

## Tastings - The Late Harvest

Currently we're deep in the middle of harvest. This year it started a bit earlier and there were wineries in Penedès and Empordà who were picking their grapes at the very beginning of August. As to when it will finish, that's always impossible to tell as the weather dictates a great deal of what will happen. If there's a big burst of heat, many will harvest earlier. If the year continues in this "fresh" manner with alternating days of a little rain followed by good, abundant sun, it will be a very late harvest, possibly even later than last year and most cellars are already declaring 2014 to be one of the best vintages on record.

While no one knows what the future holds, this gives us an interesting point to look at those wines which are part of this very late harvest. Oddly enough, despite being a warmer climate, both of these are from DO Montsant in the Priorat comarca which has that wonderful mix of heat and just the right amount of rain to stop just sort of causing mildew problems like you see the further north in Europe you go. This allows both of these cellars to harvest the grapes for these wines in the middle of November making them special, wonderful bottles that are worth a look if you get the chance.

### **Vinyes Domènech Teixar 2010 34€**

This wine is unique as it's one of the very few to be produced from 100% Garnatxa Peluda. This "hairy" variant of the Grenache grape is typically mind blowing aromatically, but often light in the body. This isn't the case with this particular bottle which hits every point perfectly.

Amazing nose with aromas of forest fruits, ginger, thyme, fennel, as well as cloves and hazelnuts. Fresh and elegant in the body, it's also ample and balanced with round tannins that lead to a lingering finish with notes of fruit and oak.

### **Ortovins Les Tallades de Cal Nicolau 2011 52€**

Joan Asens is a famed enolog in the Priorat region and his Ortovins project demonstrates why. He claims the secret is the very late harvest as seen with this wine produced from 100% Picapoll Negre (a rare grape to find these days) that's the ultimate balance of maturity and elegance in a Catalan red wine.

The red fruits in the nose intertwined with mature currants, liquorice, pepper, wild strawberries, pomegranate, and lilac notes. The body is fluid and light, but with well defined, delightful tannins. The finish is enveloping and expressive with light smoky notes at the very end.