



FONSECA

PORTO

2017 VINTAGE PORT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Comments on this classic Vintage release are as follows: Adrian Bridge, Managing Director: "This follows hard on the heels of the highly acclaimed 2016 but is very distinct in character. The Fonseca 2017 is a wine of impressive scale and depth, with the opulent, complex fruit which is the essence of the house style."; David Guimaraens, Head Wine Maker: "The quality of the fruit on the Fonseca 2017 is exceptional. It is dense and powerful, with the classic Fonseca opulence and complexity, but with an attractive minerality. The character of the year has harmonised perfectly with the style of the house."

NOTES ON VITICULTURAL YEAR AND HARVEST

In spite of a cold and dry start to the year, the first buds appeared earlier than usual, around 10th March. Spring remained unusually dry throughout, with only about 7mm of rain falling in Pinhão in the usually wet month of April. These conditions accelerated vine growth, bringing on an early flowering at the beginning of May. The first three weeks of June saw very high temperatures and véraison started much earlier than usual around the 18th. Drought conditions continued until the end of September but temperatures eased somewhat in August, bringing relatively cool nights. Predictably, the crop reached maturity very early.

Quinta do Panascal was the first Fonseca property to start picking on 6th September. The two Pinhão Valley estates, Cruzeiro and Santo António, followed on 10th and 17th respectively. These were the earliest picking dates in a generation. The thick-skinned grapes yield very dense musts, with impressive depth of colour. Although the volume of production was low overall, a high proportion of the wines made were of exceptional quality and their promise was apparent from an early stage.

TASTING NOTES

A narrow magenta ring around a core of inky purple black. The nose opens with a burst of dark, woodland fruit, dense and succulent, blended with fresher, more vibrant red berry aromas. A slatey minerality holds this exuberant fruitiness in check. At this stage, the nose is still reserved and discreetly aromatic, revealing leafy, balsamic scents and cedary notes of sawn wood. The first impression on the palate, as on the nose, is of tightly packed, dense dark berry fruit, which then explodes on the mid-palate and surges into the long finish. The texture is round and velvety but the taut, sinewy tannins and a strand of crisp acidity provide firmness and structure. The layered, complex fruit typical of Fonseca holds sway over this weighty, powerful wine.

STORAGE

Vintage Port continues to improve for decades after bottling. The bottle should be kept laid down in a cool place, ideally at a temperature below 16°C.

HANDLING AND SERVING

Vintage Port forms a natural deposit in the bottle and should be decanted. Stand the bottle upright a few hours before decanting to allow the sediment to fall to the bottom of the bottle. With time, the cork may become fragile and opening the bottle requires careful treatment. We recommend the use of a Bi-blade corkscrew that will avoid breaking the natural cork, especially one that is older than ten years of age. Pour the wine in a slow, steady stream into a decanter, ensuring that only the clear wine is poured, leaving the sediment behind. Serve at 16°C to 18°C. Vintage Port is best drunk one to two days after opening.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS

Walnuts, blue veined and other richly flavoured cheeses are excellent accompaniments to Vintage Port; so too are dried fruits such as apricots or figs. Alternatively, simply savour the rich and complex flavours of the wine on their own in a generously proportioned glass with good company.

PRESS COMMENTS

- *Andrew Jefford, The World of Fine Wine, 2021 - 92 Points*
- *Jancis Robinson, 2019 - 17,5 Points*
- *Richard Mayson, richarmayson.com, July 2019 - 18 Points*
- *Mark Squires, Robert Parker, Wine Advocate, 2019 - 96-98 Points*
- *Wine Enthusiast, 2019 - 98 Points*
- *Roger Voss, Wine Spectator, 2019 - 97 Points*
- *James Suckling, 2019 - 95 Points*
- *Neal Martin, Vinous, 2019 - 95 Points*
- *Richard Mayson, Decanter, 2019 - 95 Points*
- *Evasões, 2019 - 19 Points*
- *Revista de Vinhos, 2019 - 19 Points*
- *Vinho Grandes Escolhas, 2019 - The Best of Portugal*
- *Paixão pelos Vinhos, 2019 - 18,5, Prémio Exelência*



TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Alcohol by volume: 20%
Residual sugar: 98 g/l (dm³)
Total acidity: 4,10 g/l (dm³)