

# H U D I N



## Best Catalan wines of 2021

by Miquel Hudin | 06-12-2021 | 2 Comments

At the end of each year, I like to look back at all the wines I've tasted and pick out those in Catalunya that were either outstanding or represented something notable within various regions. This was a busy year for tastings and between the reports of: [DO Tarragona](#), [DO Terra Alta](#), [DOQ Priorat](#), and [Corpinnat](#) as well as various tastings with winemakers, I was more or less on pace and tasted over 1,000 references from Catalunya. Keep in mind that it's still a bit slow going given that we are still **very** much in a pandemic and bigger tastings are something we just can't be doing yet although many are anyways.

As with my previous **Best Of** lists, this is a **very** distilled selection of the wines from this year. This isn't a prune job that takes the top scorers however. Doing that would preclude any sense of discovery as the top-scoring wines in a region often remain the same. This a list to span many types as there are wines from single vineyards as well as those produced in the thousands. The range of prices is from 9.50€ to 275€ with six whites, five reds, and a rosé spread amongst three sparkling and nine still wines.

Note that this final list of 12 wines **are not in any particular order**. It wasn't easy to make such a compact list and I had to leave out so many wines I'm quite fond of in lieu of others that would give a bit more variety. After this initial list that's free to view, **paid subscribers** can see the full reviews, scores, and price/quality listings for all the wines. Enjoy!

- **Altavins Selecció -Blanc 2016**

From the **DO Terra Alta** report, this wine shows exactly what's amazing for this region in terms of their vanguard white variety of Garnatxa Blanca.

- **Cellers de Scala Dei – Artigots 2017**

I wrote up a **full profile** on this wine as it's just an amazingly good example of Garnatxa from DOQ Priorat and will knock the socks off of people who aren't often a fan of the variety. It's as much not cheap as it is incredible.

- **Enclòs de Peralba – Blanc 2019**

This is a new project in the Penedès region, although outside the auspices of the DO for the moment. I **profiled the project** as they're producing some excellent wines that show what the region is capable of. While the single-vineyard wines scored higher this introductory white of theirs encapsulates everything that's great about the project.

- **Pepe Raventós – Mas del Serral 2010**

Another wine made outside of any DO, Pepe and his family winery of Raventós i Blanc have been working this way for nearly a decade now and it doesn't seem to be slowing them down as shown by this sparkling wine that deserved **its own article** as it's one of the highest scores I've ever given to a sparkling wine. Definitely premium tier in terms of pricing but it certainly delivers.

- **Parés Baltà – Hisenda Miret 2019**

This was part of a **vertical tasting** that I did with the winemaker, Marta Casas. Penedès isn't known for red wines

and Garnatxa even less so it was a very interesting journey through the vintages which have all been under Marta's watchful eye and shows great definition as well as what the region is capable of.

- **Alta Alella – '10' EP 2014**

Much like the Mas del Serral, this is a rather limited release sparkling but is fully within DO Cava. I tasted it during a **retrospective tasting** and overall, it's a unique series of wines as despite the lengthy aging of 10 years, they do show the vintage and this showed wonderfully, but it won't be on the market for a bit yet. Until then, do enjoy the **2010** which is just as delicious or the **2011** that's just a notch under these two.

- **Álvaro Palacios – La Baixada 2018**

I've come back around to this wine many times. One of Álvaro's newer wines, I last tasted it for the **DOQ Priorat Report** but I also tasted the **2020** with him for the recent **pre-release report** as well. It's quickly gotten to be one of my favorite wines in his Priorat portfolio and despite its very hefty price, I like to think of it as a "budget Ermita" given that it's 1/4 the price of that icon wine.

- **Adernats – Xarel·lo Vermell 2020**

This rosé was part of the **DO Tarragona Report**, one of the lesser known DOs in Catalunya. In using the pinkish color mutation of Xarel·lo, it really brought a good deal of grip and structure to the wine in a region that was honestly, a bit hit and miss overall. I really enjoyed this wine and given that it can be found for less than 10€, I think you will as well.

- **Josep Vicens – Mon Iaió Sisco Homenatge Carinyena 2016**

Despite DO Terra Alta being well known for its whites of mainly White Grenache, they produce great reds as well and this is a perfect example being an excellent 100% Carinyena from the region.

- **Cal Pla – Mas d'en Compte Negre 2015**

I tasted this for the **DOQ Priorat report this year** and it stood out not only for being a more classic style that works really well, but also because it's readily available, well priced (for the region), and most importantly, a great wine from the **2015** vintage which are wines I generally find to be falling off a bit overall but not in this case.

- **Júlia Bernet – Maria Bernet 2014**

While I've tasted this wine before, I came across this specific vintage during the **Corpinnat report**. There were other wines from the bigger names in the group that scored higher, but this did very, very well and also happens

to be priced very, very well. Additionally, the trajectory of the winery has only been upward since I was first introduced to them..

- **Castell del Remei – Gran Reserva Blanc 2017**

Here we have something of an outlier. This is a wine from DO Costers del Segre that has been aged in line with the white Gran Reserva parameters for Spain (48mo, min 6mo oak.) This would normally terrify me given that the move in Spain is to get away from these creaky aging requirements from a past age but here, it all works. Stellar wine that the owners told me is looking towards the Viña Todonia Blanco from Rioja in terms of profile. Lofty goals, but they're doing a fine job of it so far. Very limited production and I have no idea what the price is, but it's coming to market soon, so keep an eye out for it.

Is this everything that's amazing in Catalunya? Lord no! There are of course countless excellent wines not included here. But if you want to explore further and see all the wines I've tasted along with their corresponding scores, please have a look at the much, much lengthier [Tasting Reports](#) or my articles on [Catalan wines](#).

Cheers and the best of future wishes to you!

## **Álvaro Palacios - La Baixada 2018**

Red fruited wild berries, good deal of cherry notes as well as underlying fine raspberry, very light notes of thyme, rosemary, and a touch of fennel, aromatically quite complex, with a bit of peppercorn notes at the base. Exceedingly well balanced on the palate, tannins still a bit rumbling and on their way to integrating, with a bit of tighter astringency in the finish at the moment, but this is an exceedingly fine wine. This is a re-tasting as the wine was initially tasted in June of 2020.

● 98% Grenache, 2% "Others" · 14.5% · 275EUR

**Region:** *Priorat DOQ*

**98** ●●●

## **Pepe Raventós - Mas del Serral 2010**

Very delicate sweet red cherry, light notes of ripe apricot, creamy brioche notes with a vanilla and ginger glaze, chamomile, white tea, and toasted red peppercorn. All aromatic aspects are very fresh, as if from fruits picked the

same morning when the bottle was opened. Plenty of textured, savory mousse and a palate of yellow fruits, complex spice notes carry on to the palate showing a finely honed backbone to the wine, threaded with excellent acidity. Wonderfully framed sparkling showing what Iberian climes are capable of. Single vineyard of Xarel·lo and Bastard Negre (Graciano).

● Xarel·lo, Graciano · 12.5% · 150EUR

**Region:** *Catalunya*

**98** ●●●

## Cellers de Scala Dei - Artigots 2017

Very delicate red cherry fruit with a light undertone of raspberry, red licorice and peppercorn, soft rose petal notes and a light florality over the whole aromatic profile. Delicate red fruits on the palate as well, but still a bit tucked up inside itself and would do well with another year in bottle.

● 100% Grenache · 15% · 80EUR

**Region:** *Priorat DOQ*

**97+** ●●●

## Celler Josep Vicens - Mon Iaio Sisco Homenatge Carinyena 2016

Fresh red cherry notes braced by toasted oak notes and a bit of savory dried strawberry, touch of menthol, and creamy vanilla over the top. Very balanced and delicate on the palate, soft tannins that are very well integrated with a very lengthy finish.

● 100% Carinyena · 14% · 21EUR

Quality for price? **Yes**

**Region:** *Terra Alta DO*

**96** ●●●

## Alta Alella - 10 \*EP 2014

Dried yellow apple and pear, good deal of tertiary development, caramel, toasted nutty notes, cured lemon peel. Very nice balance on the palate, fresh mousse that's wonderfully integrate with a very long finish and this wine will happily keep aging more. Truly excellent.

● Chardonnay, Pinot Noir · 12% · 120EUR

Region: *Cava DO*

**95+** ●●●

## Júlia Bernet - Maria Bernet 2014

Cured lemon peel with a touch of orange peel and blossom, dried caramel along with crunchy rock salt and briny notes over the top of lively minerality. Quite lively on the palate as well with a zesty minerality that leads into a textured, chewy finish with a great deal of character.

● 100% Xarel·lo · 12% · 23.50EUR

Quality for price? **Yes**

Region: *Corpinnat*

**95** ●●●

## Castell del Remei - Gran Reserva Blanc 2017

High aromatic intensity of cured lemon peel, ginger, white pepper, and dried green apple. Very balanced overall with some light orange peel notes at the edges. Very long persistence in the mouth with a great deal of complexity. Only six barrels produced but under Gran Reserva aging requirements.

● Macabeu, Chardonnay · 14%

Region: *Costers del Segre DO*

**94** ●●●

## Altavins - Selecció Blanc 2016

Very slight yellow apple with a developing smoky note and light petrol aspect, dried herbs, anise seed, red peppercorn, and delicate toasted notes. Rich on the palate with good grip into the finish, developed citrus notes and quite pleasing composition.

● 100% Grenache Blanc · 14% · 28.50EUR

Region: *Terra Alta DO*

**94** ●●●

## Cal Pla - Mas d'en Compte Negre 2015

Dark and red cherry, red forest fruit, notes of vanilla, burnt orange and caramel, red peppercorn, small dash of cumin and baking spices. Nicely balanced on the palate and while a richer, fully structured, wine holds a quite pleasing harmony with itself at this point with a lovely, lingering finish.

● Grenache, Carinyena, Cabernet Sauvignon · 15.5% · 21.50EUR

Quality for price? **Yes**

**Region:** *Priorat DOQ*

**94** ●●○

## Enclòs de Peralba - Blanc 2019

Light orchard fruit, dried herbs, fennel, light touch of salinity. Very delicate on the palate with light nectarine and a splash of rock salt, long finish. Very interesting to blend Malvasia de Sitges and Garnatxa Blanca.

● Malvasia di Lipari, Grenache Blanc · 12.5% · 13EUR

Quality for price? **Yes**

**Region:** *Catalunya*

**92** ●●○

## Parés Baltà - Hisenda Miret 2019

Ripe red cherry and strawberry, fennel, chopped fruit, light caramel, oak and vanilla, spice notes, sweet red peppercorns and a light floral note. Nicely balanced on the palate, still quite fleshy and in time will expand well upon this fine framework it holds.

● 100% Grenache · 15% · 25EUR

**Region:** *Penedès DO*

**92+94** ●●○

## Adernats - Xarel·lo Vermell 2020

Crisp yellow apple, popcorn, burnt orange peel, yellow field blossoms and crushed red peppercorns. Healthy dose of blood orange on the palate as well as crisp citric notes and thriving acidity that make for a juicy, savory wine with

great acidity and balance.

● 100% Xarel·lo Vermell · 11.5% · 9.50EUR

Quality for price? **Yes**

**Region:** *Tarragona DO*

**92** ●●○