

## Singular Wine: Clos Mogador Nelin Priorat Blanco

*375 Words (Or So) on a Rare White Wine from Priorat*



Europe is riddled with resurrected wine regions: places with challenging landscapes that quickly fell into economic destitution when times got tough, only to rise from the ashes on an economy of joyful wines. Sometimes, that rebirth can be traced to a single prescient individual who saw the first rays of potential. For the resurgence of modern Priorat, that person is **René Barbier Ferrer**, who in 1979 acquired a vineyard in this rugged, at-the-time forgotten outpost west of Barcelona, and got to work, eventually under the winery name Clos Mogador.

Originally from Tarragona, Barbier brought with him an already-extensive resume of experience ranging from schooling in Bordeaux, Burgundy and Limoux, as well as stints at Château Pétrus (the most celebrated Merlot in the world) and Palacios Remondo in Rioja. In short, he knew what he was doing from the start, and he lobbied his colleagues in the wine industry – including Alvaro Palacios – to join him in dusty Priorat.

What emerged from this renaissance was nothing short of miraculous. Within 25 years of Barbier's purchase, Priorat became only the second appellation in Spain to be awarded the nation's highest status, DOCa (or DOQ, because this is Catalonia). Priorat's only other peer at the top of the Spanish pyramid? Rioja.

Make no mistake, this resurgence was triggered by critical acclaim which fueled prices. **Priorat's red wines** are inky, lush, powerful and densely layered with aromas – just the thing that critics were looking for in the 1980s and '90s as Priorat ascended. And until a few weeks ago, these nearly opaque bulldozers were all I knew of Priorat. That's when I came across Clos Mogador's Nelin, and a whole new dimension to this appellation opened up for me – one that might claim **more of the appellation's future attention**.



White wine grapes are harvested with the Priorat town of Gatallops in the distance. ©Clos Mogador

Nelin is a rare Priorat Blanco. Made from a patchwork quilt of white grapes – with Grenache Blanc comprising half of the threads – it weaves together ample contradiction. Peach and vanilla-bean tones mingle with suggestions of coconut and hazelnut, all infused with power and finesse. Often, when wines (white or red) are this concentrated, they leave little room to maneuver for a more personal experience. Not so with Nelin. Ultimately, I just gave in and took it to the front porch. I suspect it will have a similar effect on many of you.

## 2017 Clos Mogador Nelin Priorat Blanco



Priorat DOQ, Catalonia 🇪🇸

**Grapes:** Grenache Blanc (50%) + 50% blend of Viognier, Pinot Noir, Marsanne, Roussanne, Pedro Ximenez, Macabeo and Escanyavelles

**Alcohol:** 14,5%

**Opinion:** ★★★★★ (out of five)

· *Food-friendliness:* Versatile

· *Value:* As Expected



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**A beginner might like ...** The meld of stone fruit, flowers and nuts that come across beautifully on the palate. If you are not used to Grenache Blanc blends or [long lees aging](#) © in whites, this will be a wholly new experience for you.

**A wine obsessive might like ...** The delightfully disorienting complexity of this wine's sensations. For me, it was like holding a compass that went berserk, at various times pointing at the Rhône, Meursault and even Jerez. Zingy at the start, mellow and enveloping on the finish.

*Note:* This wine was provided as a sample by [Europvin](#). Learn more about my [editorial and sample policy](#).