



A Different Side Of Priorat

by Collin Williams

Certainly, the argument can be made that Priorat is a wine region that relies heavily on its powerful and distinctive red blends. This fact is derived from the climate, soils, and propensity for the early Roman and other influx of peoples to plant red varietals that were native to their home lands. Some of these grape vines are very old and date back hundreds of years to the times of ancient monasteries that used the grapes in religious ceremonies and practices.

Today, Priorat reds are recognized as the epitome of prowess and sophistication in the Spanish wine world. Much of this acclaim can be attributed to the pioneers such as Alvaro Palacios and others who believed in the potential in the vineyards here.

Now that the spotlight has shed light on the region of Priorat, consumers worldwide want to learn more about its wines. I have shown you in a recent article how producers are trying to set price points that are more reasonable for the everyday consumer. But, more interesting for me are the little gems within Priorat that receive virtually no hype – the whites.

It's easy to understand why Priorat Blanco is a foreign word to most consumers' ears. Less than 5% of the vines planted here are of white varietals. This factor aside, I encourage you to seek out these wines wherever you can find them. Often, you will find that these are blends (just like the majority of red wines from Priorat) and usually consist of Garnacha Blanco, Pedro Ximenez, Macabeo, Muscat, and even Chenin Blanc. And, just like the reds, there is a distinct mineral presence in these wines that is unmistakable and fascinating.

Try this one that I fell in love with last year and has proven to be a great seller for us!

Mas Igneus Barranc Dels Closos White 2008 – Doca Priorat

\$16.90 cash

CW – “4 of 5”; EVD

This winery was founded in 1996 by Josep Maria Albet and Josep Maria Pujol-Busquets. Recently, the duo moved their cellar to the famous Costers de l'Ermita. Most interesting about this company is that they have completed the rigorous modifications needed to be certified organic by the Consell Catala de la Produccio Agraria de Catalunya – making them the first certified organic winery in Priorat.

50% Garnacha Blanca, 30% Macabeo, 17% Pedro Ximenez, 3% Muscat from 45yr old vineyards. Due to the high fragrance of the Muscat and Pedro Ximenez, this wine showcases beautiful floral and honey aromas on the nose followed by a mineral nuance with a tropical and citrus fruit preserve. On the palate, the flavors marry nicely with the vibrant acidity highlighting the mango, ripe pineapple, and white peach. Great mouth feel and complex throughout. I really enjoyed this wine! 🍷



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