

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001

According to the Spanish Vintage Chart Rating, 2001 was an excellent year for **Riojas**. With this in mind, I decided to experience the **Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001** and after the first sip, I knew why 2001 was considered to be an excellent year.

Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001, produced and bottled by Union de Viticultores Riojanos, SL, Fuenmayor, Spain, is made from a blend of 90% Tempranillo, 7% Mazuelo and 3% Graciano grapes, all native to Spain, aged in American oak casks for 12 months and then bottle aged for a minimum of 14 months, with a limited production of 125,784 bottles, making you fortunate if you can pick up a few bottles or a case to have on hand.



This classic rioja wine had structure from the Tempranillo grapes and was delightfully aromatic from the Graciano grapes, with a distinct tobacco, peppery and black cherry with a bit of prune on the nose. En bouche, the wine had medium tannins with rich black cherry flavor, a hint of spice and had a well-balanced finish.

Since I enjoy creating food and wine pairings, to bring out the nuances of this wine, I took advantage of the Spring season and paired the Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001 with sushi grade yellowfin tuna that I lightly coated with extra virgin olive oil, dusted both sides with a mélange of wasabi powder, cayenne pepper, finely ground sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, and then marinated it for several hours. The tuna was then grilled and topped with candied orange zest. I accompanied the grilled tuna with steamed asparagus and fiddleheads that were blanched and then sautéed in butter, and to add a hint of sweetness to complement the spiciness of the tuna, I made a rhubarb cream with orange juice, honey, light cream with a dash of the Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001 for additional color and flavor.

The pairing worked well as the Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001 has a rich boldness that worked well with the spices used for the tuna, each complementing the other one, without either one seeking to

dominate.

Luxury Experience's Spiced Yellowfin Tuna with Asparagus, Fiddleheads, Purple Mashed Potatoes and Rhubarb Cream

Recipe for 2 persons

Spiced Tuna

Ingredients:

13.5 ounces (382.72 grams) sushi grade yellowfin tuna
1 teaspoon (5 grams) wasabi powder
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) cayenne pepper
1/8 teaspoon (.625 grams) sea salt
1/8 teaspoon (.625 grams) freshly ground black pepper
extra virgin olive oil

Method: Lightly coat the tuna with extra virgin olive oil. Mix the spices and sift over the olive oil coated tuna. Let the tuna marinate in the refrigerator for several hours, and then grill the tuna.

Candied Orange Zest

Ingredients:

1 orange
1 tablespoon (15 grams) sugar
2 tablespoons (30 grams) water

Method: Use a vegetable peeler or a zester to remove long strips of orange peel. Trim the peels with a scissor or knife to create uniform thin strips. Boil water in a pan, add the orange strips and boil for 1 minute. Drain and plunge the orange strips into a pan of ice water. Drain, and boil the orange strips again for 1 minute followed by another plunge in an ice water bath and drain. In a pan, add the sugar and water and boil to create simple syrup, and then add the blanched orange peels and cook them until the syrup has almost evaporated. Using a fork, gently lift the orange peels from the pan and dry them on a piece of parchment paper.

Rhubarb Cream

Ingredients:

8 ounces (226.80 grams) rhubarb (approximately 2 stalks)
1 tablespoon (15 grams) honey
1 orange, zest removed and juiced
2 ounces (56.70 grams) light cream
1/8 teaspoon (0.625 grams) sea salt, freshly ground black pepper
Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001

Method: Cut the rhubarb into large pieces and boil until tender. Strain and put the cooked rhubarb in a food processor with the juice of 1 orange and puree. Add sea salt and pepper to taste. Pour the seasoned rhubarb in a pan, add the honey and the light cream and heat. Adjust seasonings to taste. Add a splash of the wine for color and taste. Serve in a demitasse cup.

Asparagus

Ingredients:

4 asparagus spears, ends trimmed and cut in half

Method: Steam asparagus until tender.

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Fiddleheads

Ingredients:

12 fiddleheads
butter

Method: Boil water in a pan, add the fiddleheads and boil for 5 minutes. Drain and plunge into a pan of ice water. Drain, and boil again for 5 minutes followed by another plunge in an ice water bath and drain. In a pan, melt a small amount of butter, add the fiddleheads and lightly sauté the fiddleheads.

Mashed Purple Potatoes

Ingredients:

12 baby purple potatoes
extra virgin olive oil
sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
light cream

Method: Boil the potatoes in their skins until tender. Using a ricer, "mash" the potatoes, add olive oil, season to taste and add the cream.

Presentation: Place the grilled tuna on a plate, top with a crown of candied orange zest. Place 2 of the asparagus pieces parallel on the plate and top with 2 more asparagus pieces placed opposite to create a box. Place the sautéed fiddleheads in the asparagus box. Place the mashed purple potatoes alongside the tuna. Serve the rhubarb cream in a demitasse cup on the plate.

Winery:

Union de Viticultores Riojanos, SL, Fuenmayor, Spain

Wine:

Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001

DOC:

Rioja

Type:

Red Wine

Grapes:

Tempranillo, Mazuelo and Graciano

Alcohol:

13.5%

For information on Marques de Tomares Crianza Rioja 2001, please contact Parador Selections, LLC at paradorselections@msn.com or +1-551-655-4748.

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