

## Rioja 2007 harvest

14 Dec 2007 by Julia Harding MW

The Consejo Regulador or Control Board of the Rioja Denominación de Origen Calificada (D.O.Ca.) has announced a total harvest of 412 million kg [c 454,000 US tons] (91 per cent red and 9 per cent white). This is an overall reduction of 2.2 per cent compared with 2006. Out of this total, the DO approved 391 million kg for wine production and, for the first time this year, wineries were able to set aside 10 per cent of the maximum yield as holding stock to insure against small harvests in the future.

The Rioja Consejo Regulador is not known for being downbeat about its harvests. They have an official rating of the vintage every year and since 1996 it has ranged only from good, through very good, to excellent.

Here's an extract from their 2007 report.

*After the picking of the final grapes of the 2007 Rioja harvest on 2 November, the Control Board of the Denominación de Origen Calificada (DOCa) expressed their satisfaction with the quality of this year's vintage.*

*The growing period was particularly long this year with an extensive, selective harvest beginning on 3 September with the final grapes collected almost two months later. Thanks to the fine, sunny late autumn weather picking was staggered ensuring each vineyard site was picked at optimum ripeness with grapes reaching the winery with a fine balance of potential alcohol, phenolics and acidity – the lack of rain ensuring that there was little evidence of rot.*

*The feeling across the region is one of optimism, with healthy grapes benefiting from good colour and alcohol levels promising great wines from 2007 – another in a string of very good and excellent vintages in Rioja. 2004 Crianzas and 2001 Gran Reservas, both from vintages rated as 'excellent' are now on the market, while the 2005 Crianzas, another 'excellent' vintage, have recently been previewed in the region.*