



# BLACK SLATE

## Mas Alta - Black Slate Vilella Alta

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In the Priorat you can find local families who have tended their vines for generations as well as newcomers drawn to the possibilities of this terroir. Even the founding members of the modern Priorat include representatives of both camps. The creators of Mas Alta, Michel and Christine Vanhoutte, originally from Belgium, became enamored with the early wines they tasted from the Priorat and decided to relocate to the small village of Vilella Alta with the goal of establishing an estate of their own. In the process they enlisted the help of Michel Tardieu and Philippe Cambie to start up their Bodega. Lest you think this is an entirely foreign affair they did hire Bixente Oçafraïn as their winemaker, a name not common in either Belgium or the Rhône valley.

Mas Alta is currently 35 ha in size with additional acreage contracted from local growers. At the core of the estate, as with most properties in the Priorat, are old-vine Garnacha and Carinyena that are up to 100 years old in age. They have also planted some new vineyards of Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Garnacha. Most of the vines are planted on schist, known locally as llicorella, with a few areas of clay-limestone soils. At harvest the grapes are brought to the newly built cellar where they are destemmed, crushed and fermented before aging in French oak.

Eric Solomon, Bixente Oçafraïn and Philippe Cambie collaborate in the creation of Black Slate La Vilella Alta by selecting Garnacha and Carinyena grown on both llicorella and clay limestone soils. A blend of old and young-vine fruit and with a small additions of Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, La Vilella Alta is a dense and intensively flavored wine that is fermented in tank and aged in French oak barrels of which 35% are new.

### LOCATION

*Spain, Priorat*

### SOIL

*Llicorella, clay limestone*

### ELEVATION

*250-450 meters*

### FARMING

*Sustainable*

### VARIETIES

*Garnatxa, Carinyena, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah*

### AGE OF VINES

*15-60 years-old*

### FERMENTATION

*Hand harvested, destemmed, natural yeast fermented in concrete, 30 day maceration*

### AGING

*12 months half in concrete tank and half in French oak barrels (35% new)*

### ACCOLADES

*91 – 2020, Wine Advocate*

*93 – 2018, Jeb Dunnuck*

*90 – 2017, Wine Advocate*

*90 – 2015, Wine Advocate*

*94 – 2015, Jeb Dunnuck*

