

ANNA ESPELT

Pla de Gates Blanc



We've known Anna Espelt since 2005 when we first started working with her family's estate, Espelt viticultors, in DO Empordà. Having studied habitat restoration and organic farming, Anna has always sought to bring her values in line with the farming practices at her family's large estate of 200 hectares. She has also been pursuing something more personal – a project focused on 25 hectares of vineyards collectively called Mas Marés located within the Cap de Creus Nature Reserve of Spain. While hiking around this area, she not only recognized the potential to revitalize some ailing vineyard sites, but she discovered evidence of human interaction with this ancient landscape dating back to the early bronze age. At once, Anna knew this place was special, not only for the wine that it could produce but for the very fact that humans had been interacting with this place for millennia.

ORIGIN

Spain

APPELLATION

Empordà

SOIL

Granite, sand, clay

AGE OF VINES

17

ELEVATION

25 meters

VARIETIES

Lledoner Roig & Blanc (Grenache Gris & Blanc)

FARMING

Certified organic (CCPAE)

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, 24 hour cooling, partially destemmed and macerated, gentle pressing, natural yeast fermentation in tank

AGING

9 months in neutral 500L and 20HL French oak barrels

When asked to describe her work in Cap Creus, Anna states that it is a land of granite, wind, blue skies, and the smell of wild herbs and sea spray. While it may seem odd that she doesn't mention vineyards in this description, it is largely because vines have been an integral part of this landscape shaped in equal parts by nature and human hands. In the US, our National Parks strive to minimize the impact of civilization, whereas, in this part of Catalunya, there is no escaping it. What might seem like a relic of a glacier is, in fact, a standing stone erected by human hands over 4000 years ago for some long-forgotten purpose. With Anna's dedication to organic and regenerative farming, these vineyards can once again be brought into balance with the surrounding flora and fauna. Through her work, Anna is paying tribute to the thousands of years of interaction between her ancestors and the land they've inhabited.

Pla de Gates is a blend of Lledoner Blanc and Roig (Grenache Blanc and Gris) that Anna Espelt grows in her Mas Marés vineyard. Having gained experience with these varieties further inland where the climate is warmer, Anna has discovered that they really shine closer to the Mediterranean, where nearly constant winds result in smaller clusters, berries, thicker skins, and fresher acidity. Pla de Gates is cooled overnight after harvesting by hand, is partially destemmed, and sees a short maceration before a long gentle pressing to capture all the aromatic and phenolic potential of these two varieties.

