

## Malaparte Vinos (Spain, Castilla Y Leon, Cuellar)

**MILESTONES:** Mariano de Frutos always dreamed of producing his own wine and in 1996 he started to plant the first 3.5 ha of Tempranillo bringing back to life a family's piece of land left in total oblivion. The wine produced in the very first vintages was just enjoyed by the family members, some friends and the customers of his Mesón San Francisco de Cuéllar restaurant (in the village of Cuellar nearby Segovia).

It was in 2004 when Mariano's dream became fully true with the establishment of the family business "Bodegas de Frutos Marin" and the commercialization of its' first wine's harvest.

The 2007's harvest was the first one totally elaborated from A to Z in the new built



winery. Meanwhile the commercial name of the bodega was launched and Malaparte Vinos was the brand name chosen by the family members.

Nowadays the bodega is managed by Elisa de Frutos (Mariano's daughter) and his husband Ruben Salamanca (no, he is not from the same name city), both with a professional architecture's background and both fascinated by Curzio Malaparte life and cultural "extravaganza".

**MALAPARTE ... WHAT KIND OF NAME IS THAT?:** Curzio Malaparte (9 June 1898 - 19 July 1957), born Kurt Erich Suckert, was an Italian writer, film-maker, war correspondent and diplomat. His father was German, his mother Italian. During the 1920s, Malaparte was one of the intellectuals who supported the rise of Italian fascism through the magazine "900". Despite this, Malaparte had a complex relationship with the National Fascist Party and was stripped of membership in 1933 for his independent streak. Arrested numerous times, he spent many years secluded in "Casa Malaparte" on the island of Capri, in front of Naples, where de facto he lived under arrest. Casa Malaparte was later used as a location in Jean Luc Godard's film *Le Mepris* (guess what .... Ruben and Elisa have named a wine after this movie).

From November 1943 to March 1946 he was attached to the American High Command in Italy as an Italian Liaison Officer. Articles by Curzio Malaparte have appeared in many literary periodicals of note in France, the United Kingdom, Italy and the United States . Probably one of the most important cultural element of the century, Malaparte has been marked as an irreverent and profane man.

Overall Elisa and Ruben deeply experience wines made with a minimal and authentic attitude that derives from the strong passion for the local traditions of the province of Segovia, revisited in a modern green and friendly environment's perspective. This means no chemicals, no herbicides sprayed in the vineyard! Their wines reflect their experimental attitude which seems to be a shared element with Curzio Malaparte. Something interesting to watch is always on the way. Stay tuned.

**THE SMALL PROPERTY IN CUELLAR:** So far we learnt that the brand name is dedicated to an artist and intellectual guy. What else now? When Mariano opted to plant the first vineyard, he became a pioneer in the recovery of any viticultural activity in the small area of “El Canalizo” and “Montón de Piñas”, near the Sanctuary of the Virgen de El Henar, harmoniously surrounded by pine trees.

The couple cultivates 5.5 ha of property vineyards located 3 km from the village of Cuellar. All the work in the vineyard is done according to organic ideology and practices (at the moment not certified). Many wines have produced under different experimental approaches and circumstances leading to vinifications which are truly natural (Malaparte attends the RAW wine fair organized by Isabel Legeron and some other artisanal wine fairs in Europe).

Cuellar, 60 km north of Segovia, has a fairly cold continental climate in winter and hot summers with an average altitude of roughly 900 meters above sea level. The temperature's excursions are noticeable and between the maximum and the minimum



during the year it's not uncommon going from minus 10 Celsius to 40 degree Celsius in the middle of the summer. The area is characterized by a pine forest surrounding all the hectares planted with vines protected by natural vegetable cover and sitting on layers of limestone mixed with sand and clay. The yields are rather low: 3,000 kg of grapes per hectare with an annual production that reaches 20.000 bottles.

In the cellar Ruben and Elisa produce wine according to different styles and techniques that can vary from the use of tanks, old barriques and centennial clay pots, a vessel historically common in many parts of Spain and not just something trendy to use.

This limited production is focused on the red varieties Tempranillo, Syrah and Garnacha (whose bush trained vineyard is 70 year old), while Ruben and Elisa in more recent years have embraced the cultivation of some white varieties like Albillo Mayor, Moscatel de Grano Menudo, Godello, Verdejo, etc. Many Malaparte's wines are completely declassified on the market and simply labeled as Vino (once was Vino de Mesa), being produced outside the criteria of the Vino de Tierra de Castilla y Leon local appellation. All the wines released contain minimum quantities of added sulphites.

**UVAS NOMADAS:** In 2012 Ruben and Elisa launched a crowd-funding project named Uvas Nomadas whose goal is to produce every year a different wine in areas which have nothing to share with Cuellar and the Segovia area. The debut wine was a Garnacha produced in Cebreros, in the fantastic terroir of the Sierra de Gredos, belonging to the Avila province.

This is an ever changing special limited-edition wine project and its' name Uvas Nomadas literally translates in "Gipsy Grapes". How does it work? The couple locates a



small old vineyard worth of restoration and attention. According to the agreements reached with the owner/s, they rent the vineyard for a single year. Individuals finance the project and at the end of the year every investor is rewarded with a number of bottles proportionate to the donation made. Isn't it nice?

In April 2018, the 2017 Rufete came to life after having recovered an old vineyard in the Sierra de Francia area (not far away from the city of Salamanca), while the last project has been dedicated to the production of a great

and intense Godello with roughly 1.000 bottles of pure fruit and entertainment.

**WINES IMPORTED:** In a nutshell the estates currently produces a good bunch of wines and Steep Hill is proudly starting to import 4 references.

The New Wave Girl 2018 is an authentic field blend with all the varieties co- harvested and then processed together. Fermented with partial skin contact (10% of the grapes) and aged in century old clay pot. Albillo Mayor, Jerez (aka Palomino), Huerta del Rey, Verdejo and some other obscure varieties. Only 400 bottles made.

Dindi 2018: It displays exactly the same varieties involved for The New Wave Girl with the only difference that the must ferments in used oak barrels.

The Rosado Oui 2018 (100% Tempranillo shortly aged in used barriques) reaffirms once again the great tradition of Spanish varieties produced as rosé and it drinks almost like a light red with piquant salty notes at the back end of the palate. Its fermentation lasted 60 days with some battonage involved.

So far the only red wine imported is the Pico Lunar Amphora 2017 (roughly equal parts Tempranillo an Syrah). This is another field blend with the two varieties processed together from the harvest. Fermented in open barrels with frequent punch downs, the wine ages in clay pot for 8 months before the bottling. Only 500 bottles produced.