



Caecus Crianza 2016

Pago de Larrea

Winemaker: Luis Larrea **Region:** Rioja, Spain

Grapes: Tempranillo (100%)

Profile: Soft savory and umami notes from the oak aging blend in well with the power and ripeness of the selected best grapes. Classic tones of vanilla, coconut, and dill from the American oak aging also help to balance the wine's youthful fruit with more mature aromatic notes.

Grape Growing: Luis's seven hectare vineyard is a single plot of land on the Ebro River. The vineyard lies on the Ebro River in the Rioja. Near the river the vineyard's soil is sandy. Limestone is concentrated in the upper part. This sub-region, Rioja Alavesa in the Basque Country, is the only one that receives its weather influence from the Atlantic Ocean via the Bay of Biscay. Weather comes off the Atlantic and is blocked by the Cantabrian mountains, but the wind comes down and over to cool the Alavesa. Temperatures here can be a full 15 degrees cooler than in Rioja Alta (Haro) and 25 degrees cooler than the Baja (Logrono). It is prized for its elevated levels of acidity and lower alcohol. Organic farming is easy and the normal practice of small vineyards in this area. Cooler climate allows lower alcohol and higher natural acidity.

Winemaking: Hand harvest followed by a cool fermentation in concrete tanks. Aging takes place for 12 months in new French and American oak. Bottle aging for 18 months after.

More About the Wine: On our first visit with Luis, he seemed quiet and reserved. He calmly showed us around the winery and happily answered our questions. Sometimes I get a hint about how a wine will be by touring the facility where it was made, but I wasn't sure what to expect from Luis' wine after visiting his. We sat down and tried his wines. They were all clean, elegant and very drinkable. I didn't yet know the prices and I actually figured they were going to be out of the price range I was looking for. I was so excited when he sent me his price list a few days later. The prices turned out to be incredibly reasonable for the quality of wine he makes! On our second visit with Luis he opened up and we spent a wonderful evening getting to know him and his sister. www.blisswineimports.com

Alc: 13.5%

PH: 3.44

TA: 5.2 g/L

RS: 0.3 g/L

Sulfur: 80ppm

Soil: limestone, sand

Altitude: 451m (1480ft)

Vineyard Age: 38 years

Production Size: 40,000 bottles

Pairing: Barbecue, pork ribs, pork steaks, grilled chicken, grilled octopus, paella, chorizo, jamon
Cuisines: American Southern, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese