



## THE PERALADA GROUP

Peralada is a small medieval town in the north-eastern corner of Spain, where the foothills of the Pyrenees stretch out to the Mediterranean. It is situated at the centre of the Empordà-Costa Brava Denomination of Origin.

The Castle of Peralada (“CASTILLO PERALADA”) is the historical, cultural and commercial heart of the district. As well as the cellars, the Castillo Peralada has a glass and wine museum together with a large library containing more than 80,000 books (in fact, it is the largest privately-held library in Spain).

The castle was bought in 1923 by Mr Miguel Mateu and since then the Suqué-Mateu family has turned the Peralada Group into one of the leading wine producers of Spain.

The Peralada Group consists of the following companies:

### Cavas del Castillo de Peralada, S.A.

#### WINES

- 🍷 “CAVA” (méthode champenoise Sparkling wines)
- 🍷 Still wines (red, rosé, white) under the D.O. Empordà-Costa Brava

#### VINEYARDS

- 🏡 Empordà. Approximately 150 hectares in five estates, planted with several grape varieties (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Ull de Llebre, Garnatxa Negra, Carinyena, Chardonnay, Macabeu)
- 🏡 Priorat. 40 Hectares, first planted 2000. First vintage expected 2003

#### CELLARS

- 🏢 Winery in Peralada, producing still wines and cellars underneath the Carmen monastery for the ageing of Gran Claustro cava
- 🏢 Modern fermentation and ageing facilities for Cava in Vilafranca del Penedés.

#### BRANDS

- 🍷 Castillo Peralada
- 🍷 Masia Peralada
- 🍷 Gran Claustro
- 🍷 Olivella Ferrari
- 🍷 Castell d’Olèrdola

### Cavas del Ampurdán, S.A.

#### WINES

- 🍷 Sparkling and semi-sparkling wines produced in the Charmat method

#### CELLARS

- 🏢 Winery in Peralada.

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#### BRANDS

- 🍷 Blanc Pescador
- 🍷 Cresta Rosa
- 🍷 Blanc de Foc

#### Comercial Vinícola del Nordeste, S.A.

A joint venture between Cavas del Ampurdán, Cavas del Castillo de Peralada and the agricultural cooperative of Mollet de Peralada.

#### WINES

- 🍷 Still wines (red, rosé, white) under the D.O. Empordà-Costa Brava, as well as the traditional sweet wines of the region

#### VINEYARDS

- 🏡 Empordà. Approximately 300 hectares in are farmed by the members of the cooperative, planted with several grape varieties (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Ull de Llebre, Garnatxa Negra, Carinyena, Chardonnay, Macabeu)

#### CELLARS

- 🍷 Winery in Mollet de Peralada

#### BRANDS

- 🍷 Covest, Anubis

#### Peralada Comercial S.A.

The distribution and sales arm of the group, selling all of the above plus wines produced in Navarra, Rioja and other regions of Spain. This also contains a sub-division known as the 'División Grandes Vinos', which as well as focussing on the top wines produced by Castillo Peralada, also is exclusive national distributor for a range of international wines, including:

- 🍷 Penfolds and Lindeman's from Australia
- 🍷 Domaine Weinbach (Alsace)
- 🍷 La Chablisienne (Chablis)
- 🍷 Guigal (Rhone)
- 🍷 Ravenswood (Sonoma, USA)
- 🍷 Casa Lapostolle (Chile)
- 🍷 JF Lurton (Argentina, Toro and Rueda)
- 🍷 Biondi Santi (Brunello di Montalcino, Italy)

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President	Arturo Suqué
Executive Vice-president	Javier Suqué
Managing Director	Jordi Carré
Wine Makers	Josep Lluís Pérez, Simó Serra, Delfí Sanahuja, Luis Hurtado de Amézaga
National Sales Director	Antonio Batlle
Export Director	Robert Hunter
Marketing Director	Eugeni Llos Norenberg
Commercial Director Spain	Manuel Ballester
Controller	Óscar Sánchez
Administration Director	Antonio Rodríguez
Production Director	Lluís Fontdecaba

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## A LITTLE HISTORY

Peralada is located in the centre of the Empordà plain, a few kilometres from Figueres (a town famous for its Dalí museum). Peralada is a village laden with history. For three centuries it was the capital of its own county: the *Comitatus Petralatensis*, whose first ruler was Count Francesc Jofre de Rocabertí i de Pacs, viscount of Rocabertí, and whose sixth successor, Guillem de Rocabertí, was named *Grande de España* by Felipe V.

In 1285, the first Castle of the Rocabertí was destroyed by fire during a French 'crusade' against Catalonia. During the 14th century, the family built a new castle, which was located outside the town walls and surrounded by splendid gardens, known today as the Castle of Peralada. Next to it was built a Carmelite monastery, with one of the few gothic cloisters in Catalonia and also a beautiful gothic church.

The castle was acquired by Miguel Mateu in 1923. He loved art and culture and so decided to keep his collections in the castle: sculptures (mainly medieval and Renaissance), altar-pieces, tapestries, furniture, paintings, coins, glassware, ceramics, etc., all of incalculable value. He also enlarged the cloister's library, which at present has approximately 80.000 volumes, including hand-written gothic manuscripts. The eastern front of the castle is dominated by two imposing towers whose reflection on the lake has become the image and the symbol of Castillo Peralada wines and sparkling wines.

One of Miguel Mateu's strongest wishes was to bring back the wine-growing tradition of the area. Wine had already been grown in the Empordà since the fifth century B.C., as the Greeks had settled first on the coast and then gone inland in search of more fertile lands. In Peralada, wine production goes back to the 15th century, as recorded in documents kept in the castle's library. The Carmelite monks built the cellars, where they used to produce wine for the region of Peralada. These cellars are still used today.

The Wine Museum is also installed in the cloister. Some interesting historical wine-related pieces are preserved as evidence of the gradual development of this industry over the centuries. Wine tastings and conferences are held in the museum.

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## OUR COMPANY

Wine is a work of art. As such, we constantly strive to improve quality whilst respecting valuable traditions. This has been a constant throughout the history of the company, understood and put into practice first by Don Miguel Mateu, then Arturo Suqué and now his son, Javier.

1960 was a key date in the company's history; the Castillo Peralada Rosé "Champagne" had been very successful internationally, particularly in Great Britain. The producers of this type of wine in the French area of Champagne then took the matter to court and for the first time were awarded protection for the name of their region. Since then, all producers outside the area of Champagne have had to look for alternative denominations. At the time, however, the case, however, meant a lot of free publicity and also public sympathy for our company!

Castillo Peralada wines and cavas have won several national and international contests, among them three gold and two bronze medals at *the V Selection Mondiale des Vins, Alcool et Liqueurs* in Paris; a silver medal at the *International Wine Challenge 1999*; also in 1999, the award "Vinalies d'Or" given at the *Vinalies* contest in Paris by the *Union des Œnologues de France*. The wines have also been present at banquets offered to kings and presidents by Spanish authorities.

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In order to produce the best possible grapes, one of the priorities of Cavas del Castillo de Peralada has been to acquire our own vineyards in the region.

Within the D.O. Empordà-Costa Brava, we now have some 150 hectares of vineyard, in five different estates:

**Garrigal** is an estate of around 40 ha of flat land with gravelly and sandy soils and neutral pH. Here we have planted both white (Chardonnay, macabeo) and red varieties (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Garnatxa negra, Tempranillo and Carinyena) as well as maintaining plots of over 50 years old. On this estate we have an experimental plot where we test how the grape varieties react to the climate of the Empordà as well as evaluating a range of pruning methods and rootstocks etc.

**Malaveïna** is one of the youngest vineyards, but one which we feel has the greatest potential. These 22 hectares of rolling hills have soils which are a reddish clay, but with many large lumps of quartz and granite dragged down from the mountains during the ice-ages. Only red varieties have been planted here, specifically Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Garnatxa negra. The first harvest from this vineyard has aroused great hopes for the future and has already produced its first two wines: the Ex Ex 1 and the single vineyard wine Finca Malaveïna, both first released in 2002.

To the north east of Peralada lies the village of **Pont de Molins** where we have a 38 ha. vineyard with flat, sandy soils. Here, as well as a small parcel of Chardonnay, the red varieties Tempranillo, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are planted. Part of our award-winning Gran Claustro is chosen from the 15 to 20 year old vines.

**Garbet** is an exceptional vineyard by any standard. Its rocky terraces are cut from south-facing hillsides where the Pyrenees meet the Mediterranean. The difficulty of growing grapes on these schist soils is increased by the fierce Tramontana north wind that often reaches gale force. Here we have planted red varieties (Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot and Garnatxa negra) and from the first harvest in 1999 have seen that they have the potential to produce stunning wines to match the unique location.

Our latest purchase is a 40 ha. estate in the village of **Espolla**, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, directly to the north of Peralada. Here, on stony and acid soils, we have begun to plant both traditional (Garnatxa, Carinyena) and international (Cabernet, Syrah) red varieties to a very high density (6,200 vines per hectare) to further reduce vigour and grape production and produce wines of the very highest quality, but above all, with a great personality. The first grapes will be picked in 2004.

At all our vineyards we use similar training and pruning techniques (Double Cordon except in the very old vines at Garrigal which maintain the traditional bush vine method) as well as using drip irrigation to ensure that the vines receive moisture at the correct time and not when our irregular rains decide to fall! Although our wines are mostly blends from all of our different vineyards, Finca Malaveïna represents the first of our wines to come from a single vineyard.

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We have begun our project in the Priorat with the same philosophy – quality above all else. Located near the village of **Bellmunt**, our 28 ha. there are on two clearly differentiated soil types: the terraced hillsides of schist typical of the DO and 10 ha. of fluvial deposits in the valley which are somewhat unusual in this small region. Upon purchasing in March 2000 we planted the valley floor to international red varieties (Cabernet, Merlot). It took a little longer to construct the terraces on the hillsides, but they have now been finished and planted with Garnatxa and Syrah. We are looking forward to our first grapes and also building a winery during 2003.

### **OUR EXPERIMENTAL WINERY: TECHNOLOGY SERVING TRADITION**

In 1992 Cavas Castillo de Peralada invested in the construction of an experimental winery, where our winemakers are able to perform microvinifications (vinifications with small quantities of must). By doing this, they are able to come to conclusions as to how certain factors influence the quality of the wines:

- ✦ factors in the vineyard, including soil types, irrigation and pruning
- ✦ factors in the wine-making (temperatures, macerations etc.)
- ✦ factors in the ageing (type, age and toast of the barrels)

The intention is not to make a laboratory process out of the art of wine, but to enable our winemakers to experiment with these factors by combining them. The overall aim is to express the true personality of the region as well as to improve the quality of our wines.

The Suqué-Mateu family believes that investment in research and development are the future of the industry, helping us to produce a consistent range of products which are to the consumer's taste and which, of course, strive constantly to improve quality

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## OUR CURRENT PRODUCTS

Castillo Peralada makes a range of products, which demonstrate the tremendous wine-growing potential of the particular climate of the Empordà.

After many years of slow, but rewarding work, we can see the results. The carefully chosen sites have grown into excellent vineyards, and with the help of our experimental winery, turn the grapes into well-defined, select, noble products, distinguished by their elegant aromas and richness of tones.

Under the Castillo Peralada label, we make red, white and rosé wines with both traditional and international grape varieties. The red grapes are harvested, fermented as individual grape varieties and selected according to quality. The best grapes from the single vineyard of Malaveïna will be used for the wine of this name. Then the wine with the best structure for ageing in new oak casks are blended to make a Reserva (a blend of a range of varieties) and a varietal Cabernet Sauvignon. Both of these wines are aged in 225 litre casks for 18 months. Wines which are to be aged in older barrels, with less structure but fresher fruit aromas are blended to make our Crianza, which ages for 12 months. Finally those grapes with less colour in the skins are made into Rosé wines (a blend Rosado and a varietal Cabernet Rosado) with a short fermentation followed by a cold fermentation. The white wines are all cold fermented, there are three whites: two varietal wines, made from Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay and a blend called Blanc de Blancs.

Recently we have begun a project to discover and bottle the best traditional wines of Catalunya. These wines are sourced from growers throughout the province of Catalonia and bottled under the D.O. Catalunya. These wines have been named Masia Peralada: Masia means farmhouse, indicating the traditional and countryside nature of the wines, but the wines still have the Peralada guarantee of quality. There are four wines under this label: a red and a rosé made from Garnacha and Tempranillo, two whites (dry and semi-dry) made from Macabeo and Muscat.

The Cavas of Castillo Peralada have also built a strong reputation as one of the finest of their type. The British magazine 'Wine' held a tasting in their March 1999 issue in which they said:

"Our favourite of the whole tasting, however, was the Castillo Peralada Brut Reserva which had a delightful lemony nose with creamy notes to it, all of which came through on the palate with rich, full fruit balanced out by a good firm streak of acidity and a very silky mouthfeel."

More recently Wine and Spirits Magazine (USA) has confirmed the quality of our cavas by awarding the highest points in a recent tasting to both our Gran Claustro and our Brut Reserva. Furthermore, a search for Spanish sparkling wines on the Wine Spectator web-site would reveal Gran Claustro at the top of the list with 86 points and the Brut reserva second with 85 points.

The range of cavas has a Reserva range of Brut, Seco and Semi-seco. There is then a Brut Nature and a Brut Nature Cuvée Especial and a varietal Chardonnay. There are then two rosés, the Brut Rosado and a wine which has been developed together with the Salvador Dalí Foundation, the Torre Galatea Brut Rosado.

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## THE GRAN CLAUSTRO WINES

When US President Eisenhower visited Spain in 1959, Miguel Mateu, who was well-known for the care he took of his *Reservas*, was requested to choose a Cava for the reception. Don Miguel chose a very small private reserve, which was very well received.

Encouraged by this success and the excellent 1959 vintage in the Empordà region, Arturo Suqué thought it was about time to produce a sparkling wine, Cava, comparable to the quality of the wines of Champagne. And so, taking advantage of this vintage, in 1965, both father-in-law, Don Miguel, and son-in-law, Don Arturo, decided to launch a very limited number of bottles.

The labour intensive production technique is still preserved today, essential to obtain a Cava of such characteristics. No more than 50.000 bottles per year can be produced.

The production takes place in the cellars of the *Convent del Carme* (Cloister of Carmen), located next to the Castle, where the Carmelite monks used to make wine more than six centuries ago; it is this cloister which gives the name to our best sparkling wine: the *Gran Claustro*.

The bottle was designed by the prestigious *Bund Grafischer Gestalter* in Basel, Switzerland and reproduces a type of bottle from the 18th century. The glass was first blown and then as the still molten crystal was left standing on the floor, its own weight made it "sit" and form this original shape.

In an attempt to reach the same heights with red wines, we are now producing a Red Gran Claustro, the 1993 vintage – the first - of which was launched in 1997. The 1998 vintage, the fourth to be released as neither the 1994 nor the 1997 vintage were considered of high enough quality to deserve this label, was the wine which vindicated our decision to produce top red wines. This 1998 Gran Claustro achieved unprecedented success, winning the Spanish 'Nariz de Oro', awarded by the sommelier association to the best Spanish red wine. Furthermore, it was the first time a Catalan red wine has been awarded this accolade.

This wine is made from selected grapes from our property's best vineyards, which have been hand-collected at the peak of ripeness. The wine is largely made from Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, with smaller quantities of the traditional Mediterranean varieties Cariñena and Garnacha. It has a long maceration to achieve maximum extraction, and is then transferred to new French oak casks (Allier) for eighteen months. A limited production, each bottle is numbered.

The basic philosophy behind the production of the *Gran Claustro* continues to be the same that Miguel Mateu and Arturo Suqué began with: to produce the very best wines possible. That we are achieving our aim has been demonstrated by five of the six major Spanish wine guides naming it in their top wines for 2002.

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