

QUINTA VALE D. MARIA VINHA DO RIO DOC DOURO RED 2018



The 2018 viticultural year was out of the ordinary, in comparison with the last five years. Winter was cold and dry and spring was cool and with very high rainfall. The summer was marked by two different stages, first cold and rainy and towards the end, warm and extremely dry. This provoked a later flowering season, however thanks to the rain, the vine found great levels of water to flourish. There was a higher pressure than average for mildium and the climatic instability brought productivity levels down. At Quinta Vale D. Maria (Cima Corgo) we monitored the vineyard carefully to make sure mildium was not very strong. At Quinta Vale do Sabor (Douro Superior), a more consistent climate offered very good conditions for vine development. In August, some dehydration and sun burn occurred, though quite mildly. Therefore, production levels did not fall dramatically at either of our estates. Harvest began on September 12th with white grapes. It ran smoothly, with grape picking occurring at the ideal maturation, and resulting in musts of great quality.

Grape origins: With less than a hectare, this small vineyard is the closest to the River Torto that flows at the foothill of Quinta Vale D. Maria. It has 29 different grape varieties (49% Tinta Barroca, 20% Touriga Franca and 20% others) planted, in field blend, in an 80 years-old vineyard. Facing south, this vineyard has several hours of shade at the end of the day, due to the proximity to the hill and the height of the mountain that extends in front of it. Since our first harvest at Quinta Vale D. Maria, in 1996, we have identified unique characteristics in each plot. In the 2009 vintage we decided that we were going to bottle the wines separately from this very special parcel.

Vinification and ageing: All the grapes are foot-trodden and fully fermented in *lagares* for 7 to 10 days at controlled 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.

Quantities: July 2020 – 2.523 bottles of 75cl, 99 Magnums of 1.5L and 20 Magnums of 3L.

Winemakers: Cristiano van Zeller / Manuel Soares

Tasting notes: Quinta Vale D. Maria Vinha do Rio 2018 presents a fruity nose, with various spices, tobacco, and light notes of chocolate and a great intensity. In the mouth, the wine is textured, surprisingly fresh, with great vigor, extremely tasty and with smooth and silky tannins.

Commercial information:

Technical analysis:

Alcohol: 15% vol

Total acidity: 5,2 g/l

Volatile acidity: 0,7 g/l

pH: 3,73

Total SO₂: 110 mg/l

Total sugar: 0,7 g/l

