



FONSECA

PORTO

VINTAGE 1994 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

The winter of 1993-1994 was extremely wet throughout the region. As a result, most vineyards experienced a very low yield, with production down as much as 75% in relation to the average in some areas of the Douro.

In spite of the poor start, the growing season was satisfactory, with dry warm weather broken only by a few short periods of rain (two days in August and four in early September). In contrast to the preceding three years, there were no periods of very intense summer heat in the summer – the temperature never exceeded 38°C – and this, combined with well-timed rainfall, has resulted in an evenly-ripened crop, producing musts rich in sugar, anthocyanins and aroma.

TASTING NOTES

Dark red, with a ruby halo. Dense blackcurrant, very fresh and elegant, with an incredible balance of delicate fruit and showing the first signs of bottle maturity. A perfect year in the vineyard, with low yields and moderate temperatures throughout the season, created this incredibly dense Port, with a freshness of fruit typical of the 1963 and 1912 vintages. In the mouth, it is very full-bodied, with lots of quality tannins that carry an enormity of fresh blackcurrant type fruit. The youth that it maintains to this day is proof of how extraordinary this Vintage is, in addition to its capacity to continue aging for the rest of the century.

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.

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

World of Fine Wine, Axel Probst, November 2023 - 99 Points

"Fonseca winemaker David Guimaraens was bit worried some ten years ago when he tasted this Port, because it was much less attractive compared to a tasting some years before. Fonseca Ports often seem to have a very long adolescent phase but always reward the patient. Deep red color. Aromas of violets, coffee, chocolate, and freshly ground black pepper. Complex, deep palate, with warm, red-berry fruit, perfectly supporting acidity, and a very complex tannic structure. Strong raspberry fruit. Almost endlessly long on the multilayered finish. Truly one of the stars of this great year."

James Suckling. The Wine Spectator, January 1998

"Choosing the Wine of the Year is no easy task when there are so many classic wines worthy of the honor. It is even more difficult when two of those wines have perfect 100-point ratings and are made by the same winemaker. So we decided to double your pleasure by choosing both Fonseca Vintage Port 1994 and Taylor Fladgate Vintage Port 1994 for the No. 1 position on Wine Spectator's annual Top 100 list for 1997. This marks the first time in the history of Wine Spectator's Top 100 that two wines have earned top honor."

James Suckling. The Wine Spectator, April 1997 – 100 Points

"Hold on to your hat. This is the best Fonseca since 1977 – probably even better than that of the legendary vintage – more like the breathtaking 1948. Masses of color, aroma and fruit flavor. Big, full bodied and very sweet, with tons of tannins and a sweet finish."



TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Alcohol by volume: 20,5%
Residual sugar: 90,9 g/dm³
Total acidity: 4,50 g/dm³