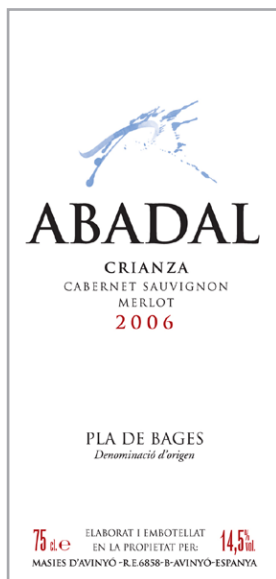


Abadal Crianza 2006



Winery: Bodegas Masies D'Avinyo

Region: Pla de Bages D.O.

Grapes: 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and 50% Merlot

Vineyard: Masies D'Avinyo is leading the charge of quality wine production from this, one of the oldest vine growing regions in the world, el Bages, named for Bacchus the Roman god of wine. The vines are cultivated on carefully structured terraces, influenced by a Continental- Mediterranean climate, with low rainfall. This leads to highly structured wines that maintain a freshness and delicacy rarely found in such rich wines. Vineyards are planted with native and French grapes, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay and Mando and Picapoll. A strong technical background is used in vineyard management, for example, specific total leaf area per mass of grapes to assure ripeness. This is combined with a detailed interaction with each vintage. In warm vintages, new oak is purchased with lower levels of toast, in

cooler vintages barrels with higher levels of toast are used. A combination of French, Hungarian and American oak is used in aging the wines.

Masies D'Avinyo's winemaker, Joan Soler, explains his philosophy as this: "I understand that wine is basically an agricultural product, therefore I look to achieve the best balance in our vineyards (not only in terms of production but also environmental terms by excluding the use of herbicides and by allowing the controlled growth of grass). In terms of winemaking, I have two goals, first to extract as much of the flavor of the grape into our wines, second to allow the aromas of our grapes to be primary in our wines. I look to exclude aromas from the winery or from excessive barrel aging."

Wine: All vines are estate grown in the foothills of the Pyrenees. The grapes were harvested by hand. Maceration lasts 20 days with periodic pumping over. Fermentation temperatures never exceed a maximum of 84° F. Each variety was aged separately in American and French oak barrels for 10 months. After the final assemblage, it was bottled and aged at the winery further prior to release.

Reviews:

"Aromas of cedar, mineral, cassis, and pomegranate lead to a medium-bodied, smooth-textured, easy-going wine. It has enough ripe tannin to evolve for 2-3 years but can be enjoyed now."

88 points *Wine Advocate* issue 183 June '09

"Always a good bet, this CS-Merlot blend is smoky, tightly structured, piercing and generous. The flavors are of cassis and plum, while the finish is textured, round and ends with a blast of bitter chocolate. Fulfilling, lively Spanish wine. Recommended for the price."

89 points *Wine Enthusiast* November '09



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