



HERÈNCIA ALTÉS

La Musaranya

Nuria Altés, like many young vintners in Spain, comes from a family who has grown grapes for generations. Tucked away in a remote corner of Catalunya, Nuria's new project, Herència Altés, is situated outside the village of Batea, in the DO of Terra Alta. Remarkably Terra Alta is one of the largest wine-growing regions in Catalunya and one of which few are aware – something Nuria has set about changing. Growing up among the vines that her grandfather tended, Nuria has known these vineyards since her childhood and decided in 2010 to start purchasing grapes from her father to make her wines. She is assisted by her partner Rafael de Haan, and together, they inaugurated a new cellar for the 2016 vintage located in her hometown of Batea.

The soils around the village of Batea are called Panal – chalky and sandy topsoil over deep, clay-limestone, all underpinned by limestone bedrock. Panal is naturally low in nutrients with a tremendous capacity to store water, vital for the wines. The summers are warm and dry and almost always windy, alternating between the continental Cirç and the easterly Garbi bringing in humidity from the Mediterranean. This part of Terra Alta is so prone to these two winds that the area is famous for windmills that generate much of the region's electricity in addition to growing grapes. At elevations ranging between 390 and 480 meters above sea level, the vineyards of Herència-Altés benefit from a higher elevation than most of the rest of the DO. This allows for full maturation of the grapes at lower finished alcohol and higher acidity.

By blending old vine Garnatxa Blanca with a small portion of younger vine fruit, Rafa and Nuria can capture the rich concentration of the variety while retaining a lively and vigorous acidity. La Musaranya is the name for the shrews that returned to their vineyards once they switched to organic farming. They not only eat vineyard pests and aerate the soils, but they also indicate the return of biodiversity to their land.

LOCATION

Spain, Terra Alta

SOIL

Sandy clay-limestone

ELEVATION

400–450 meters

FARMING

Certified organic (CCPAE)

VARIETIES

Garnatxa

AGE OF VINES

15–65 years-old

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, cooled for 24-hours, direct whole-cluster pressing, natural yeast fermentation in concrete tanks

AGING

Malolactic fermentation and 4–5 months in concrete tanks with regular bâtonnage, vegan

ACCOLADES

90 – 2022, James Suckling

