

MEDIA KIT





CASTELL DEL REMEI, A NEW STAGE FOR A HISTORIC WINERY

In the vast worldwide scenario of wineries, there are not many that can boast a **lasting career** and even fewer who have managed to stay in business for so long focussing their production solely on quality wines.

In the setting of Catalan wine production, one of the rare examples of historic enclaves is **Castell del Remei**, which **got its winemaking business under way in 1780** in Penelles (Lleida) with the aim of making only crianza or aged wines. The outstanding geo-climatic conditions of the property and the design of the installations set Castell del Remei apart as the **first Catalan winery conceived in the model of the greatly-admired Bordeaux *châteaux***.

Just as occurred with other historic wineries, in Castell del Remei's long career the vocation to create great wines has necessarily had to go through all the different social, political and economic situations that have succeeded one another over the last **two centuries**, and also cope with the wine sector's own particular circumstances: the phylloxera disaster, the evolution of consumers' tastes, the search for new markets, the flourish of wine-related tourism, etc. Lastly, the other conditioning factor determining the development of such a longstanding wine business is the **human factor**, especially the attitude with which its owners deal with the changes and ups and downs of history, as well as their decisions and perseverance in attaining their aims.

In Castell del Remei's case, this responsibility has fallen mainly on two families: the **Girona family**, who laid the foundations for the project and developed the business during the 19th and 20th centuries, and the **Cusiné family**, who acquired the estate in 1982, modernising the installations and the winemaking and maturing processes to adapt the winery's production to the requirements of the new millennium and create a reputation in the **Costers del Segre Origin Denomination**.

In this stage the figure of **Tomàs Cusiné** takes on great prominence. In the 1980s he made a decisive contribution to defining the profile of Castell del Remei wines. In 1997 he created Cérvoles Celler, a project with vines at an altitude of 700 metres in La Pobla de Cérvoles which became a benchmark in Spain and a member of the exclusive group of "Grandes Pagos de España". In 2003 Tomàs left his family business to develop his own projects: **the Tomàs Cusiné** (2003) and **Cara Nord** (2012) wineries.



After consolidating the development of these wine businesses and becoming one of the foremost wine producers in Catalonia, **in October 2014 Tomàs Cusiné returned to Castell del Remei, assuming the complete responsibility in the management of the company.**

On his return, Castell del Remei got a new period under way with the aim of renewing the winery's image, furthering the commitment to quality in all the wines in the range while respecting their own personality and style, restructuring the vineyards, reinforcing the company's professional team and renovating the estate's installations in order to boost its range of appeal for wine tourism.

CASTLE ASSOCIATED WITH WINE AND WITNESS TO HISTORY

Castell del Remei is a property with unique characteristics, with an **ancient history** and a farming tradition going back to the times of Roman rule and which, in the last 150 years, has been linked to the development of the Canal de Urgell, the infrastructure opened in 1862 to take water from the River Segre to the farmland in different municipalities of the counties of L’Urgell, El Pla d’Urgell, La Noguera, El Segrià and Les Garrigues, and which helped to develop agriculture in an extensive zone (70,000 hectares) of the province of Lleida.



In fact the plan to build the great canal was what led **Ignasi Girona i Targa** to acquire the property in 1853 in the municipal area of Torreneral, later extending the estate by incorporating neighbouring lands. In 1867, after the death of Ignasi Girona i Targa, the property had already become an important centre for farming and fishing production, to such an extent that in 1872 it was granted the category of “farming colony”, making it eligible for certain privileges, for both the owners and the over fifty families who lived on their land (one of these benefits was, for example, exemption from military service).

Under the management of **Ignasi Girona i Agrafel**, the founder’s son, the estate continued to expand, building new installations (an oil mill, a flour mill, a distillery, a cooperage, a forge, etc.) and incorporating the technical innovations typical of the Industrial Revolution, which enabled the gradual mechanisation of production. In this period Castell del Remei experienced a real heyday, covering a surface area of 1090 hectares which made it the **largest estate of irrigated land** in Catalonia. It was also at this time that the castle itself was reformed and took on its current appearance, with four towers and over eighty windows.

In the following decades the estate’s prosperity meant that the families of workers living on the colony had a farm school, a football field, a cinema, a theatre group, a band of music, an Annual Festival (which still endures today) and a sanctuary, all on the same property, which also has its own post code: E-25333.

The development of wine production

The winemaking business of Castell del Remei was registered in 1780, when the preparation of wine in the old mill is determined. The biggest step towards winemaking on this estate was nevertheless made by **Ignasi Girona i Vilanova**, who decided to develop its wine production around the late 19th century, given his interest in the product and the great demand at that time because of the phylloxera blight which was ravaging vineyards in France and other European countries.

Girona i Vilanova, trained in Agricultural Engineering at Paris University, went to Bordeaux to learn more about the methods and infrastructures used there to make aged wines, and went back to Catalonia with an oenologist and families of Bordeaux winemakers, making sure he laid the foundations for production with professional thoroughness. Taking advantage of the extension of the property that had been bought by his grandfather in 1852, Girona i Vilanova planted his first 70 hectares of vines here and extended the winery, building part of the installations that are still used today. He also brought in American oak casks and purchased the machinery needed to be able to bottle his wines at source. His was **one of the first Catalan companies to market wine bottled with crianza status and his own brand. In fact Castell del Remei is the fifth oldest brand in Spain according to the Patents and Trademarks Register.**



In order to recover the vines affected during the phylloxera epidemic, Ignasi Girona i Vilanova imported stocks of French varieties, **Cabernet Sauvignon and Semillon**, becoming a pioneer **in introducing these groups onto the Iberian peninsula**. In 1921 he extended the capacity of the winery by building an annexe specifically designed for preparing white wines. He also brought in a revolutionary winemaking system using gravity and wagons which, by means of rails and rotating plates, made it easier to rack the wine and



press the pomace via hydraulic means. Thanks to these innovations, Castell del Remei wines didn't take long to acquire fame and prestige among the dining tables of the bourgeoisie in the Barcelona of the time, also gaining recognition at the **Universal Exhibitions** of Brussels (1897) and Barcelona (1929), and in several competitions celebrated in Turin, Athens, Vienna and Budapest.

At the time of Ignasi Girona i Vilanova's death in 1923 Castell del Remei already had over 400 hectares of vines. He was succeeded by his brother Joan, who continued the tradition of industrialising the business and extending the property by buying neighbouring land. **Joan Girona i Vilanova** also had to live through one of the most dramatic times in Castell del Remei's history: in 1936, after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the estate's lands were ransacked and all its machinery was dismantled. The wineries were emptied and the crops went to seed through lack of care. In their advance towards Barcelona, Franco's troops made use of the castle grounds to install an aerodrome, a field hospital and a powder store, which accidentally blew up on the 20th of January 1939, leaving behind a tragic balance of 192 dead (184 soldiers and 8 civilians). At the end of the war Joan Girona i Vilanova had to face up to the consequences of the most dramatic episode experienced by the province of Lleida in the 20th century, taking on the reconstruction of the buildings destroyed by the terrible explosion (including one of the towers and a large part of the castle itself).

The Cusiné family and the transformation of the Castell del Remei

Joan, the last of the Girona family to run the property, died in 1950. Beside the castle his nieces and heirs built the Sanctuary consecrated to the Virgen del Remedio, which has been actively used for Catholic worship since 1954. The shrine, with frescos by Maestro Obiols and Maestro Miret's hymns, is a place of pilgrimage for a large number of Catholics. The heirs of Joan Girona i Vilanova also incorporated the public limited company which ran Castell del Remei from 1950 until its **acquisition by the Cusiné family in 1982**.

The new owners carried out an ambitious renovation project on the winery facilities, investing in the technology required to produce quality wines such as tanks, pneumatic presses, cooling and filtration systems, new casks, bottling line, etc., and in restructuring the vineyard. The transformation of Castell del Remei into a contemporary wine business was completed around 1990. Since then, thanks to the strict criteria of excellence laid down by the Cusiné family, the brand has established itself as a **trademark for quality in the Costers del Segre designation of origin** and is also widely present on international markets.

In 2014, with the **return of Tomàs Cusiné** as owner of the company, Castell del Remei embarked on a **new stage in which the qualities of its own wines were reaffirmed** and work was started on the project to adapt the estate's facilities to take advantage of its great potential to produce wine and also as a wine-tourism destination. The management is currently involved in adapting the business structure and the professional team of Castell del Remei to the demands of a dynamic **wine group with four wineries: Tomàs Cusiné, Cérvoles, Cara Nord and Castell del Remei** itself, which thanks to its long history and great heritage is destined to become one of the prominent assets of this group.



AN OUTSTANDING WINEMAKING PROPERTY



The features of Castell del Remei as a winemaking property are as interesting as its long history: the large size of the estate, its outstanding geographical location, the geo-climatic conditions of the land, the installations for making and maturing wine and the heritage of the complex which contains, apart from the wine production facilities themselves, a 19th century castle, the Virgen del Remedio sanctuary, a restaurant, a lake, wooded areas, a pond and the buildings of the former farming colony (a distillery, oil mill, cooperage, workshops, etc.), all make up an incomparable ensemble in southern Europe's winemaking regions.



The estate

Castell del Remei is located in the municipal area of Penelles in the county known as La Noguera, in Catalonia's province of Lleida, 120 km from Barcelona and roughly 100 km from the Mediterranean. The property lies in the area covered by the **Costers del Segre** appellation or DO (*Denominación de Origen*).

Climate

The conditions at the estate are ideal for wine production, typical of a **continental** climate: large temperature swings with very cold winters and hot summers (the extreme temperatures are -8°C on the coldest days and 40°C in summertime). Rainfall is low, rarely reaching 250 ml per year, although the average humidity is nevertheless 63.7%, with particularly dry summers and winters. In this county the western and north-western **winds** are prevalent and particularly strong in the spring. The breeze most appreciated by vine growers is nevertheless the **Marinada** which, on hot summer evenings, arrives punctually from the Mediterranean to cool the clusters of grapes that have suffered in the intense heat of the sun during the day. Another of the special weather features of this area are the persistent **mists**, which recur more than 34 days every winter on average.



Soil

Castell del Remei fields are at an average altitude of **250 metres** above sea level. However, most part of the vineyards currently in production are located high up on the mountains, at an altitude of around **600 metre**.

The soil on the property is predominantly **calcareous**, and its nuances enrich the expression of Castell del Remei wines.

The vineyard

The plots of vines at the heart of the estate are located on the bed of the inland sea which occupied a large part of the Central Depression during the Cenozoic era, providing fertile soil with a mainly alluvial composition. The vines located higher up are found on the northern side of Montsant on **loamy soils** (loamy-limey or loamy-chalky) with a large amount of **gravel**, providing good drainage.

The winery has **162 hectares of vines on the estate**. Most of the vines (90%) are grown in vineyards on the mountains close to the Castle at altitudes from 700 to 800 m.



The varietal composition of the vineyard is highly diverse. As well as local varieties (**Garnacha, Tempranillo, Cariñena, Trepát, Malvasía and Macabeu**) there are also the varieties that came originally from France, imported by Castell del Remei onto the peninsula in its early days (Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc) and which currently form an extremely rich ensemble, ensuring the winery's oenologists have plenty of resources available when it comes to making the final coupage of wines.

The **average age of the vines is over 25 years** and they are trained using the double chain espaliers (Royat Doble) system, with a plantation density from 4000 to 5000 plants per hectare. The selection of clones and rootstock is made considering their capacity to adapt to the types of land and varieties of grape.

Since Cusiné bought the property and restructured the vineyard, an exhaustive control of the yield was carried out to ensure the quality of the wines. At present production does not exceed 5000 kg per hectare.

The winery

At Castell del Remei wines are still produced and matured in the old cellars which have nevertheless gradually been adapted over the last years, incorporating little by little the technical resources required to produce quality wines.

The original installations cover a total surface area of **5500 m²** and are split into **six galleries side by side**, built on stone, with a wrought iron structure and walls up to 100 cm thick. The old winery is partly underground so that a regular temperature is maintained all year round. It has a revolutionary system of winemaking by gravity as well as an annexe specifically designed to produce white wines, and wagons whose rails and rotating plates make it easier to rack the wine and press the pomace using hydraulic means. The original ageing or "crianza"

gallery has a Catalan style vault with a height of 12 m, making it the largest in Catalonia. These are the details which prove that Castell del Remei has been intended for the production of quality wines right since its very beginning.

At present the rooms used for ageing the wines contain a set of **approximately 1000 casks** (of French and American oak, 50% each), while the winemaking zone is equipped with heat-regulated stainless steel tanks, pneumatic presses and other latest-generation technical tools which help to produce over a million bottles of wine a year. The winery also has a large exhibition room and another for tastings, offices and a shop open to the public.



The complex: much more than just a winery

Although Castell del Remei focuses mostly on wine production, it is much more than a winery. The complex made up of the buildings where the former **farming colony** used to work, such as the workshops, distillery, flour mill, oil mill, etc., the **lake**, the **Sanctuary of the Virgen del Remedio**, the **castle** itself, which still has its original 19th century structure with four towers and eighty windows, and the **restaurant** open to the public (which serves traditional Lerida cuisine throughout the week) all reveal the long history of this property and vouch for the hard work that has been done on it, adding to its interest as **a wine-tourism destination**.

THE PIONEERING SPIRIT OF COSTERS DEL SEGRE

Castell del Remei is one of the most representative wineries of the **DO Costers del Segre**. The Designation of Origin or DO was set up in 1986 to promote a wine region with deep-rooted tradition but which, through being an inland area, had for centuries remained far from the main trading channels. Paradoxically, this isolation did not prevent the county from becoming a ground-breaking region in important innovations, being the first to introduce French grape varieties into Catalonia such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Semillon, as well as putting into practice winemaking techniques used in California and other winemaking countries of the New World.

The DO Costers del Segre currently covers a surface area of 4212 hectares, divided into seven subzones, each of which has its own geological and climatic characteristics. The nexus joining all of these is the middle basin of the **River Segre**, between the foothills of the Pyrenees and the River Ebro. This extensive zone generally has calcareous and a dry continental climate, with a lot of sun, very scanty rain, cold winters and hot summers.



The major part of the vineyards in this DO are located at altitudes from 250 to 1000 metres above sea level and are divided into 7 different subzones. Raimat, located in the eastern end of Costers del Segre, has a gentler relief which has hardly any effect on the typical variables of the continental climate. In the subzone of Segrià, located in the central part of Lleida, the fields have the lowest rainfall while in Les Garrigues and the Valles del Riucorb, the two southern areas of the DO, the temperatures are even more stringent –especially in summer– and they contribute to the dryness of the fields.

The extension of vines in the region and their grape varieties have been determined by the effects of the phylloxera blight that reached Lleida in 1895 and spread quickly, devastating practically all the grapevines in the following six years. Of the 118,000 hectares of vines that existed before the blight only just over 15,000 were recovered, and some of the typical varieties of the zone such as Pinós or Samsó would not be planted again. Around 1909 American vines with grafts of selected varieties started to be planted: Monastrell, Macabeo, Trepát, Garnacha and Sumoll. This was also when Cabernet Sauvignon and Semillon, imported by Castell del Remei, were introduced.

Today the rules of the ‘DO Costers del Segre’ cover a wide range of recommended varieties: reds such as Garnacha tinta, Garnacha tintorera, Mazuela (or Samsó), Merlot, Monastrell, Petit Verdot, Pinot Noir, Samsó, Syrah, Trepát, Tempranillo (or Ull de llebre), Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc; and the whites Albariño, Chardonnay, Chenin, Garnacha blanca, Gewürztraminer, Macabeu, Malvasía (or Subirat parent), Moscatel de Alejandría, small grain Moscatel, Parellada, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier and Xarel·lo. In 2015, the 44 wineries registered in the DO produced a total of 43,105 hectolitres of wine marketed, 30% of which is exported.





HIGH ALTITUDE WINES WITH ECOLOGY AND INNOVATION

The criteria underlying Castell del Remei's wine production and oenology stem from a logical development of the proposals of a winery set up over two centuries ago, with the aim of producing aged wines based on high quality standards; a winery that has successfully adapted to the circumstances of the time but without forfeiting any of principles for quality.

In 1982, when the Cusiné family bought the property, the vineyard was restructured and strict production standards were set, based on **low yields**, implanting grafts into the stock to suit the characteristics of the land and the varieties and with a **demanding selection of clusters** to make the wine. The installations were also modernised, as well as the oenological equipment and the casks, in order to produce a range of wines of proven quality, the ones that have consolidated the prestige of Castell del Remei up to the present day.

Mountain vines

In the winery's new stage that started with the return of Tomàs Cusiné, Castell del Remei has set out to respect the style and character of the wines in its range, increasing even further the quality requirements in production. To this end, the new management has made a **fundamental change** to its wine production, **concentrating the growth of the different varieties (150 hectares of vines) in mountain zones**, at greater heights. In these vineyards, located at altitudes from 600 to 800 metres, the persistent winds (the western wind by day and the Marinada from the sea in the evening), the day-night contrast

and the rainfall (from 380 to 500 mm) generate a gentle microclimate which guarantees a slow ripening of the grapes, with late harvests in which grapes are picked with good acidity, high sugar content, thick skins, soft tannins and great colouring intensity.

Painstakingly made wines

Castell del Remei is also committed to an **organic and sustainable management of its vines**, practising integrated agriculture: its fertilisers are exclusively organic, the land is tilled between vines and the plant cover for the soil is kept. Treatments to encourage the vegetative development of the vines are also minimised. All these practices form part of the philosophy that has been called “painstakingly made wines” (or more literally “wines made with a conscience”), requiring the utmost thoroughness all the way from the land to the bottle.

Research and human capital

Castell del Remei also believes it's vitally important to monitor grapes very carefully before harvesting so as to pick the clusters at their ideal point of ripening. The balance between acidity, sugar content and ripeness of the skins and seeds defines the work to be done at the winery in each of the varieties in order to obtain the desired quality in all the wines in the range.

During fermentation the interaction of the musts is exhaustively monitored, as well as avoiding any excessive tannic extraction during maceration in order to achieve more elegant, complex, fresh and long-lasting wines.

It should also be noted that Castell del Remei promotes **research** into viticulture and oenology in a commitment to both ecology and **innovation**, while the last fundamental component of the Castell del Remei philosophy relates to human capital: **without a good team of professionals, it's impossible to make great wines.**



TOMÀS CUSINÉ, 32 HARVESTS PURSUING A DREAM



Born in 1962, **Tomàs Cusiné Barber** is one of the oenologists and wine businessmen with the greatest influence and prestige in Catalonia, considered by some specialists to be the best blender of wines in Spain.

He began working in the world of wine after Castell del Remei was purchased by his family in 1982. In 2003 he left the family business to set up his own projects: the **Tomàs Cusiné and Cara Nord wineries**, at which he was able to put into practice his own ideas about wine production and oenology, furthering **ecological principles, total quality and technical innovation through research**.

As **President of the Lleida-Costers del Segre Wine Route**, Cusiné has also been involved in revitalising wine tourism for this DO, promoting visits to wineries and vineyards, themed routes, tasting sessions and other activities.

In October 2014 he came back to Castell del Remei, taking over its senior management, to go on strengthening the direction taken by this historical winery, restructuring the vineyard, renewing the image of its wines and furthering the estate's appeal for wine tourism.

By adding the family wine business, Tomàs Cusiné has become the promoter of a dynamic wine group of four wineries: **Tomàs Cusiné, Cara Nord, Cérvoles and Castell del Remei**. These wineries annually produce a total amount of **1,200,000** bottles of wine in five DOs (**Costers del Segre, Conca de Barberà, Montsant, Catalunya and Cava**), which are marketed in over **40 countries** in Europe, Asia, America and Oceania.

After more than **three decades working in the wine world (32 harvests!)**, Cusiné has managed to fulfil his dreams and goals by remaining faithful to his principles, intense dedication to his business and trusting in the work carried out by the team of professionals around him.

AWARDS AND RATINGS IN SPECIALISED GUIDES

These are some of the ratings and awards given to Castell del Remei in specialised publications.

GUIDE/COMPETITION	COUNTRY	WINE	RESULT
Peñín Guide	Spain	Gotim Bru 2012	91 points
Peñín Guide	Spain	Gotim Bru 2011	90 points and 5 stars for value for money
Parker	EUA	1780 2009	90 punts
	USA	1780 2009	90 points
La Vanguardia 2016	Spain	ODA 2012	Outstanding wine
Peñín Guide	Spain	ODA 2012	90 Points
Peñín Guide	Spain	Oda Blanc 2012	90 points and 5 stars for value for money
Peñín Guide	Spain	1780 2007	91
Catavinum WWSC	Spain	Oda 2010	Gold
Catavinum WWSC	Spain	1780 2007	Gold
Vins de Catalunya Guide	Catalonia	Oda Blanc 2013	9.28
Vivir el Vino Guide	Spain	1780 2008	92
AWC Vienna	Austria	Oda 2009	Gold (90.9 pts)
1001 dégustations	France	1780 2008	3 stars (Excellent)
Parker	USA	1780 2008	90
Parker	USA	Oda Blanc 2012	89

