



Latest project in Spain

AIFYnal & MosYca by IBERICA BRUNO PRATS



History

While he studied at the *Institut National Agronomique* in Montpellier in 1967, Bruno Prats took good note of Professor Jean Branas' remarks regarding the interest of old Monastrell vines from the Alicante region.

In 1998 he visited the vineyards of Alicante for the first time with his friend Telmo Rodriguez who introduced him to the Poveda family, major local wine negociants.

In 2008 Bruno Prats went back to Alicante to purchase an anchorage spot for his new boat.

At that time, Stéphane Point, who had been working for almost 10 years in Portugal for *Prats & Symington* as a winemaker of *Chryseia*, expressed the intention of leaving the Douro region for a Hispanic country where his Chilean wife would feel more comfortable.

Hence, Bruno Prats proposed to Stéphane to become a partner in a new viticultural project in the Alicante Appellation.

In February 2009, Stéphane Point started an in depth visit of this wine region in order to assess the quality of the different vineyards and set-up agreements with the plots owners that would include viticultural advice and grape purchasing contracts.

They set up a small-scale winemaking unit inside the Poveda family wine cellar in the heart of the Alicante Appellation.

Their first vintage was produced in 2009.

The Men

Bruno Prats.: 67 years-old, Engineer in Agronomy, ran the family-owned Château Cos d'Estournel in Saint Estèphe for 30 years. In 1990 he created *VINA AQUITANIA* in Chile with Paul Pontallier (from Château Margaux) and Felipe de Solminihac.

After Cos d'Estournel was sold in 1998 (run by his son Jean-Guillaume since then), Bruno Prats decided to join forces with the Symington family to produce *CHRYSEIA*, a non-fortified wine from the Douro which has become a benchmark internationally.

In 2005, with Lowell Jooste (from *Klein Constantia*) and Hubert de Boüard (from *Château Angélu*), he created *ANWILKA* in South Africa, a Super Premium Syrah-Cabernet blend from the Stellenbosch appellation.

Stéphane Point: 38 years-old, a Bordeaux University of Oenology graduate was part of the *CHRYSEIA* project from the start and was in charge of winemaking until the 2008 vintage.

Stéphane shares with Bruno Prats a taste for elegant and balanced wines, without over-extraction and too much oak.

He has a real passion for the search of new terroirs and likes to make hand-crafted wines using as little automated and mechanical intervention as possible.



The Terroir

Alicante as a wine region is quite old. The high temperatures in summer are balanced by the proximity to the sea. The soil made up of clay and limestone is often very rocky (Alicante is the first producer of marble in Spain). Rain is very scarce and almost non-existent in summer.

The Vines

The Monastrell, called Mourvèdre in France where it produces some of the best vats in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, was born in Alicante. It is a late-budding grape variety that needs a lot of heat to reach perfect maturity. It is undoubtedly the grape-variety that is the best suited to global warming! Even after undergoing some scorchingly hot days in August (above 40°C), it keeps an excellent acidity level and reasonable alcohol degree. Non-irrigated bush vines are the best way to grow Monastrell as they limit evaporation and prevent the berries from shriveling. Such vines can reach 50 years and older, and their fruit can then show incomparable finesse and aromatic complexity.

Unfortunately, these old bush vines are low-yielding and the local growers tend to uproot them to benefit from European Union subsidies by growing higher-yielding and lower-quality grape-varieties on irrigated land. The IBP project's priority is to save the old vines by paying a fair price to the growers and producing a wine true to its origin.

Winemaking

The IBP cellar is both very modern and traditional:

- Modern because of its temperature-controlled stainless steel vats and very precise analytical control during the winemaking process.
- Traditional because the grapes are carefully hand-sorted, the vats of small capacity enable fermentation of individual plots, the pump overs are assisted by gravity, and the pressing is extremely gentle.

The aging takes place in 225 and 400L French oak barrels, either new or a year old.

Bottling is done in-house thanks to the very modern Poveda facilities.

The Wines

ALFYNAL (whose name clearly indicates that it is Bruno Prats' last viticultural project) is a pure Monastrell, from very old vines. It exemplifies the aromatic complexity and the finesse of this beautiful and demanding grape-variety. Powerful yet without heaviness, fresh without greenness, it shows a great capacity to age.



MOSYCA whose name is the acronym for its components: **M**onastrell, **S**yrah, **C**abernet Sauvignon (with a touch of Petit-verdot), is a wine that shows the assimilation of these various grape-varieties in a very « bordelais » fashion.