

## **Tastings - Summer's Freshness**

I can never say enough good things to say about the beginning of summer in Catalonia. The long days and just a touch of heat (compared to July & August of course) remind us all as to why we live here and this time brings back my fondest memories of first visiting the region seven years ago and sipping a glass of something on a rooftop terrace while watching the sun set at this mythic hour of 9:30 at night.

While there are the diehard sun worshippers out there who find that it's already beach season (you most definitely will not find me amongst them), there are still hints of coolness along the shores and if you venture more inland, the nights are quite cool. Our meals start filling up with fresh, seasonal vegetables, grilled meats and light seafood. With all that in mind and while I think red wines are always wonderful, it's a special moment for the southern white wines, especially those with a White Grenache base as it allows freshness, but with a touch of broad-shouldered fortitude.

### **Coca i Fitó - Jaspi Blanc 2013 10€**

Toni and his brother Miquel started up their cellar in DO Montsant after Toni had been consulting as an enolog with many cellars in the area. Their range of wines from that cellar are great but it's the oddball in the group from a little further down in DO Terra Alta that hits a great succession of tasty notes for me.

It's a classic blend of mostly White Grenache as well as Macabeu. There are mineral notes in the nose with lime peel and grapefruit. It's smooth and fresh on the palate with a nice, expressive acidity that lingers on in the finish. Great for meals or just enjoying under the shade of an umbrella.

### **Cristian Francés Breton - Blanc 2012 13€**

Cristian has worked for L'Infernal of DOQ Priorat in Torroja for some time as a cellar hand. A few years ago he started making his own garage wines that have since branched out in to a proper label. While admittedly hard to find and in the case of the white, very limited in production, he's making some unique bottles down there that are worthy of note.

The Blanc has nice floral notes to the nose and a wonderfully fresh body. Its balance of White Grenache, Macabeu, and Chenin Blanc make for a unique, layered white that while expressing the minerality so typical of these wines, also has an elegant balance from start to finish and makes for a very versatile wine.