



VITICULTORS

Mas d'en Gil

PRIORAT

## The Dream to Bottle the Earth.

Steeply sloping hillsides made of *Llicorella* (slate) soils, crowned by tiny villages, drenched in Mediterranean sunshine... The Priorat is a tiny rural world in the south of Catalonia, 130 km from Barcelona, where sea breezes and inland winds fill the steep vineyards with the essence of aromatic herbs.

The Rovira Carbonell family care for and farm one of the most emblematic and ancient estates of the Priorat Qualified Designation of Origin (DOQ) Priorat: Mas d'en Gil, located in Bellmunt del Priorat, one of the nine "Historical Priorat" villages.

Located at 350 metres above sea level, Mas d'en Gil covers an extension of 125 hectares (309 acres) of vineyards, olive groves, almond groves, hazel groves, cereal crops and Mediterranean woodland. Spread over five valleys with differentiating microclimates and *terroirs*, the estate is a scale model of the abrupt Priorat landscape, one of the greatest wine growing regions in the world.

Mas d'en Gil is a combination of nature and human activity going back centuries. Over the last 150 years, this has culminated in the passion shared by three families who have consecutively owned the estate. Today, this dream of bottling the earth has become reality in the shape of wines, olive oil and bittersweet vinegar made at Mas d'en Gil. These products express the respect, hard work and surroundings of this place in the heart of the Priorat.



## **The Priorat**

### ***Mediterranean landscape, abrupt contours and ancient geology***

The Priorat is an inland area close to the sea made up of a system of valleys and steep slopes. The lay of the land here makes farming a challenge and is only for the most patient. It is surrounded by mountains and traversed by ravines which lead down to the Siurana River. Geology here is ancient, originating in the Palaeozoic era, 400 million years ago. The top soil is made up of friable slate, known as *Llicorella* and is one of the most differentiating factors of the Priorat. The climate is Mediterranean with a continental influence characterised by cold, dry winters, hot summers and rainy springs and autumns. Winds here are important. In the winter time the cold, dry north-easterly wind, known as the *Serè* blows. In the summertime, the refreshingly cool *Garbinada* blows in from the sea. The vegetation is dominated by holm oak groves and garrigue with a typically Mediterranean aromatic forest floor.

The Priorat wine growing area enjoys a deep historical connection, which was initiated in 1194 with the founding of the Carthusian Monastery of Scala Dei. This monastery, now a ruin, is located a little more than 15km from Mas d'en Gil. Over the centuries, this monastery encouraged the planting of vineyards right up until the monks left in 1835 due to the government auctions of church properties. This was the beginning of the modern era in Priorat. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the county reached 20, 000 hectares (49,421 acres) of land under vine. This was ten times the amount planted today. Shortly after this, however, the phylloxera plague attacked the vines and led to the exodus of workers to the nearby industrial cities. This was the beginning of Priorat's apathy, which lasted almost until the end of the twentieth century. During these years of decadence, only a few growers, among them Masia Barril – the brand name of the wines made at Mas d'en Gil estate from 1931 to 1998 – were able to keep standards up and continued to make singular Priorat wines.

## **Bellmunt del Priorat**

The "Bell-Munt" or "Beautiful Mountain" is the iconic mountain which frames Mas d'en Gil and lends its name to our village, Bellmunt del Priorat. This village embraces the southernmost part of the DOQ Priorat wine appellation.

Located just a few kilometres away from the estate, the village is a string of houses built on a hill divided on both sides by a ravine which carries water down to the Siurana river below. Bellmunt has maintained its agrarian economy of ancestral origin and at the same time is also well known for the famous mines which were worked from Roman times. The village enjoys differentiating climatic factors which are extremely relevant during the summer: the refreshing *Garbinada* sea breeze easily blows in from the nearby Mediterranean. On the hot afternoons of the summer, this wind helps the vines to absorb much needed moisture, enabling them to continue to ripen the grapes.



## **Mas d'en Gil**

### ***Respecting natural rhythms and expressing nature***

The Mas d'en Gil estate sums up the essence of Priorat. Wooded hills and cool ravines, "costers" or steeply sloping vineyards; swathes of cereal crops; hills dotted with olive trees, almonds and hazels. The different *terroirs*, aspects and micro climates determine the crops planted here, their use and the buildings which have appeared here over time. The most important crop is the vineyards, divided over 43 plots. The great majority are red grape varieties: Garnatxa (Grenache) (65% of total vineyard area) and Carinyena (Carignan) (20%). 10% of the vineyards are indigenous white grape varieties: Garnatxa Blanca (White Grenache) and Macabeu (Viura). The other important crop at Mas d'en Gil is olives. The estate has a total of 2,000 hundred year old Arbequina variety olive trees.

This agricultural mosaic, with a strong Mediterranean character is worked based on respect for natural rhythms and the expression of nature. It has always been this way and so it is still today. In fact, new energy flows through the estate in the form of biodynamic farming methods.

## **Five Valleys**

### ***Different environments, aspects, microclimates and crops***

Five valleys make up the landscape of Mas d'en Gil: Vall del Bellmunt (Bellmunt Valley), Vall de lo Grinyó (Grinyó Valley), El clot de l'Oliver (Olive Tree Hollow), Vall de la Coma (Coma Valley) and Vall del Sas (Sas Valley). Each one of these areas has its own personality: a different *terroir*, particular micro climate, diverse aspects and use based on the different conditions of each place.

These singular profiles add a marked typicity to the products cultivated here. The valleys of Mas d'en Gil are like five little worlds surrounding the house and which define the plurality of the estate, its natural rhythms and its fruit.



## **The History of Mas d'en Gil**

### ***An adventure of a lifetime for three families over the last century and a half***

Mas d'en Gil is the result of three historical eras, of three separate visions which have afforded the estate the sum of exceptional quality in terms of viticulture, winemaking and wine distribution.

Francesc Gil, was the founder of the estate. He was intuitive and enthusiastic, very much a man of the 19th century. His descendents managed the estate until the next owners, the Barril family took over in 1930. They consolidated the technical and farming side of the estate and re-named it Masia Barril. Rafael Barril Figueras and his son, Rafael Barril Dosset together with Magdalena Vicente Herrando founded a “new Priorat model based on old methods”. Of advanced ideas, hard-working and determined, they took the ground-breaking decision to start bottling their wine production.

In 1998, the Rovira Carbonell family bought the estate and recovered its historical name, Mas d'en Gil. This was a dream come true for Pere Rovira, one of the great wine professionals of the Penedès wine growing region. Soon after 2000, the first Mas d'en Gil wines were released. Pere Rovira's youngest daughter, Marta Rovira Carbonell introduced organic farming methods to the estate and is the current director of the company, backed by her father and her sister, Pilar.

Circa 1860	Francesc Gil acquires the estate.
1860-1885	Grape growing is consolidated at Mas d'en Gil estate.
1885	Gil dies without issue and the estate passes to the Gil-Rusiñol family (the family which the artist, Santiago Rusiñol belonged to)
1931	Rafael Barril Figueras buys Mas d'en Gil and renames it Masia Barril.
1980-1998	Masia Barril wines gain international recognition.
1998	The Rovira Carbonell family buy the estate and recover the name of Mas d'en Gil.
2000	The first wines are released under the label Mas d'en Gil.
2008	Marta Rovira, the youngest daughter of Pere Rovira, introduces biodynamic farming methods.
2010-	The brand, Mas d'en Gil is available in more than 40 international markets. It is a reference point for excellence and Priorat identity.



## Wines and more

### **Bellmunt Negre**

**This wine expresses the young Garnatxa (Grenache) vineyards of the village of Bellmunt, in the south of Priorat.** It is open and vibrant, light on the palate with a plethora of citric and peach sensations coupled with mineral notes and the refreshingly fine sweetness which sets Mas d'en Gil wines apart. This wine is made with grapes harvested from the Vall del Bellmunt vineyard plots. These plots are mainly planted with Garnatxa (Grenache) and Carinyena (Carignan) grape varieties. It is classified as a "Vi de Vila" ("Village Wine") which means it is a wine made by a winery located within the municipal boundaries of the village of Bellmunt del Priorat, using vineyard plots which are located within the aforementioned village.

### **Bellmunt Blanc**

**Young white Garnatxa (Grenache) wine which epitomises the village of Bellmunt in the south of Priorat.** It offers aromas of orange peel and forest floor with a slightly mineral palate and a Mediterranean herb finish. Made using the grapes harvested from two young white vineyards located in the Vall del Bellmunt. It is classified as a "Vi de Vila" ("Village Wine") which means it is a wine made by a winery located within the municipal boundaries of the village of Bellmunt del Priorat, using vineyard plots which are located within the aforementioned village.

### **Coma Vella**

**Mediterranean forest floor aromas, fruit and minerality** which make us re-live a springtime stroll through Mediterranean woodland. Intense and fresh, balanced with some silkiness which is characteristic of Mas d'en Gil wines. This wine and its name are taken from the Coma Vella vineyard plot, the oldest one in the Vall de la Coma. Planted with Garnatxa Peluda (Downy Grenache) and Garnatxa del País (Grenache) together, this valley faces east and west towards the Mediterranean Sea. The place is blessed by the refreshing sea breeze, known as the Garbinada.

### **Coma Alta**

**The "enfant terrible" of Mas d'en Gil. A salty, lively white wine.** Its aroma reminds one of the forest floor and almond and peach blossom. In the mouth, it is vertically structured and very subtle, ending with a mineral note and a salty finish. Coma Alta, the vineyard plot which lends its name to this wine is located at the highest point of the Vall de la Coma, facing north-east.



### **Clos Fontà**

**Old vines, the most precise representation of Mas d'en Gil estate *terroir*.** Clos Fontà concentrates black fruit and minerality in a complex wine. It is the fruit of observation, the passing of time and the will to feel, meditate and recount. It epitomises this unique landscape. This wine is made from old vines located in different valleys around the Mas d'en Gil estate. Its name comes from the old name of the estate: Mas d'en Fontà, due to a spring which is located close to the Masia or farmhouse.

### **Coma Blanca**

**"La Grande Dame", the jewel in the Mas d'en Gil crown. A white wine for drinking after reds.** Complex, with deep nuances and a lingering finish. This wine starts to get interesting in its fourth year. Made using two Garnatxa Blanca (White Grenache) vineyards and two others planted with Macabeu (Viura) before 1945 on one of the most heterogeneous *terroirs* of the estate. The vineyards are surrounded by pine trees and wild areas.

### **Gran Buig**

**This wine represents the best vintages of Mas d'en Gil: 1998, 2004.** An intense Bigarreau cherry red, this wine expresses the purest essence of old vine Garnatxa (Grenache) and Carinyena (Carignan) vineyards of the estate. Intense and complex with an aromatic mix of red fruit and black puréed fruit with mineral notes. In the mouth, this wine is luxurious, wrapping the tongue with velvety tannins. It is smooth and bursting with aromatic sensations and a long, lingering and very elegant finish. It is made only during exceptional vintages, based on three vineyard plots normally used as a blend in Clos Fontà. Buig is the name of one of the selected vineyards, whilst the adjective "gran" is related to great vintages and wines known as "grand cru".

### **Nus vi dolç (a sweet red wine)**

**Mas d'en Gil's liquid chocolate.** This is our sweet wine made with Garnatxa Negra (Red Grenache). It offers notes of ripe fruit and a luxurious sweet palate. The finish contrasts with some acidity and freshness which invites one to have another glass. Nus is aimed at recovering the old Priorat tradition of making sweet red wines with Garnatxa Negra (Red Grenache).



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### **Mas d'en Gil Olive Oil**

**The perfume of the Arbequina variety olive, its texture and the saltiness of the Llicorella (slate) soils.** Fresh tomatoes, artichoke leaves and freshly cut grass. In the mouth this oil displays medium density with a final note of almond. It is made using olives from hundred year old trees located mainly on the steep slopes ("costers") of the Vall del Bellmunt, known as L'Esmoler and la Bruguera, as well as La Plana del Mas.

### **Mas d'en Gil Agredolç bittersweet vinegar Solera 1958**

**A perfume of Garnatxa (Grenache) vinegar.** Aromas of nuts: almonds and hazelnuts and dried fruit such as dates, dried apricots and figs. In the mouth, its fine acidity accentuates its perfume. Made using 1958 "soleras" or lees which were inherited from the Barril family, former owners of Mas d'en Gil, this is an intense vinegar, full of nuances and very complex, with a suggestive balance between its acidity and sweetness. It displays an ancient connection which excites all old-style vinegar enthusiasts.

### **Practical Information**

UTM coordinates: E3125 – N4558

Distances: 130 Km from Barcelona, 30 Km from the Mediterranean Sea

Total Area of DOQ Priorat: 17,629 Hectares (43,562 Acres)

Total Area of DOQ Priorat under vine: almost 2,000 hectares (4,942 acres) (11% of total area)

DOQ Priorat villages: Bellmunt del Priorat, Gratallops, Porrera, Poboleda, Torroja del Priorat, La Vilella Alta, La Vilella Baixa, El Lloar and La Morera de Montsant.

There are also DOQ Priorat vineyards to be found in the village areas of Falset and El Molar.

FINCA MAS D'EN GIL, Km 4, Carretera TP7101 from Falset to Bellmunt del Priorat

GPS: (N) 41° 9' 14.465" – (E) 0° 45' 55.184"

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**"Dreams are an important part of our lives and we must believe in them."**

Pere Rovira Rovira