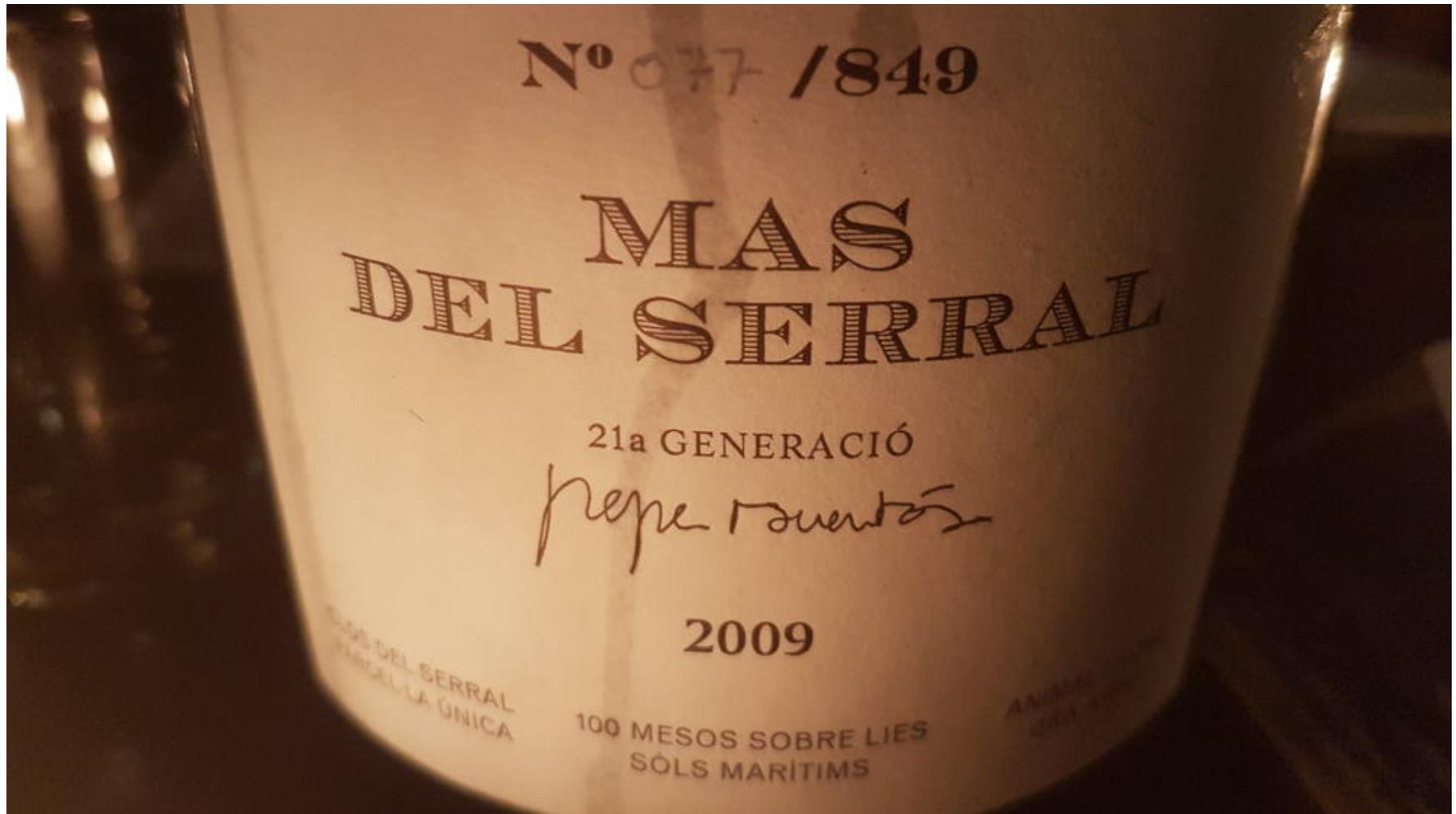


2009 Pepe Raventós Mas del Serral

BY NEAL MARTIN | MARCH 02, 2020

I covered the wines of Spain for 14 months around 2012/2013, an ominous task because of the sheer number of eclectic wines and regions, plus the fact that I lacked in-depth knowledge of the country. In retrospect, though, that gave me a necessary clean slate to evaluate the wines without preconceived notions. My appreciation for Spain grew exponentially during that time and in the end, I thoroughly enjoyed that part of my career. I miss the wine and the winemakers, not to mention the amazing regional cuisines. Many of my perceptions towards Spanish wines were changed, the first immediately during my inaugural trip to Penedès in Catalonia. There I was, stupid me, thinking cava was a cheap supermarket fodder for those that do not want to shell out for champagne. That erroneous assumption was addressed on day one.



I met winemaker Pepe Raventós at a dinner for artisan Spanish winemakers at Noble Rot that preceded the *Viñateros* tasting this past February. We never met during my short tenure as reviewer, however it was his wines alongside those of Gramona, that blew apart my preconceptions of what Cava can achieve. Raventós shared a magnum of **2009 Pepe Raventós Mas del Serral**, one of only 849 produced in what is its second release. It comes from 1.92-hectares parcel of biodynamically-farmed Xarello, handpicked and whole bunch pressed, fermented in stainless steel and aged for a whopping 100 months on the lees. Sporting a burnished limpid straw hue, the 2009 boasts an electrifying bouquet laced with scents of orange rind, sea spray and oyster shells - the marine-like aromas intensifying with aeration. The palate delivers exquisite harmony and the tension that would embarrass many a self-aggrandizing Champagne. There is so much energy coiled up in this Cava, with a glorious saline edginess on the finish that urges you back for another sip (and another and another.) This cuvée is not inexpensive and is very limited in quantity, but it is also unequivocally sensational. It will drink well for maybe 15 to 20 years. **95/Drink 2020-2035.**