



# 2008 NITA D.O.Q. Priorat

## ·WINEMAKER'S NOTES·

Like the dark red ruby the color of this wine resembles, Nita is a rare gem from the Spanish appellation of Priorat. A region typically known for its concentrated barrel-aged reds, this wine is one of only a few *jovens*, or non-barrel aged wines, made within this celebrated appellation. Unaffected by the toasted notes and wood tannins that barrel aging can produce, the 2008 Nita is perfect for those who want to taste the fruit and *terroir* of a wine in its purest form. Brain child of young female winemaker Meritxell Pallejà, this wine retains all of the characteristic minerality of Priorat, while better preserving the dense fruit flavors of the old-vine Garnacha and Cariñena. With delicate aromas of soft mint, wet flint, violet, plum and chocolate, this wine is well-balanced with silky, mature tannins and notes of black licorice and wild berry jam that linger on the finish. Designed to be consumed upon release, this wine can also age for up to 5 years in bottle.

*45% Garnacha, 35% Cariñena, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Syrah*

## ·VINTAGE·

The 2008 vintage was a rather demanding year for winemaker Meritxell Pallejà as her strict selection process required her to carefully choose the grapes and juice that would be used for making her inimitable Priorat wine. A dry and cold winter was followed by a very rainy spring, where over 213 mm of rain fell between the months of March and May alone. The rainy spring months were aided, however, by strong Mediterranean winds that helped ensure a healthy phytosanitary state of the vines. An additional 200 mm of rain fell throughout summer and fall, which prevented the desiccation of the grapes and provided the clusters with a little more hang-time. Ultimately, Meritxell selected fewer lots than in years past and this led to a limited bottling of superb wine, making the 2008 Nita an especially rare gem from Priorat.

## ·VINEYARDS·

Located in the southern half of the province of Tarragona, around 2 hours directly south of Barcelona, the D.O.Q. Priorat has a very rugged countryside where the majority of the vines are grown on steep hillsides made up of nothing but solid or crumbling stands of slate, known locally as *llicorella*. This nutrient-poor "soil" with little water retention is the distinguishing element of this region. These characteristics, along with stark diurnal temperature differences, produce gnarled vines of very low production and wines that are incredibly complex with great fruit concentration.

## ·FERMENTATION AND AGING·

As Meritxell Pallejà does not own any of her own vineyards, she carefully selects the best grapes and juice available to purchase and then ferments each of the varieties and vineyards separately. During each vintage the wine goes through an extended maceration and, after the final blend is made, the wine is aged for one year in stainless steel or concrete tanks before bottling. As Meritxell has a deep interest in biodynamic winemaking, every vintage of her wine is bottled corresponding to the waning and waxing of the moon. It is suggested that the wine also be consumed according to the lunar calendar on either a day of "fruit or flower," which is when the wine is said to fully express its floral and fruit aromas.

*Wine analysis: 4.50g/l (0.45%) total acidity; 3.56 pH; 14.5% alcohol by volume*

## ·HISTORY·

Meritxell Pallejà is the third generation of her family to have been raised in Falset, the "capital" of Priorat, where her great-grandmother Anita built their first family home, "Cal Nita," from which comes the name of this wine. After finishing her undergraduate degree in agricultural engineering, Pallejà spent a harvest and crush in the Napa Valley and in Bordeaux. She then returned to Priorat and became assistant enologist to Alvaro Palacios, before deciding to obtain her graduate degree in enology and create her own label.

