

Red Bag Clues:

Serve in a Cab/Merlot Stem

New Clues:

- The forgotten black grape.
- Believed to be the cousin of Cabernet Franc.
- This country has more vineyard acreage than any other, but is only third in production.
- Recently updated classification requirements to improve overall quality of the wines

Bonus - producer

- The press can't get enough of this producer. He's producing wines from the farthest reaches of his native land.

The press can't seem to get enough of Alvaro Palacios these days -- his legend built on the stunning wines he has crafted from the farthest reaches of Spain, from Priorat to Bierzo. Palacios' latest project features another rising star -- the obscure Mencía grape. In the Bierzo appellation, perched in the Northwest corner of Spain, ancient Mencía vineyards emerge from the steepest of hillsides, their roots deeply set into unique, mineral-laden soils. Under the skilled hands of Palacios and his cousin, Ricardo Perez Palacios, the forgotten black grape (believed by some to be a cousin of Cabernet Franc), has achieved new heights. The 60- to 100 year-old vines yield less than one ton per acre, resulting in a most concentrated, unique expression of this variety and of the Bierzo terroir.

Wine & Spirits Magazine named Alvaro as one of 50 "Most Influential Winemakers" of 2004. In that article, which appeared in the Fall 2004 issue, Ray Isle quoted Palacios as saying, "By 1999, I was established in the Priorat. I'd been to Bierzo once before, and remembered it. [So when Ricardo called about wanting to start something new], I said, 'Let's go. Now.'"

Answer - Descendientes de José Palacios Petalos, Bierzo 2005 - Mencía Grape