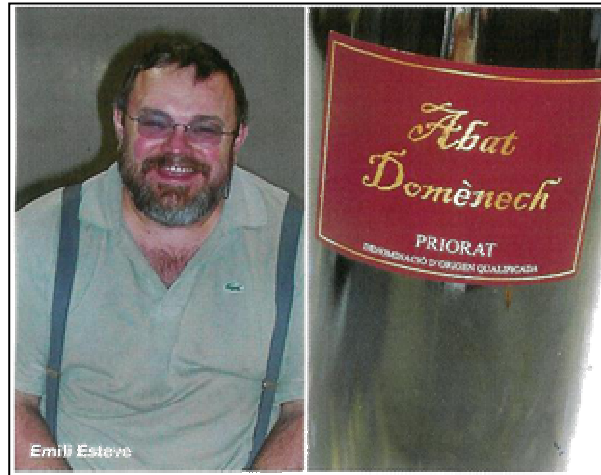




# Wine & Spirits

## CESCA VICENT: Winery of the Year



The Priorat, the star region for new Spanish wines, is growing rapidly. From the handful of wineries that existed in the late '80s, there are now more than 50—and counting. This speaks to the fame of a region where everybody wants to be these days, and also how popular Priorat has become on store shelves.

On these steep slopes carved by the Siurana River, several high-profile neighbors have arrived. Cesca Vicent, a winery that started to bottle its wines in 2000, may appear to be a newcomer, but its owners have had land here since the 13th century.

The proprietor, Francesca Vicent, and the Catalonian winemaker Emili Esteve have two vineyards in Gratallops, in the northwest of the region. Mas d'en Corral, a vineyard of old garnacha and cabernet sauvignon vines, provides the grapes for Abat Domènech. The 2000 vintage of this blend shows off the ambitious style of the winery: more than the sturdiness typical of this D.O., these aim to be elegant and finely polished reds, a rarity among so many Priorat powerhouses.

The Solanes vineyard, planted in the early '90s, offers a different facet of the winery's style. This doesn't have Abat Domènech's depth of flavor, but instead provides a smooth and juicy red, unusually fresh for the warm Priorat's standards.

On the surface, Cesca Vicent's wines show off the refined side of Priorat. However, if you take a closer look, you'll find the flavors of the slate under these polished reds, that black minerality coming from the local stony soil and relating them directly back to their origin —P.T.

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