

La Cartuja



La Cartuja is a modern interpretation of DOCa Priorat's terroir that nods to the great history of the region. During medieval times, "La Cartuja" was the name given to a large area of today's Catalonia region governed by the Carthusian monks, who were responsible for much of the agrarian development of the region, including viticulture. Today, Priorat is one of the most prestigious appellations in Spain, revered for its powerfully mineral reds grown in poor soils of decomposed volcanic slate. Among other accolades, Priorat has the status of Denominación de Origen Calificada, the highest tier of quality in the Spanish appellation system. La Cartuja is a distinct wine with Mediterranean flair but stands out among its peers for its approachable character, moderate alcohol and soft tannins that allow for drinking much younger than is common for Priorat. A wine of pedigree, La Cartuja remains a small production cuvee made from estate-owned grapes located in the Les Solanes estate, which has been farmed since the heyday of the Carthusian monks in the middle ages. This project was born in 2007 as a special bottling to capture and display the unique mineral character of the region in a direct, unpretentious way, finally making Priorat available to all.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: La Cartuja is a single-vineyard wine that represents the authentic identity and flavors of Priorat, made only from native varieties. The wine is made in an approachable style to be enjoyed young while preserving the minerality and explosive blue fruit that is the hallmark of all Priorat reds.

RATING HISTORY: 2016 92 W&S, 2015 91VM; 2013 90VM



GRAPE: 70% Garnacha, 30% Mazuelo (Cariñena). Vines planted since 2002. Tended in llicorella soil at 250 m (820 ft) elevation

VINIFICATION AND AGING: The wine undergoes two days of maceration followed by eight days of fermentation and ten days of extended maceration after fermentation. The wine is aged for 6 months, half in 225-liter and half in 300-liter French oak barrels.

PRODUCTION: 3,340 cases



LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: The vineyards are located in a 24-hectare (59 acre) estate named La Solana ("Les Solanes" in Catalan) in the heart of Priorat, between the towns of El Molar and El Lloar, 4.5 km southwest of Gratallops. The La Solana vineyard sits at 250 meters (820 feet) elevation with slopes that have a southeastern exposure. These steep slopes overlook the Siurana River at the bottom of the valley, 1.6 kilometers away, which joins the Ebro River 8 km further on. The famous Ebro runs through Aragon, Navarra and Rioja. The soils of this vineyard are composed of volcanic slate and sand, which impart the signature of Priorat's terroir and distinctive mineral and graphite flavors. Priorat's soils are poor in nutrients and have a low pH, which results in brighter, fresher wines. Priorat wines show the characteristics of a cool climate, which lends acidity, and a warm climate, which brings ripe tannins.



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TASTING NOTES Brilliant ruby. Ripe dark berries, licorice, smoky minerals and a hint of succulent flowers on the perfumed nose. Juicy, round and open-knit; a peppery note adds lift and cut to warm blackberry, bitter cherry and licorice pastille flavors. The long, mineral-accented finish shows very good focus and closes on a youthfully tannic note, leaving cherry pit and floral notes behind. -- Josh Reynolds.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 14.0%

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