



Cellar Club December 2021

2017 Bodegas Muga Reserva- Rioja, Spain

Hailed as the star red variety in Spain's most celebrated wine region, Tempranillo from Rioja, or simply labeled, "Rioja," produces elegant wines whose best examples are fully capable of decades of improvement in the cellar. The Bodegas Muga, located in the city of Haro, uses the finest materials, combining tradition with the latest advances in winemaking so as always to give its wines the very best quality without losing authenticity. It is the only wine cellar in Spain which employs its own master cooper and coopers, who make all the vats for the cellar as well as the oak casks. The winery remains true to traditional winemaking methods such as racking the casks by gravity and fining the wine with fresh egg whites. The red 2017 Reserva, which is sold as Crianza in Spain, is their most popular wine. It has a serious palate with fine, chalky tannins and very good balance. It is a triumph over the conditions of the year, elegant and balanced, approachable now and with potential to age. It is a lovely, succulent red with juicy berries and plums, together with some chocolate, spice, walnut and cedar. It is medium-bodied with round tannins and a flavorful finish and a touch of dried fruit in the center palate. A pretty combination of savory and fresh-fruit character. 94 PTS JS, 93 PTS WW, 93 PTS RP

Pairings: This wine will make an excellent match for meat dishes, such as T-bone steak, and also with charcuterie and all kinds of casseroles.

2020 Alvaro Palacios Camins del Priorat- Priorat, Spain

Priorat is a Catalan wine-producing region that was virtually abandoned until the early 1990s. René Barbier, recognized the region's forgotten potential and banded with five friends to create five "Clos" in the village of Gratallops. They revived some of Priorat's ancient Carignan vines, and planted new—mainly French—varieties. Within ten years, the area under vine practically doubled. Named the 2015 "Man of the Year" by Decanter Magazine, Alvaro Palacios is an important figure in the wine industry. He spent his early 20s working and studying winemaking outside of Spain. His experience abroad - particularly in Bordeaux - instilled in him a deep passion and ambition to make wines that could be world-class. Now considered to be among the more important new Spanish wineries in a generation, Alvaro Palacios embodies the spirit of "The New Spain." The regional blend 2020 Camins del Priorat, produced with grapes from 101 plots from eight villages in Priorat, is a blend of 55% Garnacha, 15% Syrah, 12% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot and 8% Cariñena. The mouthfeel is velvety with great freshness and very fine tannins. Sweet-berry, watermelon and orange aromas follow through to a full body with soft, fine tannins and a fruity finish. 93 PTS JS, 92 PTS RP

Pairings: Priorat red blend wines pair well with rich food such as stews, cassoulets and other rich dishes. Priorat wines also love grilled meat such as beef and veal.