



MAS ALTA

La Creu Alta

In the Priorat you can find local families who have tended their vines for generations as well as newcomers drawn to the possibilities of this terroir. Even the founding members of the modern Priorat include representatives of both camps. The creators of Mas Alta, Michel and Christine Vanhoutte, originally from Belgium, became enamored with the early wines they tasted from the Priorat and decided to relocate to the small village of Vilella Alta with the goal of establishing an estate of their own. In the process they enlisted the help of Michel Tardieu and Philippe Cambie to start up their Bodega. Lest you think this is an entirely foreign affair they did hire Bixente Oçafraïn as their winemaker, a name not common in either Belgium or the Rhône valley.

Mas Alta is currently 35 ha in size with additional acreage contracted from local growers. At the core of the estate, as with most properties in the Priorat, are old-vine Garnacha and Carinyena that are up to 100 years old in age. They have also planted some new vineyards of Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Garnacha. Most of the vines are planted on schist, known locally as llicorella, with a few areas of clay-limestone soils. At harvest the grapes are brought to the newly built cellar where they are destemmed, crushed and fermented before aging in French oak.

La Creu Alta is a blend of roughly 50% old-vine Carinyena, 30% Garnatxa and 20% Syrah. The fruit comes from vineyards in the village of La Vilella Alta with one vineyard just across the border in Torroja. With the concentration, dark fruit and minerality that only old vine Carinyena can provide when grown in the schistous soils of the Priorat, La Creu Alta is a dense wine with tremendous polish and structure leavened with the spiciness and freshness provided by the Syrah and Garnacha.

LOCATION

Spain, Priorat

SOIL

Schist

ELEVATION

350-550 meters

FARMING

Certified organic (CCPAE)

VARIETIES

Carinyena, Garnatxa Negra, Syrah

AGE OF VINES

20-100 years-old

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, fermented in concrete, 15 to 30-day maceration vintage-dependent

AGING

18 months in French oak (80% new), then 12 months in foudre

ACCOLADES

94+ – 2019, *Wine Advocate*

94 – 2018, *Wine Advocate*

99 – 2015, *Jeb Dunnuck*

