



FONSECA

PORTO

GUIMARAENS 2019 VINTAGE PORT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Established in 1815, Fonseca belongs in the first rank of Vintage Port houses. It is regarded as one of the most stylistically consistent of the classic Vintage Port houses and its Ports have been made by five generations of the Guimaraens family since its foundation. This consistency derives not only from continuity of family involvement, and the knowledge and skill passed down from one generation to the next, but also a close link with the vineyard. The firm's three estates of Panascal, Cruzeiro and Santo António are the heart of the distinctive character of Fonseca's Vintage Ports.

Fonseca's respect for the vineyard and the unique environment of the Douro Valley expresses itself in the firm's leadership in the field of sustainable viticulture. In 2006 it became the first house to offer a Port made entirely from organically produced grapes. Fonseca is the only Port house with four 100 Point scoring wines. Perhaps more than any other Port producer, Fonseca has built a loyal community of Port enthusiasts who value its individuality and the inimitable character of its wines.

NOTES ON VITICULTURAL YEAR AND HARVEST

After a warm and dry period of dormancy, the vineyard cycle began slightly early with budburst on 9th March, about a week ahead of the usual calendar. Overall, the growing season was drier and cooler than average although the usual April rains were quite heavy, with around 98 mm of precipitation at grapes began to colour (véraison) at around the usual time in mid-July. Although the ripening season began with high temperatures, the weather in the critical month of August was cooler than average with some rainfall on 25th and 26th to balance the ripening of the crop. The relatively cool conditions and absence of peaks of high temperature have translated into the elegance, crisp acidity and 'singing' fruit that we find in the 2019 wines. Harvesting of red grapes in the eastern areas of the Douro began in hot weather on 4th September and at Pinhão on 14th. The crop was perfectly healthy and in excellent condition although yields were almost a tenth lower than the 10-year average. The wines were attractively aromatic, with a high natural acidity and greater than normal colour intensity.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS

Walnuts are an excellent accompaniment to Vintage Port, as are blue veined and other richly flavoured cheeses. 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.

TASTING NOTES

Almost black at the centre with a narrow garnet rim. As expected of a Guimaraens Vintage Port, the nose is built around a core of concentrated blackberry, blackcurrant and cherry aroma, complex and intense. As the nose opens up, the curtain lifts on multiple dimensions of complex aroma including savoury herbal notes, cedary hints of cigar box and a discreet redolence of roasted coffee. The palate is beautifully balanced, with plenty of volume and a crisp acidity which runs through the mid-palate and into the long finish, lifting the wine and giving it freshness and vigour. The tannins are taut and close-knit, providing both structure and volume, and the wine finishes on notes of dense woodland berry fruit.

STORAGE

Vintage Port continues to improve for decades after bottling. The bottle should be kept lain 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.

