

**VINES, WINES & FOOD IN CATALONIA**  
**March 11 to 18, 2018**



Catalonia, in north eastern Spain, is one of the better-known regions for premium wines including the famed Cava (sparkling wines). This program will be especially well received by wine lovers, journalists who specialize in wines, wine distributors, wine associations, and travelers who seek that unique, off-road experience.

Catalonia is home to 12 Denominations of Origin (D.O.) wineries and on this special tour you will explore 4 of the best with in-depth visits and tastings of some of our very best wines. The viticulture knowledge dates back at least 2,000 years. On our tour you will visit the El Priorat area where most of the vintages from local wineries have scored more than 90 points as rated by Wine Advocate, Robert Parker (<https://www.robertparker.com/>).

However Catalonia is much more than exceptional wines; coasts and stunning mountains often glisten with snow and ancient cities provide stunning backdrops to some of the finest cuisine in Spain; gastronomic highlights includes tapas, ham and tastings! A selection of lunches will be served in the cellars. The bustling capital of Barcelona is an architectural gem and one of the most beautiful cities on the Mediterranean.

We have based our selection of wineries on Robert Parker's Wine Advocate and the Spanish Peñin Wine Guide. This program only includes visits to wineries with more than 90 points as rated by the Wine Advocate.

You are invited to join a select few to come, taste and enjoy all that is Catalonia!

March 11, 2018 Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ BARCELONA AIRPORT - FALSET (PRIORAT) 125 Km (D)

On arrival at Barcelona airport you will be met and greeted by our guide-interpreter. Once our group has arrived, on or before 3:00 pm, we will depart by private motor coach toward the Wine Origin Denomination of Priorat. Arrival and hotel check-in followed by our welcome dinner. Overnight.

March 12, 2018 Monday \_\_\_\_\_ PRIORAT - 50 Km (B, D)

After breakfast, our travelers will depart to our first winery located in village of Torroja. Eben Sadie and Dominik A. Huber, founders of the winery, show great respect coupled with an interventionist philosophy and biodynamic viticulture. They represent the second revolution in the Priorat. Eben Sadie is well known for its South African wines Columella and Sequillo.



The varieties planted are Grenache and Carignan. They produce nine different types of wines, eight of which have been scored by Robert Parker with more than 90 points. Here you will visit the vineyards and the cellar with explanations of the philosophy of the company as well as how they produce their excellent vintages.

Following this visit our group will depart for another family owned and managed winery.

There are few vineyards planted on soils as ancient as those of the Priorat. The area forms a depression which has been slowly eroded, and due to this, appears very craggy.

Recommended red varietals: Grenache, Carignan.

Permitted red varietals: Hairy Grenache, Tempranillo, Piquepoul, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Syrah.

White varietals: White Grenache, Macabeu, Pedro Ximenez, Chenin Blanc, Muscat of Alexandria, Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains, Xarel.lo, Piquepoul.



Here we visit the vineyards; walking through the vines with full descriptions of the process and ending with a tasting of five different wines all scored with more than 90 points.

Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

March 13, 2018 Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_ FALSET - LLEIDA – 150 Km (B, L, D)

Breakfast. At the border of the Priorat area there is another D.O.; Montsant – here the soils have the same or very similar characteristics to the Priorat producing exceptional quality wines.

Here you will visit a cooperative where we explore its cellar built 100 years ago in uniquely Modernist architectural style. The designer worked with the world-renown architect Antonio Gaudi at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



They have a production capacity of more than 700.000 bottles per year and a percentage of this production is exported to more than 30 countries. Many of the wines are scored 90 points or more by the Wine Advocate. In addition to the wines today you will also have a taste of local olive oil.

From here we head to a small village where, in 1979, a young couple recovered the family winemaking tradition. Considered pioneers due to their time and efforts ensuring that the Priorat wines would have the quality, reputation and reputation for excellence around the world. The owners are one of the icons of the Priorat.

In the cellar, we will receive full explanation on the history of this D.O., with technical details of the vineyard, cultivation system, and then to the cellar ending the visit with a taste of four different wines.

Lunch will be served in a restaurant belonging to the winery that we have visited. A varied menu with typical food of this area will be served.

From there you head to the city of Lleida, our base for the next three nights. Dinner and overnight.

#### March 14, 2018 Wednesday      LLEIDA AND ITS PROVINCE - 125 Km (B, L)

Breakfast. Today we depart exploring the province of Lleida where we will visit to two wineries.

Our first visit is to a winery located in terrain with an extreme climate that leads to very characteristic identity traits in the wines. Limestone rock and clay land are the basis for soils that are poor in organic matter. Here they produce seven different varieties of red and white wine, one organic, with six of these wines are scored more than 90 points. These wines are exported to many of the European countries as well as to Asia and North and South America.



Following our visit to the vineyards and cellar, our visit ends with a tasting of its excellent wines.

We then continue a few kilometers and visit our second winery.

The estate is located on the north face of the Sierra de la Llena ridge, at an altitude of between 700 and 740 meters above sea level. The winery cultivates 29 hectares of its land with Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Grenache, Carignan, Marselan, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Müller Thurgau, Macabeo, Riesling, Albariño... The winery has also acquired grapes grown under its supervision from other vineyards in the area. This cellar is primarily producing wines for export. Its export exceeds 70% of the total annual production. The winery sells its wines to more than 30 countries worldwide, including Europe, North and South America, Asia and Australia.

During the visit you will come to know the type of soils, climate, vines conduction, landscape, vegetation, and the scenery as we enjoy our tour among the vineyards.

Once in the winery, our hosts will show and explain the vinification process all with a full detailed tasting four of their excellent wines.

We will also have lunch among the vines, if climate and weather permit, or served in a close hotel that belongs to the winery.

Return to Lleida, for an open afternoon and evening.

March 15, 2018 Thursday      LLEIDA - CATALAN PYRENEES - 180 Km (B, L)

Breakfast and depart to the Pyrenees Mountains, through the town of Balaguer and from there along by a scenic road before we arrive in the town of Tremp. Here we will enjoy a brief stop for a coffee.

Few kilometers from town we will visit a singular winery founded in 2001 when the owner was looking for land that could reduce the effects of climate change on vineyards around the Catalan Pyrenees.



He has planted 23 of the 95 hectares on the property in high density with varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Syrah, Petit Verdot, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Semillon and Albariño. The remainder of the land has been left as a forest. The elevation of the property (850-1000 meters), the excellent sun exposure makes the place look privileged and magical. The lands are generally calcareous and clay-loam with low organic content. They do not use any herbicide, insecticide or fungicide, except those permitted in organic farming. Harvesting is done manually and the wine is fermented in a variety of materials: wooden vats, stainless steel vats and natural stone. This winery was the first to use the cold/heat transfer processes of geothermal energy in all its processes. The winery is also designed to function by gravity in all its processes and has the most advanced winemaking technology. They produce white, red and sparkling wines (some of them organic); in total six different kinds of wines and one sparkling wine all scored from 92 to 95 points out of 100.

Lunch will be served in a local restaurant of the village having a menu of the typical food of this mountainous region.

Late in the afternoon, return to Lleida, for an open afternoon and evening.

March 16, 2018 Friday      LLEIDA - PENEDES - BARCELONA - 200 Km (B, L)

Early breakfast and depart to Penedes County the most important sparkling wine production area in Spain (cava) but also producing exceptionally good wines.

In 1979 Carlos Esteva went to live to the estate of his grandfather and started to work converting the property into a vine plantation adding to the established vineyards new varieties. The property has 450 hectares but only 90 are planted with vines in small plots of land. The area is caustic, with numerous chasms, caves, lairs and potholes. The marine fossils, which can be seen in certain areas, are a reminder that 20 million years ago this region was part of the seabed. The vineyard consists primarily in small plots scattered across the property to a total of about 90 hectares and constitute a genuine melting-pot due to the large number of grape varieties. Some grape varieties are planted in a plot of land to experiment with its adaptability to the land and climate. In total, they have cultivated 28 grape varieties. Here they do manual harvesting of the grapes that shortly after have already started into the winery for processing.

The new winery is, above all, a show of respect towards the unique environment with architecture that unveils the historical side of the estate. With this objective and focus on the details, the ultimate design is a winery completely invisible from the outside as it is incrustated into the rock.

After seeing the vineyards and winery, we end the visit with a tasting of three wines with some local refreshments.

Here our lunch will be served in the cellar with a seasonal Catalan menu including local products designed around the produce of the season.

We then depart this afternoon to visit one of the best wineries for cava (sparkling wine) in Spain.

Here we visit a family owned winery founded in 1924 by the grandfather specializing in cava (sparkling wines). They make only Gran Reserva Brut Nature Cavas, aged from 30 months to over 10 years. All the cavas are cultivated in the highly calcareous soil of our vineyards, a Mediterranean microclimate, and a unique approach to viticulture that stresses observation over intervention. Their philosophy, as wine-growers and producers, is grounded in an attitude of respect for biodiversity and the ecosystem and they work exclusively with grapes harvested from their vineyards - grown in accordance with the principles of organic and biodynamic agriculture. They also manually harvest the grapes.

In the winery all bottles are aged a minimum of 30 months and uniquely Brut Nature Gran Reserve. Most of the cava are scored exceeding 90 points. With a glass of exceptional cava in your hands you "cheer" ending the final technical visit of our unique Vine, Wine & Food Tour!

We then continue to Barcelona – a relaxed later afternoon and open evening in Catalonia's Capital!

March 17, 2018 Saturday BARCELONA (B, D)

Breakfast. Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, is a cosmopolitan Mediterranean City and one of the special highlights of our tour. Accompanied by an official local guide here we admire the impressive cultural heritage uniquely Catalan and Spanish. In the old city-centre, surrounded by walls dating to the Roman times, we explore the Gothic Quarter - narrow streets, attractive corners and home to an abundant collection of Gothic buildings including the impressive Cathedral surrounded by medieval palaces. The Plaça del Rei brings a labyrinth of marvellous buildings - the Palau Reial Major; the Plaça Sant Jaume (which houses the Palau de la Generalitat site of the Catalan Government) and City Hall. The urban development of Barcelona's central area was designed by the architect Ildefons Cerda where the emerging Catalan bourgeoisie built its mansions and palaces following the principles of Modernism. Masters including Gaudi, Domenech i Montaner and Puig i Cadafalch, have left outstanding architectural buildings including the Casa Mila "La Pedrera" and Palau de la Musica Catalana that were designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. The Basilica of the Sagrada Familia (the Holy Family) and residences including Casa Lleo Morera, Casa Amatller and Casa Batllo, are just a few of the many modernist gems treasured by the city. The afternoon is left at leisure and can be devoted to visit some of the city's important museums (Picasso, Miro OR Tapies) or to shop in the exclusive boutiques of the Passeig de Gracia. This evening a special Farewell dinner will be served in a local restaurant. Overnight.

March 18, 2018 Sunday DEPARTURE FROM BARCELONA (B)

Breakfast. A main group transfer is included for our group – however flight schedules may vary and supplements for individual transfers may apply.

**Disclaimer:** Planned visits to the selected wineries may vary by chronological order. The visits to the vineyards are subject to weather conditions. We reserve the right to replace visits with others of similar characteristics and quality.

**LAND TOUR PRICE** (pp double/twin occupancy): \$3,235 Canadian p.p. based on twin / double occupancy  
Single room Supplement: \$645 Canadian

***The departure is guaranteed with a minimum of 15 passengers to an absolute maximum of 20 participants.***

The tour price includes:

- Deluxe coach services as per itinerary
- 7 night's accommodation in double/twin room on Bed and Breakfast basis in selected 4\* hotels
- Meals as detailed in the program (B = breakfast, L = lunch and D = dinner)
- English speaking tour escort throughout
- Arrangements for all visits, presentations, meals, special sampling at our wine cellars
- City-guided, Barcelona panoramic tour

The package price doesn't include:

- Portage service at airport or hotels
- Meals not detailed as included
- Admission fee not specified as included
- Gratuities

**Due to the unique requirements of this tour we have a registration deadline of 15 NOVEMBER 2017**

**WINERIES TO BE VISITED:**

**D.O. Priorat:**

Terroir-Al-limit <http://www.terroir-al-limit.com/>

Celler Mas Doix <http://www.masdoix.com/>

Clos de l'Obac <https://obac.es/>

**D.O. Montsant:**

Celler de Capcanes <http://www.cellercapcanes.com/en>

Cooperative Falset Marça <http://www.etim.cat/>

**D.O. Posters del Segre:**

Tomas Cusiné [http://www.tomascusine.com/en\\_index.php](http://www.tomascusine.com/en_index.php)

Clos Pons <http://www.clospons.com/>

Castell d'Encus <http://www.castelldencus.com/en/>

D.O. Penedes:

Can Rafols dels Caus <http://www.canrafolsdelscaus.com/en/>

Cavas Recaredo <http://www.recaredo.com/en/>

**HOTELS TO BE LODGED:**

Falset:

Hotel-Hostel Sport <http://www.hotelpriorat-hostalsport.com/en> (the only one with enough capacity in the county)

Lleida:

Hotel Zenit Lleida <https://lleida.zenithoteles.com/en/>

Barcelona:

Hotel Avenida Palace <http://www.avenidapalace.com/>