

WINE DESCRIPTION

DOW'S 2005 QUINTA SENHORA DA RIBEIRA VINTAGE PORT


ESTABLISHED 1798

DOW'S PORT

Dow's

Dow's is owned and managed by the fourth generation of the Symington family, Port producers since the 19th Century. The family, whose experience dates back over 100 years, supervises all the vineyards, winemaking and ageing of this wine.

Dow's owns two of the Douro's finest Quintas, Senhora da Ribeira and Bomfim. They were acquired in 1890 and 1896, making Dow's one of the first houses to invest in premium vineyards.

Tasting Notes

The very hot climate through the summer at this vineyard resulted in highly complex and concentrated wines but very low yields. The old vines added further to the intensity of the wine as they make up a very large percentage of the blend. Senhora da Ribeira 2005 is an opaque, black-coloured Vintage Port, packed with concentrated aromas of juicy ripe blackberries and fresh floral notes. On the palate loaded with fresh and powerful wild red-fruit flavours, leading into rich black chocolate notes, the whole balanced by complex, attractive and peppery tannins. The very essence of Vintage Port.

The Viticultural Year

Finally some long awaited and highly beneficial rain fell on the 7th and 9th September. As a result, it was decided to delay the Vintage for a few days at Senhora da Ribeira in order to take full advantage of the positive impact that the rain would have on the grapes.

This decision played very much in favour of the quality of the grapes, and by the time picking began on the 13th, the grapes had swelled and the skins softened, producing rich sweet musts of a superb inky purple-black colour.

Good weather continued throughout the remainder of the picking which ended on the 27th September.

Blend Composition

The Ports made from the old mixed plantings ('Vinha Velha') make up 75% of the blend. Due to the very hot and dry weather leading up to the vintage the 'Vinha Velha' produced exceptionally low yields of only 0.87Kg per vine. The musts had a very high skin-to-juice ratio and made extremely complex and intensely structured wines. The remaining 25% of the wines were made from the late ripening Touriga Franca. The 2005 harvest particularly favoured this variety, with the hot day time weather conditions and cool night time temperatures that followed the rainfall of the 7th and 9th September, allowing for a higher than usual degree of maturation. The Touriga Franca from the 2001 vineyard planted next to the winery made particularly good wines. The resulting wine can be described as being the essence of Vintage Port, with powerful wild red-fruit flavours, leading into rich black chocolate notes, the whole balanced by complex, attractive and peppery tannins.

Vinification

Senhora da Ribeira has one of the most advanced small 'specialist' wineries in the Upper Douro, combining original granite lagares for foot treading with three groundbreaking 'robotic' lagares installed in 2001. The 2005 Senhora da Ribeira Vintage blend was vinified 65% in 'robotic' and 35% in traditional lagares.

Vintage Overview

2005, a year that produced some good and interesting wines despite the extremely dry conditions.

Contemporary Family Comments

"2005 has proved once again the amazing ability of the vine to overcome very tough conditions. It was astonishing to see the small green berries fill out, turn dark red and ripen with such limited moisture in the soil. Nature was very kind to us with rain on the 6th and 9th, followed by a succession of beautiful sunny days. We are confident that some very interesting and very good Ports will have been made in the Douro this year."

Charles Symington
October 2005

Wine Specifications

Alcohol: 20% vol (20°C)

Total acidity: 5.0 g/l tartaric acid

Baumé: 3.8

