

A glass of clàss?

We live in interesting times in Catalonia where we have not one, but now two sparkling wine designations. We all know the most famous one, DO Cava but since 2013 there has existed the lesser-known Clàssic Penedès which is the name for sparkling wines released under DO Penedès. This was created as a number of producers in DO Cava grew dissatisfied with the industrialization of the appellation.

So Clàssic Penedès was created to be a more stringent and distinct sparkling wine. For starters, all wines must be made from organic grapes--this is the first sparkling wine designation in the world to require this. The minimum aging time is also 15 months as opposed to nine with Cava but the most important aspect is that all of the grapes that go in to finished wines must be from within DO Penedès. For those who may not be aware, Cava producers can and do source grapes from various regions all over Spain which makes it much more of a "wine product" than anything else.

While there are many wines being produced as Clàssic Penedès now, I present two that showed different sides to this new designation in a tasting I did recently at the DO's offices:

Albet i Noya - Brut 21 2012

Pale straw in color. Notes of the lees, white blossoms, white pear. Light red apple notes in the body, medium-plus body, medium acidity, medium finish. Holds a great deal of singular character. 16€

Clos Lentiscus - Blanc de Blancs 2012

A natural wine producer that uses the honey from their own beehives for the liqueur de tirage. Fully Malvasia based. Pale lemon in color. Honey, white blossoms, fresh lemon zest, melon, medium-plus acidity, bright and lively. 17€