

Tastings - Go with the Flow

Most people long ago learned what to do when life gives you lemons but there are probably few who know what to do when Mother Nature throws hail your way unless of course you're a winemaker. Every year, random hailstones are a constant threat as they can knock off the buds in spring or damage the grapes at any point up until they're harvested.

Such was the dilemma confronted by Sota els Àngels last year. This winery in Baix Empordà was founded in 2003 by Maria Jesús de Polanco and Guy Jones at their beautifully restored *masia*. Farming biodynamically and organically, in 2013 they decided to change directions a bit and started working with enolog Fredi Torres who has made a name for himself in Priorat. It just happened that this year marked a disastrous bout of weather in the form of heavy hail which destroyed upwards of 80% of their crop. What was left, wasn't going to be easy to make a wine from and Fredi talked them in to making a red as well as a 'blanc de negre'. These are both young wines that come with screw caps instead of corks. But, don't think for a minute they're cut-rate wines as they were vinified via natural fermentation (as opposed to controlling it via foreign yeasts) and mark the start of a new path, letting Mother Nature guide the production a great deal more and thus, "going with the flow".

Flow Blanc de Negres 2013 10€

This is a lovely balance of mineral chalkiness and touches of lemon peel in the nose. Very fresh and light, as it decants you get more floral and geranium notes. The body has yellow fruits and peach skin notes that lead in to a persistent finish with light raspberry touches that nod to the source of this white being red grapes.

Flow Negre 2013 10€

The nose is gracefully fresh with watercress and white pepper notes. There are floral elements as well, but they're downplayed alongside some earthy clay notes. The body fills out the palate but still manages to dance in to the finish with lingering, light minerality