

QUINTA VALE D. MARIA VINHA DO RIO DOC DOURO RED 2017

2017 was characterized by an extremely dry and hot year. The vegetative cycle was significantly fast, anticipating the harvest to the earliest date ever in our winemaking memory. We started picking white grapes on the 21st August and on August 26th we picked the first red grapes. In 2017 there was not much precipitation. During the months of June, July and August there were very high temperatures, which led to a hydric thermal and luminous stress, which conditioned the production of the vine. Nonetheless, there was an increase in production compared to 2016, even if not to the degree initially anticipated in the early part of the vegetative cycle. At the sorting table, there was very little fruit rejection, since 2017 was a year of very good phytosanitary conditions. Concentration in the berries, heat and lack of water during the maturation period, accelerated the ripening of the berries, resulting in musts of great complexity and quality.

Origins: With less than a hectare, this small vineyard is close to the River Torto that flows at the foot of Quinta Vale D. Maria. It has 29 different grape varieties (49% Tinta Barroca, 20% Touriga Franca and 20% others) planted, all mixed, in a vineyard with an average age of 80 years. Since our first harvest at Quinta Vale D. Maria, back in 1996, we immediately knew that there were unique characteristics in every parcel. One of them, our oldest parcel and the one with lower altitude and closer to the small river Torto that passes through Vale D. Maria, was especially unique, with its gentle flowery and spicy aromas. During the 2009 harvest, we decided it was time to show the wine from this very special vineyard on its own. We called it Quinta Vale D. Maria “Vinha do Rio” (Vinha do Rio translates into the river vineyard).

Vinification and ageing: Quinta Vale D. Maria “Vinha do Rio” grapes are foot trodden and fully fermented in *lagares* for 7 to 10 days at temperatures ranging from 22°C to 27°C. The resulting wines are then racked into new Allier French-oak 225L casks from various coopers, namely from François Frères and Taransaud, where they go through malolactic fermentation. The final choice of casks and the blending happened between May and June of the second year after the harvest. The wine is normally bottled two to three weeks after the blending.

Bottling date: June 2019 – 1,567 bottles of 75cl, 99 Magnums of 1.5L and 20 Magnums of 3L.

Winemakers: Cristiano van Zeller / Joana Pinhão / Francisca van Zeller

Tasting notes: All grapes are picked by hand, carefully selected on a mat and foot-trodden where they fully fermented in *lagares* for 7 to 10 days at temperatures ranging from 22°C to 27°C. The resulting wines are then racked into new Allier French-oak 225L casks from various coopers, namely from François Frères and Taransaud, where they go through malolactic fermentation for 21 months. The final choice of casks and the blending happened between May and June of the second year after the harvest. The wine is normally bottled two to three weeks after the blending.

Technical analysis:

Álcohol: 15,5% vol

pH: 3,55

Total acidity: 5,56 g/l

SO2 total: 121 mg/l

Volatil acidity: 0,79 g/l

Total sugar: 0,8 g/l



Ratings

95 points

Wine Enthusiast

95 points

James Suckling

93+ points

Robert Parker

Commercial information:

