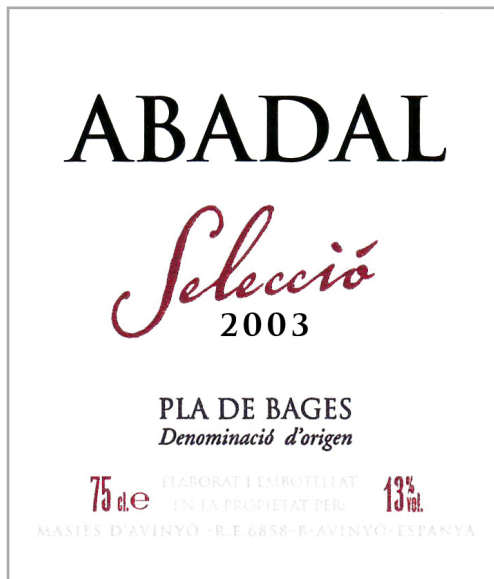


Abadal Seleccio 2003



Winery: Bodegas Masies D'Avinyo

Region: Pla de Bages D.O.

Grapes: 40% Cabernet Franc, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon and 20% Syrah

Winery: Masies D'Avinyo is leading the charge of quality wine production from this, one of the oldest vine growing regions in the world, el Bages, named for Bacchus the Roman god of wine. The vines are cultivated on carefully structured terraces, influenced by a Continental- Mediterranean climate, with low rainfall. This leads to highly structured wines that maintain a freshness and delicacy rarely found in such rich wines.

Vineyards are planted with native and French grapes, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay and Mando and Picapoll. A strong technical background is used in vineyard management, for example, specific total leaf area per

mass of grapes to assure ripeness. This is combined with a detailed interaction with each vintage. In warm vintages, new oak is purchased with lower levels of toast, in cooler vintages barrels with higher levels of toast are used. A combination of French, Hungarian and American oak is used in aging the wines.

Masies D'Avinyo's winemaker, Joan Soler, explains his philosophy as this: "I understand that wine is basically an agricultural product, therefore I look to achieve the best balance in our vineyards (not only in terms of production but also environmental terms by excluding the use of herbicides and by allowing the controlled growth of grass). In terms of winemaking, I have two goals, first to extract as much of the flavor of the grape into our wines, second to allow the aromas of our grapes to be primary in our wines. I look to exclude aromas from the winery or from excessive barrel aging."

Wine: Abadal Seleccio is an ambitious project that forms the backbone of the viticultural and oenological research taking place at Bodegas Masies D'Avinyo. It is based on three basic principles: balance between vine production and resource availability; intensive green pruning operations and reduced production with the aim of smaller berries; selective harvesting. Hand harvesting assures that the grapes are optimally ripe. Grapes are destemmed and fermented separately in stainless steel followed by aging for 14 months in fine-grained French oak barrels. Unfiltered.

Reviews:

"Deep purple in color, the wine has a hugely expressive nose of spice box, herbs, black currants, and blackberry reminiscent of a top-level Saint-Emilion. The flavors already are complex as well as rich, the texture velvety, and the balance impeccable. This elegant wine can be enjoyed now but should last for at least another 10 years."

94 points *Wine Advocate* issue 169 February '07



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