



## Inside VinExpo New York: A Q&A with Pedro Ballesteros, MW

### **Q: What draws you to the Cariñena region?**

**Pedro:** The very old vines and deep history. Cariñena was well known several hundred years ago, and then because Spain was a very poor country for many years, the region was abandoned and its wines went into a kind of oblivion. For many years the country was out of the major trade routes in the world. Only a few Spanish wines were sold outside Spain, and inside the country, people couldn't afford to buy wine. Although wines of Cariñena were recognized as very good, there wasn't a good market for them. But, that doesn't change the fact that the terroir is there and so is the potential for quality.



### **Q: What is one important fact we should know about Cariñena today?**

**Pedro:** It offers you the chance to enjoy wines made from very, very old Garnacha and Cariñena grape vines that are about 100 years old – and that you can't find anywhere else on Earth.

### **Q: What is one important fact we should know about the region's history?**

**Pedro:** Five hundred years ago, Cariñena was a famed region. All the conditions for top quality were there, including important people located close to the area. We have had to wait 500 years to once again have the right people close to Cariñena, to recover this importance. The region has always had the soil and climate for important wines, but only now is it recovering its social potential.

### **Q: What do we need to know about Garnacha?**

**Pedro:** Garnacha is kind of a chameleon grape. It adapts to different climates, to different soils and, unlike (for example) Cabernet Sauvignon, Garnacha gives very different expressions according to the place in which it's grown—whether that's in Sardinia, in Châteauneuf du Pape, Madrid, Cariñena or Rioja. In Cariñena you have one common climate: it's very continental, very dry. You have four different kinds of soil: clay, slate, calcareous, and alluvial. This means you are going to get different expressions of Garnacha: more minerality, a very firm structure from slate; wines that are rounder, have more body, and that can be very complex from calcareous; and much more fruity wines, sometimes a little bit more alcoholic, from clay. Wines from the alluvial soils tend to be lighter in color, less intense, good for drinking when they're young.