



August Vicent of Celler Cecilio in the vineyard



CELLER CECILIO

Few regions in Spain have captured the curious blend of modernity and tradition better than the Priorat, a mountainous region located southwest of Barcelona. Historically, geographically and culturally it was an ideal spot for a revolution when Rene Barbier, Alvaro Palacios, Daphne Glorian, José Luis Perez and Carles Pastrana set about making their first wine in the small village of Gratallops in 1989. From this modest start the great clos of the Priorat were born: Clos Mogador, Clos Dolfi, Clos Erasmus, Clos Martinet and Clos de l'Obac. While it is easy to point to these pioneers as the founders of the modern Priorat, in reality the roots of this epic change were planted in the stony llicorella soil generations before. One of such example existed in the very village that the modern Priorat calls home.

Celler Cecilio is also located in Gratallops, in the heart of Priorat, and was the first winery registered in the D.O.Ca. It is a family estate dedicated to making and bottling wine since 1942, established and founded by Cecilio Vicent, father of the current owner and winemaker, August. When Cecilio, a native of Valencia, settled in the Priorat, he met and married into a family with many hectares of vineyards. At that time these vineyards had been neglected so Cecilio set about restoring them first selling his grapes to the local cooperative while studying winemaking. Finally in 1942 he began bottling his own wines in a small stable he renovated into a cellar which is still in operation today under the stewardship of his son August Vicent.



Vicent farms four vineyard sites in Gratallops and one in El Lloar – 9 hectares in total. The oldest vines are located in Els Espills where the Garnatxa and Carinyena are 80 years old. His remaining plots, El Plana, Mas d'en Corral, La Sort and L'Aubada were replanted starting in the 1980s and finishing with L'Aubada which has converted from an olive grove to a vineyard in 2004. These newer sites are planted with Garnatxa Negra, Garnatxa Blanca, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah.

Visiting the cellars of Celler Cecilio is like going back into time and August still tends an ancient solera – once a very popular style of wine in the region. August ferments his wines in tank with indigenous yeasts and the wines are macerated for 20–25 days before aging in tank or neutral, large French oak barrels. Luckily for us he is a neighbor of Eric and Daphne and when the opportunity arose to make a Black Slate bottling from this estate, we couldn't pass up the chance. The Black Slate Gratallops comes from a blend of older and younger vine fruit originating from August's vineyards near the village. It showcases both the power, typical of Gratallops, as well as the charmingly elegant and rustic touch of Vicent's winemaking.

FACTS at a GLANCE

Founded	1942
Proprietor	August Vicent
Winemaker	August Vicent
Size	9 ha
Elevation	400 – 500 meters above sea level
Soils	Llicorella
Vine Age	10 – 80
Varieties	Garnatxa Negra, Carinyena, Garnatxa Blanca, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah
Farming	Sustainable
Harvest	Manual
Cellar	Natural yeast fermentation in stainless steel tanks by vineyard site and variety, 20–25 day maceration, aging in tank or large, neutral French oak barrels

