and lemon fresh. The palate is nicely phenolic, without excess, only taking up half the room in one's mouth. Gently, nuttily rich and perfectly savoury, it's filled out with spiced fruit acid and feel of the chalky limestone in which it's grown. Perfectly mid-weight, nicely rounded, it sits gently with presence, freshness edging and shaping.

Vina Olabarri, Reserva

Made from 85% Tempranillo and 15% Graciano-Mazuelo mix, it sees 12 months each in French and American oak before maturing for a further 12 months in bottle.

Bright ruby, the wine has dusty cranberry and faded tobacco fruit laced with vanilla and angelica and the oak affects a sense of creamed nut. On palate, the red fruit is cherry-floral and leathery, with lots of savoury, secondary complexity. The mouthfeel is restrained, framed by persistent tannin giving a long cold sweet tea finish after a long and beautifully settled palate ride.

Vina Olabarri, Gran Reserva

Tempranillo with 10% Graciano, matured for 24 months in French and American oak and racked to age 3 years in bottle before release.

Deep and fine, it has a faded sweetness on nose with integrated wood and dark husky spice yielding an appealing cloud of coffee, licorice, angelica, carob, curacao orange, tobacco leaf, and old wood. With good length, it's a dark, gentle, truffle old-schooler. Open and wide in the mouth, it gently arcs back and away - gloriously smooth with fine wood and spice, subtle and elegant. Wonderful gentle drinking now, it probably has 15 years up its sleeve just like this!

Vina Olabarri, Crianza

100% Tempranillo aged 75/25 in French and American oak for a year, and racked to age a further 12 months in the bottle. Oak is changed 1/5th per year. 13.5% a/v, 5.5 g/l acidity.

Good mid-ruby colour, it smells of tangy sour cherry and briary mulberry with cherry wood, mature smoky blue florals, nut, tobacco and baked earth. The palate has good mid-palate fruitfulness with a nice sense of reach and spread. Well-structured, the fruit and oak work together to affect a pleasantly dry, oak-spiced, truffly gentleness. Lingering, gliding tannins and good acid together achieve freshness and complexity at back. Old school, but alive and interesting.