



**RIOJa**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

QUALIFIED DESIGNATION

OF ORIGIN RIOJA

REGULATORY BOARD

**2022**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER WITH CONFIDENCE

While 2021 was a turning point for the Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja, gradually overcoming the adverse effects of the pandemic, 2022 and its complicated global situation posed a new challenge for the sector. The year was not without its difficulties, affected by the outbreak of war and its repercussions on the increase in energy prices, as well as by the shortage of raw materials and the uncertainty caused by the exit from the European Union of Rioja's main export market.

Within this scenario, and thanks to the enormous efforts of all the wine producers and vineyards that form part of the Designation, Rioja was able to increase its sales in key countries and strengthen its market position in Spain, with a modest improvement in the positioning of domestic sales. This once again reflects Rioja's competitive strength and the resilience of the brand, and demonstrates the confidence and solid commitment of consumers to the wines of our Designation, even in turbulent times. Because there are always uncertainties, but the strength that this area transmits binds us to continuously surpass ourselves, year after year; this dedication has been embedded in the DNA of Rioja since its origins.

As a result of these dynamics and the concerns that define us, in order to mitigate the negative effects of an adverse situation, the Designation began an exercise of reflection and definition of a work plan before the end of the year, in order to also achieve its equilibrium in the short term. This plan is inevitably focused on the creation of value, a mission in which the Regulatory Board and the sector as a whole have been involved for some time now. The decisions regarding quality sparkling wines, the development of geographical indications in the labelling with Vinos de Zona and Vinos de Municipio (local and village wines) and the promotion of the wine tourism hub are examples of this.

In this spirit of value creation, the year just ended has been very important. In 2022 we have progressed along the paths of innovation and digitalisation applicable to the sector, we have reinforced our commitment to sustainability, understood and addressed in our Designation of Origin in a comprehensive manner, in its environmental, social and economic aspects, and we have strengthened the promotion of wine tourism, another important economic lever for Rioja, getting even closer to the pre-pandemic figures and committing to our distinctive position as a leading national tourist destination, increasingly better prepared to welcome all visitors who want to get to know us first-hand.

The Designation of Origin has also continued its tireless promotional work, publicising the diversity and uniqueness of the Qualified Designation of Origin (QDO) Rioja within and beyond our borders, redoubling its efforts to attract new consumers and raising awareness of our professionalism and quality among an ever-growing public.

But, above all, we have made progress in something that is essential: to showcase the value of our wine and our land. It is just as important to work for the future as it is to understand, treasure and appreciate that which has allowed us to reach this point after almost a century of history. We maintain the strong and energetic lifeblood that allowed us to overcome so many challenges and that gave us such an advantage in the past. Today, Rioja is more capable and vibrant than ever.

Our challenge is to navigate uncertainty without losing the excellence that makes us unique. The 2021-2025 Strategic Plan continues to be our roadmap, a compass that is guided by our know-how and the decisions we have taken together to point us in the right direction.

In summary, it has been a period which has not been spared its difficulties, once again demons-

trating the maturity of this Designation of Origin to make decisions in complex situations, in order to guarantee its leadership and profitability across its entire value chain, ensuring the future of all of us who are part of it and who are committed to its continued development. It is time for Rioja to unleash its full potential and rely on its value and quality assets to embrace sustained and sustainable growth for all. We are resilient winegrowers and winemakers just like our land, in its image and likeness. We create value. And we want to continue to be alongside the people, because wine is both a celebration and life. Together and with confidence, we move forward along this path.

It is time for Rioja to  
unleash its full potential  
and rely on its strengths  
of value and quality to  
embrace sustained and  
sustainable growth for all.



**FERNANDO EZQUERRO,**  
Chairman of the QDO  
Rioja Regulatory Board

# PROMOTING A UNIQUE BRAND

**M**oving forward without losing sight of its history and its context is part of the exercise which, year after year, the Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja has been proposing since its beginnings.

2022 has been a challenging year globally, particularly for Europe and, within this framework, the path taken during this year by the Designation of Origin and the Regulatory Board has been punctuated by many challenges and rewards, where resilience and optimism have been the most significant words. The sector as a whole has worked diligently to preserve the legacy of an ancestral tradition and to strengthen Rioja's position as a key player on the world's wine stage.

## The Designation of Origin Rioja, in figures (2022)

### VITICULTURE

**66,797**  
hectares OF REGISTERED VINEYARDS



**14** AUTHORISED GRAPE VARIETIES



**3** PRODUCTION AREAS



Rioja Alta = **28,051** ha.  
Rioja Oriental = **25,402** ha.  
Rioja Alavesa = **13,344** ha.

**14,139**  
WINEGROWERS



**144**  
MUNICIPALITIES



**118** La Rioja  
**18** Álava  
**8** Navarra

**742**  
REGISTERED WINERIES



**570**  
WITH BOTTLING  
REGISTRATION

**132** 'UNIQUE VINEYARDS'  
RECOGNISED BY MAPA, FOR **81** TITLES,  
ON OVER **220** HECTARES



### HARVEST

Rating: **VERY GOOD**



From 10 August  
to 6 November

**409,319,579**  
kilogrammes of ENDORSED GRAPES



**285,954,609**  
litres of ENDORSABLE WINE



**251.264.486**  
LITRES MARKETED  
(-1.2% compared to 2021)



**343** MILLION  
BOTTLES  
marketed

### SALES



Variation in  
TOTAL SALES  
compared to 2021:

**-1.2%**

### SPAIN

**+0.16%**  
in VOLUME



MARKET SHARE:

**27.5%** in volume\*  
**31.7%** in value\*

### EXPORTS

**-3.11%** in VOLUME  
**-1.4%** in VALUE

SHARE of SPANISH STILL WINES WITH PDO:

**34.7%** in volume\*\*  
**40.5%** in value\*\*



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

**136**  
COUNTRIES

# REGULATORY BOARD: COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE OF RIOJA

The Regulatory Board is the organisation responsible for overseeing, defending and promoting the Qualified Designation Of Origin Rioja, with the aim of protecting the character and quality of its wines and raising awareness of its product.

Under the auspices of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA), it is made up of 32 members representing five winery associations and eight winegrowers'

associations, i.e. all the associations in the sector, and they are the same members of the Board of Directors of the Rioja Wine Interprofessional Organisation, the chair of which also holds the chairmanship of the Regulatory Board by virtue of the existing regulations. The respective representatives of MAPA and the autonomous administrations of La Rioja, the Basque Country and Navarra also participate in the Plenary with voice, but without vote.

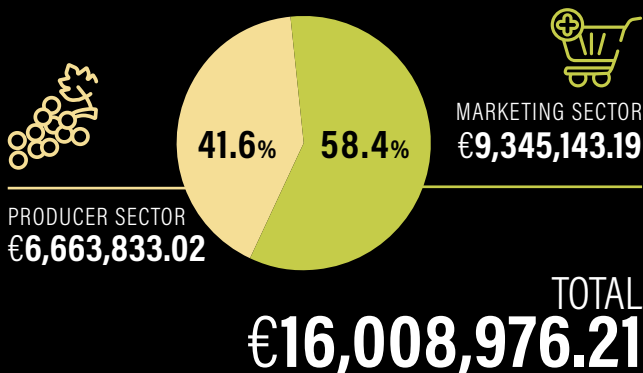
The Board held **eight plenary sessions** in 2022



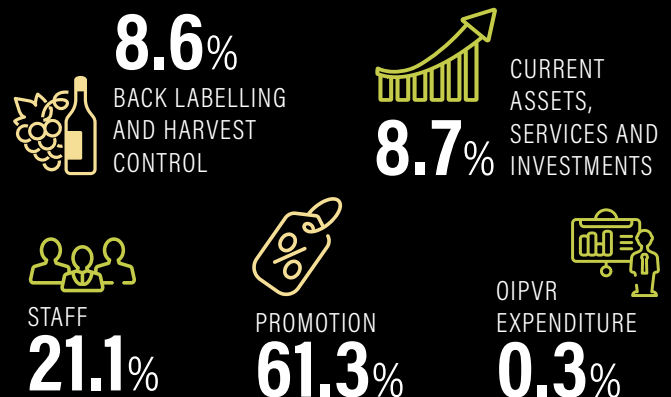
## Committed professionals

Within QDO Rioja there is a team of people who work tirelessly to promote Rioja, its objectives and interests; a group of talented colleagues who, with their ethics and professionalism, continue to consolidate it at both a national and international level. At the end of 2022, it had a staff of 49 people who constitute the driving force behind the organisation in achieving its goals.

## 2022 DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN BUDGET



## ITEM BREAKDOWN



# FOR A SUSTAINABLE PRESENT AND FUTURE

In its eagerness to improve and surpass itself every day and on its quest to position itself as a benchmark region in terms of sustainability within the wine sector, the Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja has made a firm commitment to sustainability, as set out in its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. The Regulatory Board works every day to maintain the position that Rioja occupies in the sector, ensuring the long-term viability of all the agents and stakeholders that comprise its value chain.

QDO Rioja exists to create memorable and sustainable moments, so, following this philosophy, it is committed to its land, its environment and its people. For this reason, it carries out its work in a sustainable way, with love and respect at every stage of the process of growing and making Rioja wines.

The emphasis is on preserving quality and advancing towards excellence in the entire Rioja production model, taking care to strike a balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects.

## Pursuing common objectives

Since its origins, QDO Rioja has become a social and economic driving force for the region. This firm commitment to its future and economic growth translates into activities aimed at achieving sustainable development, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations, such as SDG 8: 'Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and quality employment', and SDG 9: 'Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation'.

The Designation Of Origin also blends in harmoniously with the land, its diversity and its stark contrasts, as well as its impressive heritage of vineyards and wineries. In this way, the Regulatory Board also implements initiatives aligned with SDG 11: 'Sustainable Cities and Communities', SDG 12: 'Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns', SDG 13: 'Climate Action' and SDG 15: 'Life of terrestrial ecosystems'.

## Key Initiatives:

- **Creation and subsequent implementation of the Committee of Experts on Sustainability**, which, among other initiatives, has established the priority Sustainable Development Goals on which the QDO action plan hinges, promoting the carrying out of a diagnosis to ascertain the current state of sustainability in the Designation Of Origin.
- **Development of the 'Unique Vineyard' project**, a pioneering initiative in the Spanish wine sector that focuses on the singularity and uniqueness of different *terroir* and vineyard estates in Rioja.
- **Formation of the Task Force for the Protection of Landscape and Vineyards**, which works proactively to protect the landscape as the natural heritage of the Designation Of Origin.
- **Elaboration of the Plan for the protection of old and centenary vineyards.**

## Rioja premiered a docuseries on the grape harvest in real time

In 2022, a pioneering project was presented to share the grape harvest in real time with consumers and wine lovers around the world. The QDO Rioja launched the first docuseries on this subject, broadcast in real time. 'The Heart of Harvest' was released worldwide on 9 September 2022 via the Regulatory Board's digital channels. This innovative project was part of Rioja's international promotion campaign under the slogan 'Rioja, Spain's Finest', which promotes the positioning of the Designation Of Origin as an international flagship.

'The Heart of Harvest' was recognised at the 7th edition of the International Wine Challenge Merchant Awards, which took place in November 2022 in Madrid. The docuseries received an award in the category of Best International Marketing Campaign.



# PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE: RIOJA WINE ACADEMY

Its years of existence have marked the course for this initiative of the Qualified Designation Of Origin Rioja, which aims to train instructors specialised in Rioja wines, as well as wine enthusiasts on a national and international scale.

To this end, since 2020 the Rioja Wine Academy has been forging close ties with prestigious training institutions such as the Napa Valley Wine Academy, the Culinary Institute of America, Florida International University and the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers.

## Official Rioja wine instructor

Rioja Wine Academy's most acclaimed programme continues to attract great interest and, for the 2022 programme, more than 300 applications were received. A total of 43 top professionals, including several Masters of Wine, took part in the course, which featured the participation of more than 60 wineries, 10 themed tastings of more than 130 wines and 12 visits to bodegas and vineyards.

## New digital certificates

One of the new features in 2022 was the launch of a new concept of digital certification via the Accredible tool. This platform makes it possible to create, manage and distribute digital certifications once a course or programme has been completed. It also enhances the presence and visibility of the Rioja Wine Academy in digital and social environments.

43 top-level professionals took part in the 'Official Rioja wine instructor' course.



RIOJA WINE ACADEMY,  
IN DATA

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

5 PROGRAMMES



+18,000  
REGISTRATIONS

+125  
NATIONALITIES



+140  
OFFICIAL INSTRUCTORS

# WINE TOURISM: THE YEAR OF RECOVERY

The Rioja wine region is the driving force behind the wine tourism activity in Spain, the region that receives the most visitors and a national and international benchmark in the wine tourism sector.

The figures from the 'Monitor de Enoturismo de la DOPa Rioja 2022', a report published by the Qualified Designation of Origin Rioja Regulatory Board for the fifth consecutive year, confirm the continued growth of wine tourism in Rioja.

## Keys to take-off

In addition to the increase in visitor numbers, there are other indicators that point to a full recovery in demand for wine tourism in the region:

- **International demand represents 29.12%** of the total in 2022. Compared to 20.3% in 2021, this represents a growth of 43%.
- **The average expenditure per visitor per day in the QDO was €217.67**, and the average spend in a winery stood at €36.53, 20.68% more than in 2021, exceeding even the pre-pandemic figure by 5.40%.
- **The economic impact of wine tourism in the region was 155.5 million euros**, almost 50% more than the previous year.



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## Profile of the Rioja wine tourist

Hundreds of thousands of people visited the *bodegas* that offer wine tourism activities in the QDO Rioja. Rioja wine tourists are mainly people between the ages of 45 and 54, wine enthusiasts who like to enjoy wine culture, the natural environment and gastronomy.

Among the experiences that arouse most interest are visits to wineries, preferably in vineyard surroundings, family-run and centuries-old. In addition, food and wine activities amongst the vineyards or visits to the wine-bar (tasting areas in the actual *bodegas*), are also among the most popular experiences.

## 2022 THE YEAR WHEN GROWTH TOOK HOLD

**748,345**  
VISITS IN 2022



+62.64%  
compared to 2021

**29.12%**   
INTERNATIONAL VISITORS



**202** WINERIES  
THAT CAN BE VISITED

**€36.53**  
AVERAGE SPEND IN WINERY

+20.68%  
compared to 2021



**€155,528,954**  
ECONOMIC IMPACT




+49.93%  
compared to 2021


# RIOJA

## QUALIFIED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN RIOJA REGULATORY BOARD

### HEADQUARTERS

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### SOCIAL NETWORKS

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 RiojaWineTV

 Rioja Wine

**SEE** THE 2022 ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE REGULATORY BOARD  
AND VITICULTURE, WINERIES AND  
MARKETING STATISTICS

