



CLOS MOGADOR

PRIORAT

FACT SHEET



OWNER

René Barbier and his son, also René.

PRODUCTS

Priorat (Tinto) DO, Clos Mogador

SIZE OF THE VINEYARDS

20 Hectares

LOCATION OF THE VINEYARDS

The cellars are situated on a ridge near the village of Gratallops, in the heart of the Priorat hills. The vineyards are planted on very steep terraces forming a gigantic natural amphitheatre above the Siurana river with an average altitude of 450 metres above sea level.

SOIL

The schistous slate and quartz soil, locally called 'llicorella', is organically very poor and ideal for wine growing. The climate is unique with very hot summers, relatively cold winters, little rain and dry northwesterly winds diminishing the moderating influence of the nearby Mediterranean.

GRAPE VARIETIES

The exact blend varies with the vintage, but average is as follows :
40% Garnacha, 20% Cab Sauv, 20% Cariñena & 20% Syrah

AVERAGE AGE OF THE VINES

The Grenache vines are very old...over 80 years in age. The other varieties have been planted more recently, since the early 1980's.

AVERAGE PRODUCTION

Just 25 000 bottles per year (which translates to an average yield of 9 hl/ha !)

VINIFICATION AND AGEING

René Barbier is a strong advocate of the belief that great winemaking starts in the vineyard. His vines are made to suffer in the extremely poor slaty soil and rough climate. There is no irrigation, so the roots are left to search for water, only found at a depth of 25 metres. No chemicals are used, wild herbs and plants grow between the vines. The result is a remarkably small yield of only 6 Hectolitres per hectare permitting an enormous concentration of flavours.

Picking is by hand of course - mechanisation is as impossible on these steep slopes as it is undesirable to René. The grapes are stacked in shallow trays and loaded into a refrigerated truck container rented for the duration of the harvest. The next day, the crop has to pass two sorting



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tables, with severe selection of substandard or raisined berries, before partial destemming, crushing, and maceration for two more days at a cool temperature. Fermentation, with regular pumping over, is controlled at a maximum of 30°C. Total vatting period of three to four weeks. After racking and a delicate pressing (in a hundred year old press) malolactic takes place. Ageing in 500 litre new French oak casks for one year with racking by gravity every three months. The Syrah is aged in vat to maintain the lively fresh fruit flavours. After blending of the different grape varieties the wine spends the second winter in vat. No stainless steel is used here, only fibreglass and wooden vats. The doors of the cellar are kept open in winter to encourage the precipitation of tartrates. Unfined and unfiltered, the wine is bottled in the spring or autumn of the second year after the harvest.

Meticulous care is taken over every aspect of the vinification and ageing process. René Barbier is a pupil of Jean-Claude Berrouet, the wine maker at Château Pétrus. Enormous attention is given to every detail. The oak from the Nevers and Allier is selected in France and then assembled in the Rioja. The wine is manipulated as little as possible, and then only by gravity, with the cool winter temperatures making all forms of clarification unnecessary.

TASTING NOTES

The wine shows an opaque black, purple colour and an intense complex bouquet of ripe fruit, wild herbs, toasted bread, spices and smoke. The palate is massive and well balanced with a fat richness, a dense structure of velvety tannins and a powerful, lively acidity. Flavours of cristalised fruit, pepper, chocolate, coffee and a whole panapoly of spices and herbs. On the long finish there are the unique mineral tones that make Priorat so special.

MARKETING

With such a small production, availability is restricted to a small allocation for a few different markets. Clos Mogador is available in the top restaurants in France and Spain. These include the Louis XV in Monte Carlo, Le Crocodile in Strasbourg, Le Bistrot du Sommelier (Philippe Faure-Brac), Faugeron, Le Cygne in Geneva, El Bulli at Las Rosas and many more. Export markets include Japan and the USA.

NOTES ON THE PROPERTY

The Barbier family is originally from Gigondas where they owned vineyards until the phylloxera devastation brought René's great grandfather to Tarragona. There he founded a small negociant company that built an excellent reputation for itself over the years. In the early 1970's the family firm was purchased by Rumasa and subsequently sold to Freixenet, the big cava producer.

René started his career working as export manager for the Palacios family in the Rioja, but was drawn back to his native Catalonia and the wild Priorat mountains. There, with a few friends, he founded what is now called "the Gratallops group". They constructed a cellar just outside the village of Gratallops, in the heart of Priorat, where each pioneer started making his own wine



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with the denomination 'Clos'. Apart from Clos Mogador this is the origin of Clos Dofi (Alvaro Palacios), Clos Martinet (José Luis Perez) and Clos de l' Obac (Carlos Pastrana). All are now independent with their own vineyards and cellars.

Clos Mogador is named after a novel written by René's great aunt called "Les Gens de Mogador" describing her family's life at the foot of Mont Ventoux. The story was subsequently televised and became famous in France. René's first vintage was 1989 - a wine that still shows considerable ageing potential. Since then, Clos Mogador has established its position as one of the most exciting and prestigious red wines from Spain, and in recognition René has recently been awarded the Order of Agricultural merit by the Spanish government.

With his dynamic team of vineyard workers René also farms vineyards for friends who, encouraged by René's enthusiasm for Priorat, have purchased a few hectares on the surrounding hills. The best known of these is Clos Erasmus which is made by René in his cellars for Daphne Glorian. He also takes care of Clos Figueras, 10 hectares of vineyards owned by Christopher Cannan. In 1998 the cellars at Clos Mogador were enlarged to cope with the small increase in production.

It is amazing that such a reputation should be created in such a short space of time: a fact that augers well for the future of both Clos Mogador and the Priorat appellation.