



Portuguese Reds

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Reception Wine: 6:00 PM, Formal Tasting: 6:20 PM

Faculty Club, Univ of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$60; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$80

In April we present an outstanding selection of red wines from 3 well known regions of Portugal: Douro, Alentejo and Dao. Although Portugal does not have the same long history of fine wine culture as France, Italy and Spain, the unique and wonderful grape varieties grown across the 14 wine regions of the country are growing in demand. Portuguese wine styles changed dramatically about 21 years ago when Portugal (and Spain) entered the European Union and began a period of rapid economic expansion that brought it into the ranks of a modern industrialized nation. Such changes affected viticulture as modern winemaking techniques transformed production. Strict temperature control during fermentation allowed growers to produce "modern" wines that could be appreciated by all wine lovers. From typical wines made exclusively for the domestic market, the best wineries created new products adapted to the world markets, while keeping the unique characteristics of Portuguese varieties.

A World Heritage site and one of the oldest established wine-producing regions in the world, the **Douro valley** is, without doubt, one of the most distinctive terroirs in the history of world viticulture. The Douro region has traditionally been known as the source of port wines, but in more recent times the region has become recognized for many of its outstanding non-fortified wines. The region follows the Douro river from the Spanish border to the town of Mesão Frio, about 90km up-river from the city of Porto. Douro is the most mountainous and rugged wine regions in Portugal. The grapes are protected from the influence of the Atlantic Ocean by the Marão mountain range in the west. The region includes three sub-regions: Baixo Corgo, Cima Corgo and Douro Superior. The fertile, cooler, rainier Baixo Corgo in the west, is the sub region with the most vineyards. The Douro produces a large section of grape varieties, many of which are grown on gnarled old vines, which give small yields of complex wines.

The **Alentejo region** covers approximately one third of Portugal and the rich fruity wines produced in this region are often considered the most popular of Portuguese wines. The region consists of undulating plains and gentle hills for the most part, although the São Mamede mountains range rises up by the border with Spain. The soils across the region vary from pink marble to granite and limestone. There are 8 sub-regions in Alentejo, seven of which are clustered centrally while Portalegre lies to the north east on the granite foothills of the São Mamede mountains. Sub-regions Borba, Évora, Redondo and Reguengos are more typical of the Alentejo, while Granja-Amareleja, Moura and Vidigueira are located on limestone-based soils and have a significantly hotter climate, making growing conditions more challenging. The most widely planted red grapes in the region are Aragonez and Alicante Bouschet.

Raising 200m above sea level, the **Dão region** is completely surrounded by mountains, which protect it from the continental climate and the chill and rains from the Atlantic. The high altitudes of the region result in cool nights, slower ripening, and good acidity and aroma. The wines from the region typically age well. For reds, Touriga Nacional and Alfocheiro are often planted in the granitic soil, along with Jaen, Baga, Bastardo and Tinta Pinheira.

We invite you to join us as we compare four wines from Douro, three from Alentejo and one from Dão, all of which have scored at least 90 points and are drinking at their best today! **The event fee includes appetizers and a reception wine.**

REGISTER/ BUY TICKETS

Register/buy tickets online at <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=vxghb4bab&oeidk=a07e77p8zlg3d316adb>. You must register online and then can pay by credit card or by cheque. **ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, April 12th. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, April 9th after which only credit card sales will be accepted until midnight Sunday, April 14th or earlier if the event sells out. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact chris@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.



Tasting Notes and Information

2007 Chryseia DOC Douro \$52

Applying Bordeaux wine-making methods to grapes which are traditionally destined for the production of vintage Port is the essence of the exciting Chryseia project. Chryseia released its first vintage in 2000. "Chryseia is a benchmark wine in modern Douro table wine making. With its layered tannins, black currant fruit, minerality and stylish yet powerful structure, this is a wine of great stature, needing aging for 2-3 years." 94 pts. Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast, April 2010.

2004 Gambozinos Touriga Nacional DOC Douro \$35

"Bright scents of violets meet smoky, schist-scored tannins in this powerful touriga nacional. The fruit slowly infuses the tannin completely, as it will with cellar time. Age this a few years, then drink with seared duck breast." 91 pts. wineandspiritsmagazine.com, April 2008.

2008 Pintas Character DOC Douro \$36

"From 45-year-old vines, a wine with huge concentration, yet always elegant in character. The weight and density are palpable. Dark black fruits, along with a juicy edge, go with the dry core of this ageworthy wine." 94 pts. Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast, April 2011.

2006 Quinta Do Portal Tinta Roriz \$43

"There's a juicy aroma, with very expressive mineral, red plum and hot stone flavors. Finishes with a tannic jolt and well-defined savory herbal and dark chocolate notes. Drink now through 2013." 90 pts. Kim Marcus, winespectator.com, Web Only, 2009.

2008 Álvaro Castro Quinta de Saes Reserva \$30

"The 2008 RESERVA is an equal blend of Touriga Nacional and Tinta Roriz, with 40% old vines field blend. It begins with the same sensibilities and style as the regular Tinto and the Outeiro - then, it adds depth, crispness and a little bit of tannin while remaining well integrated and harmonious. It becomes more and more appealing with aeration. This finishes beautifully and it sneaks up on you - it is more persistent than it seems, its elegance and harmony not detracting from its grip. There is nothing obvious about this wine - it subtly grabs your attention and keeps it, though. In terms of bang for the buck, it is the best value point in the lineup. Drink now-2020." 92 pts. Mark Squires, erobertparker.com, Dec. 2011.

2007 Fitapreta Preta Vinho Regional Alentejano \$39

"Any doubts that Portugal's Alentejo region can rival many big New World wines would be dispelled by this extravagant wine. With its intense fruit, sweet tannins, figs, coffee and spice flavors, it packs a serious punch of flavor. For drinking now." 91 pts. Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast, April 2010.

2004 Quinta Do Zambujeiro Terra Do Zambujeiro Vinhos Regional Alentejano \$49

"The 2004 Terra do Zambujeiro is a nice one-two punch, and provides some considerable value. This is a mid-level wine from this winery. The 2004 Terra do Zambujeiro is beautifully balanced, with a backbone and grip on the finish. It is a blend of 26% Aragonez, 25% Periquita, 23% Trincadeira, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Alicante Bouschet. It is penetrating, and a little brooding, perhaps a bit closed at the moment. It lacks the exuberance of the 2003, but has better focus and more harmony, and a sensual texture. It should repay cellaring. Its fruit is also ripe and extremely pleasing when it finally opens up. It will not be released until 2008. Drink now-2015." 91 pts. Mark Squires, erobertparker.com, Dec. 2007.

2007 Marques de Borba Reserva \$55

"The 2007 Reserva Marques De Borba is this year's version of Ramos' flagship wine. It seems like a winner, bright, beautifully structured, elegant and bursting with flavor, if a bit too oaky at the moment, a little too scented with vanilla. The light mid-palate gives it a certain ethereal air. It will be interesting to see where this fragrant wine goes in the cellar. It drank beautifully the next day. Note to bargain hunters: I would be remiss if I did not note that Ramos' Vila Santa, at a fraction of the price, holds up pretty well, too. Drink now-2020." 91 pts. Mark Squires, erobertparker.com, Feb. 2010.