

TUTTO

MENDALL

Terra Alta, Catalunya



Laureano Serres' home and cellar are based in El Pinell de Brai, a hot, dusty little town that looks like something out of a Spaghetti Western and serves as the unlikely ground zero of Catalunya's lively wine scene.

A pioneer who has been influential in inspiring others in the area to return to their winemaking roots, Laureano was also there the night the Brutal Wine Corporation was founded and is an organiser of one of Europe's most talked about wine fairs, H2O Vegetal. His spirit, sense of community and love of life are both legendary and infectious and like so many before us, when we visited for the first time we were welcomed with open arms.

Laureano was working as a computer programmer in Madrid when he decided a change of scenery was necessary and returned to his hometown to head the local winemaking cooperative. A couple of years later he set off on his own, bottling wine under the Mendall label from the 1999 harvest. He has worked with organic fruit from the very beginning and since 2002, after forgetting to add any sulphur to the wines and enjoying the results, he has never looked back.

He now farms five and a half hectares of vineyards spread over parcels in El Pinell at around 170 metres of altitude and higher up in the Terra Alta, where they reach some 500 metres above sea level. There is little topsoil, meaning the vines dig right into the limestone below. This unique terroir lends the wines a freshness and complexity that is not always common in this part of the world.

The wines are made in all manner of vessels in his small cellar in the town centre. Limited space dictates that the majority of wines are bottled young and brimming with an energy that comes about from Laureano's unique brand of wine making, which combines creativity and restraint to brilliant effect. Truly one of a kind, they offer vivid expressions of man, grape and place.

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ABEURADOR
2022

Macabeo from forty five year old vines planted in perhaps the family's greatest cru, Abeurador, over clay, limestone and sand, some 420 metres above sea level in Vilalba dels Arcs. The grapes were destemmed and the wine fermented on the skins for four days, before being pressed to vats until the following spring. A hazy shade of amber in the glass, it carries a gentle spritz but retains a beautiful drive, offering heady notes of citrus, chalk and brine.