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“Recaredo: Sparkling Wine From Spain”

# Forbes

MARISA D'VARI · JANUARY 2020

Most wine lovers are familiar with the Spanish sparkling wine known as Cava. Its center of production, Penedès, lies in the northeastern corner of Spain. Like Champagne, Spanish sparklers are produced in the “traditional method.” In this process, the first alcoholic fermentation is followed by a second fermentation in the same bottle. This produces bubbles (a result of trapped CO<sub>2</sub>), a yeasty aroma of fresh baked bread, and a rich mouthfeel from the breakdown of spent yeast cells.

Spanish sparklers traditionally fall under the Cava DO (Denominación de Origen). They are made from the indigenous Spanish grapes of Parellada, Macabeo, and Xarel-lo. In recent years, the use of international varieties (mostly Chardonnay and Pinot Noir) have been accepted by the Cava DO.

## **Rise of Independent Producers: Focus on Recaredo Winery**

When most people think of Cava, they think of the big brands: Freixenet and Codorníu. Yet high quality, limited-production, Penedès-based small producers are now raising the bar for Spanish sparklers. This is apparent by their focus on (mostly) organic or biodynamic farming. Across the board these small wineries seek to differentiate themselves by aging the wine longer than the DO requirements.

Other small producers are creating single variety sparkling wines, when most Cava DO wines are blends of the three primary indigenous grapes. Josep Mata Capellades created the Penedès-based Recaredo Winery in 1924. Managed by his grandson Ton Mata since 2010, Recaredo exemplifies this quality-focused, limited-production movement in several respects.

First, Mr. Mata sources grapes only from his Demeter certified (biodynamic) vineyards. Demeter International is one of the largest certification organization for biodynamic wine. Second, Mr. Mata now focuses on indigenous grape varieties and turns them into icon wines.

An example is the limited-production, 100% Xarel-lo bottling from the special Turó d'en Mota vineyard. The word Turó means hill, and Mota refers to the family who owned the house on the hill and surrounding vineyards. Vinified for over 12 years, this wine retails at over \$160.

During a recent visit to his vineyards, Ton Mata enthusiastically pointed out the combination of factors (terroir, free-roaming animals) that contribute to healthy grapes and quality wine. Every so often, he stopped and lifted what seemed to be an uprooted tree or branch. In the black earth below, hundreds of earthworms and other soil burrowing animals (whose presence regenerates the soils) could be seen. These creatures help aerate the soil by creating tunnels. They also provide nutrients for the vines with their decomposition.



[www.recaredo.com](http://www.recaredo.com)

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## **Recaredo: A New Direction**

For many years, sommeliers, students in various wine programs, and even average wine lovers have been taught to recognize the Cava DO (Denominación de Origen) on a label as a designation of quality. In January 2019 Recaredo, together with eight more family wineries specialized in quality sparkling wines, left the Cava DO. Now, all Recaredo's labels fall under the CORPINNAT European Collective brand.

## **Visiting Recaredo**

Beyond biodynamics, the winery earned recognition and respect for the long aging process (over 30 months) of its top sparkling wines. They are also known for the unique fact they only produce vintage-dated, Brut Nature sparkling wine.

The term "Brut Nature" refers to wines with no dosage (additional sweetening). Recaredo sees these as gastronomic wines, meant to pair well with cuisine at top restaurants.

One can make an appointment to visit Recaredo in Sant Sadurni d'Anoia (Penedès) by contacting the winery at [visites@recaredo.com](mailto:visites@recaredo.com) or calling +34 938 910 214.

