



Sacra Natura organic wine

Bodegas Vinos Piñol is located in the town of Batea, 45 miles south of Barcelona, in the high mountains of Tarragona, 1300 feet above the Mediterranean Sea. The winery was founded in 1945 by Joseph Arrufi and consists of 100 acres in the Terra Alta Region. The Terra Alta Region, the highest of the DO wine zones in Spanish Catalonia, is situated next to Priorat and is a wild, remote country buffeted by strong winds, baked by hot sun in the summer, freezing in the winter, and measures one of Spain's lowest rainfalls. Bodegas Vinos Piñol is one of the biggest promoters of organic farming in Spain. They allow plants other than vines to grow in and around their vineyards thereby attracting beneficial insects and predatory mites, as well as providing food (pollen, nectar, etc.) replacing the need for chemical pesticides, fertilizers or insecticides. The soil of the vineyards is poor in organic matter and consists of a surface layer of limestone covering an inner layer of clay. The 2005 Sacra Natura is a blend of 35% Cariñena, 25% Tempranillo 20% Merlot and 20% Syrah. Cariñena, the same grape as the French Carignan, is thought to have originated in the region of Cariñena, in the northern province of Aragon. Today it is mostly grown in Catalonia where it almost always is blended with softer varietals. The grapes for the 2005 Sacra Natura were hand-picked during late September and maceration lasted 20 days with daily *remontage* (pumping over). The wine was then fermented for 10 days in 2,700-gallon stainless steel tanks at 85° F. Following the completion of malolactic fermentation, the wine was aged for 6 months in new American, French and Hungarian oak barrels. The wine was not fined or filtered and 2,250 cases were produced. The 2005 Sacra Natura is 100% organic and has deep ruby colour, pungent, floral aromas of liquorice and blackcurrant aromas tinged by dried violet and mint. Deeply concentrated, chewy and focused, with blackcurrant fruit nicely framed by supple tannins and accented by tobacco and black cardamom. Finishes spicy, sweet and long, with a note of graphite and terrific lift from vibrant acids.

Robert Parker in his Wine Advocate gave the 2004 vintage 90 points and wrote, "*A pungent earthy note provides a distinctive terroir aspect to this dark purple-hued 2004. Sweet raspberry and blueberry fruit along with scents of new saddle leather, spice box, toast, and vanilla emerge from this beautiful effort. It is hard to believe such quality is available at this price.*" *I recently had a delicious entrée at a local restaurant, oven-roasted homemade lamb sausage with cannellini beans, and would have loved to be drinking this wine with it!*"