

GUIMARAENS 1998 VINTAGE PORT



Background Information

In the early 1950's, the rising demand for vintage ports led Fonseca Guimaraens to create a second vintage port under the 'Guimaraens' label in 'non-classic', or undeclared years. Guimaraens vintage port is produced from the same three Fonseca quintas in the Cima Corgo which provide the backbone of Fonseca's vintage ports in declared years. Because they are produced from wines from the same sources as the classic Fonseca vintage ports, Guimaraens vintage ports consistently show the classic Fonseca style.

Somewhat earlier maturing than Fonseca vintage ports, they are aged in Fonseca's lodges in Vila Nova de Gaia and are only released for sale upon reaching maturity, which may be a decade or more after the vintage date. There is a smaller blend of Guimaraens vintage produced and these non classic wines, for their quality and rarity offer an exceptional value.

Notes on Viticultural Year and Harvest

The 1998 growing season started extremely wet. The water table was replenished but this in turn caused extensive erosion problems, particularly in old terraced vineyards. A cold spring followed with temperatures just above freezing mid April. With May came a burst of warmth. A dry, hot summer, with temperatures exceeding 40 ° C during the first two weeks of August, was followed by daily showers during the harvest which began on 20th September.

The almost perfect growing season caused great excitement in the Douro until picking began. The rain during the harvest caused dilution of the fermenting musts and a corresponding reduction in the power of the final wines. Hopes were dampened and the overall yield turned out to be the lowest of the decade.

Press Comments

James Suckling, The Wine Spectator, 28th February 2001 – 85 points

"A pretty, early drinking Vintage Port. Very grapey, with hints of plum skin. Medium bodied, with medium tannins and a light finish."

Sarah Ahmed, Thewinedetective.co.uk 20 February 2015

"Fleshier, more generous than Panascal, with attractive star anise and fruitcake spices to its baked plum and dried fig fruit. It's a mellow fellow with ripe but present supporting tannins. Nice balance and length."

Tasting Notes

Dark purple, almost opaque with lovely, rich, full blackberry aromas and attractive floral and liquorice scents. This is a big, very rich and well rounded wine bursting with blackberry fruit. Medium to full bodied with a smooth, silky finish.

Storage / Handling

The ideal storage conditions are up to 16° Celsius and most importantly at a constant temperature. The bottle should rest on its side, thus keeping the cork moist and therefore an effective seal. After uncorking the wine, pour in a slow, steady stream into your decanter, carefully watching the emerging liquid to ensure that only the clear wine is poured, leaving the sediment behind.

Serving Suggestions

Walnuts are an excellent accompaniment to Vintage Port, as are various cheeses such as Stilton and Dorset Blue Vinny. So too are dried fruits such as apricots or figs. Alternatively, simply savour the unadulterated taste in a good glass with good company.

