

TRUE BLUE PRIORAT: LLICORELLA & VALL LLACH



THE HILLSIDES IN THE MOUNTAINOUS WINE REGION OF PRIORAT ARE NEARLY ENTIRELY COMPRISED OF GREY-BLUE SLATE STONE. IN CATALAN, THIS SOIL IS CALLED **LLICORELLA**, PRONOUNCED “LIQUOR-ALE-YA,” AND THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS IT LENDS TO THE GRAPES OF THE REGION ARE NOTABLE IN THE DISTINCTIVE WINES OF **VALL LLACH**.

SEVERE SOIL

- A fine-grained metamorphic rock, *llicorella* was formed by compression of clay, solidified magma and volcanic ash. Dark grey-blue in color and easily broken into slabs or sheets, it is acidic and lacking in organic material.
- In arid Priorat, roots of the vines must push deep to find nutrients and water. Root depth reaches up to 45 feet deep; compare this to 5 to 15 feet deep in the fertile Napa Valley!



HEROIC HARVEST

- Vineyards climb these steep, slippery *llicorella* hillsides. The rugged slopes are inaccessible to machinery, requiring an arduous and intimate, labor-intensive harvest by hand.
- The head-pruned vines surviving in this rocky soil produce very low yields of fruit each year, deeply concentrating the grape clusters that they grow. **VALL LLACH** further reduces productivity by dropping clusters. Here, it takes an average of 3 vines to make only one bottle of wine!

DISTINGUISHABLE FLAVORS

- The optimum sun exposure and beneficial water deprivation result in greatly concentrated wines, a higher-than-usual alcohol content, and superb quality. They have complex aromas and distinctive flavors – mineral, meaty, elegant, and deep.
- Jancis Robinson has called Priorat wines “the best expression of *terroir* coming out of Spain.”

VALL LLACH’S EXPRESSION

- Its combination of dry-farmed *llicorella* hillside vineyard parcels; and wine-making method of fermenting clusters within hours of being picked, manually punching down and aging in the finest French oak barrels, ensures that **VALL LLACH’S** wines are among the very best that Priorat offers.
- The labels and capsules of the estate’s wines – Vall Llach, Idus, Embruiç – reflect the varying grey-blue hues that are found in the *llicorella*, from which their distinctiveness stems.

