

## **The Evolution of Espelt**

In 2007, Espelt was one of the first wineries I got to know well in the northern DO Empordà region that borders France. They've been making wine there since the Greeks but the 20th century saw large cooperatives dominate the scene with a rather squalid bulk production. Towards the end of the 1990s, many smaller wineries opened that were run by local families of which Espelt is one.

While definitely the largest of this new wave of cellars, they are able to produce, unique singular wines. Their young wines are an excellent value but it's in the upper range where Director, Anna Espelt (whose family have been viticulturists in the region for generations) has been pushing a new agenda. Taking over the winery fully in 2012, she has been adamantly pursuing a true Empordà character to her wines.

For those who don't know Empordà and especially the area of the Albares foothills, it's a rugged, windy country. While the wines can carry power like those further south, the best will always have this fresh tinge of windswept herbs and salty breeze. Based upon what I've been tasting of recent vintages I think that Anna has captured this exceeding well although she continues to push herself and her team to do even more.

### **Sol i Vent 2014**

The "fruit of the mountain" as Anna calls it. A blend of Grenache, Mourvèdre, and Syrah that has perfumed red fruits, cumin and a full feel on the palate. Bramble, very open, honest, and true Empordà character.

9.50€

### **Terres Negres 2013**

Mostly Carignan with a little bit of Grenache, it shows rich, ripe red berries and notes of cigar, tea leaf, and orange peel on the nose as well as light slate minerality. Full in the body, it fills out the mouth elegantly, while still allowing its wild side to show just under its collar.

14.50€