



Can Ràfols dels Caus

A singular red from Garraf's wild limestone hills, Montombra 2021 marries finesse and depth: vivid fruit, saline lift, and sculpted tannins from vertiginous terraces shaped by relentless Mediterranean winds and sun.



Alcohol :12,60 %

Composition: 60% Cariñena, 40% Syrah

Montombra Tinto 2021

Penedès, Spain

Region and Vineyards

Montombra lies within the **Massís del Garraf** (Penedès Marítim), a coastal limestone massif south-west of Barcelona where porous **limestone** and sandy clay-loam soils dominate. Here, vines endure bright Mediterranean light, sea breezes and scant rainfall, conditions that favor small berries, moderate alcohol and naturally vivid acidity. The estate's north-exposed amphitheater tempers heat and preserves aromatics, while the massif's active lime and calcium carbonate content imprint that telltale chalky finesse and saline edge.

The Montombra parcel is a steep, terraced slope—some gradients reach **50%**—built with dry-stone walls that separate varieties and help regulate moisture. Planted in 2004 on Richter 110 rootstock, the site hosts red **Cariñena** (Carignan), **Syrah** and Touriga Nacional alongside whites, with the 2021 vintage marked by drought yet achieving optimal ripeness thanks to deep-root water reserves. The result is fruit of striking concentration and balance, translating the **Mediterranean** scrub, stone and light directly into the glass. Serve at 14-15 °C.

Winemaking

Montombra Tinto 2021 is a co-fermented blend of **Cariñena** (Carignan) and **Syrah**, varieties that complement each other brilliantly: Carignan supplying acidity and structure; Syrah adding color, floral lift and spice. The grapes macerated and fermented together for 12 days with light pigeage and one gentle pump-over daily, privileging fine tannin grain over extraction. Alcoholic and malolactic fermentations took place in open stainless-steel tanks to preserve purity.

Élevage followed in **500 L French oak** for **16 months**, a format that softens texture while limiting overt wood impact. Bottled under natural cork, just **835 bottles** were produced (12.60% vol; TA 3.99 g/L as tartaric; pH 3.12). The structural metrics—especially the low pH—explain the wine's drive, precision and long aging curve (stated potential **20-30 years**).



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with a youthful purple rim; moderate density and bright clarity.
- **Aroma:** Black cherry, blackberry and damson interwoven with violets, black pepper, licorice and Mediterranean herbs; graphite, iodine and a subtle cedar/lingering cocoa from large-format oak.
- **Palate:** Medium-bodied yet intense; brisk, mouthwatering acidity (low pH) carries dark fruit and savory tapenade over fine, chalk-dusted tannins. Long, mineral tail with saline lift and peppery spice; beautifully balanced at 12.6% alcohol.

Did you know?

Montombra began in 2019 as a visionary project from Carlos Esteva; by 2021, the team chose to vinify separate cuvées to better underline the terroir's nuances. Winemaker **Xavier Ribes** has painstakingly transformed this rugged site—its terraces and calcareous skeleton—into what the estate calls a "true Grand Cru." Only **835** numbered bottles were made in 2021. **Slopes reach 50%.**

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Charcoal-grilled lamb chops:** The wine's savory herb and pepper notes echo rosemary and thyme, while bright acidity cuts the fat.
- **Catalan botifarra with white beans:** Dark fruit and saline minerality complement pork richness; acidity refreshes each bite.
- **Seared tuna with black olive tapenade:** Syrah's olive tones and the wine's coastal salinity dovetail with meaty tuna and briny condiments.
- **Wild mushroom risotto:** Carignan's acidity and fine tannins frame umami depth; subtle oak brings a gentle nutty accent.



Robert Parker (RP) : 95 Points (2021)

The 2021 Montombra Tinto was produced with a blend of 60% Cariñena and 40% Syrah, and the character from both grapes is noticeable; the slightly rustic and dusty Cariñena has echoes of tree bark, and the oily Syrah has notes of tapenade and violets wrapped in sweet spices and aromatic herbs that make it complex and attractive. It has contained ripeness, a medium-bodied palate with very fine, chalky tannins and a dry, stony sensation. The wine seems to be aging at a very slow pace. It fermented and matured in 300-liter oak barrels, and the oak is better integrated than in the wine from 2019 that I tasted last time, which felt marked by the 100% new barrels. Only 835 bottles produced. It was bottled in February 2023.

