

Granito Cru Alvarinho



After a decade as winemaker at Niepoort, where he was responsible for some of the best known and highly rated wines to come out of the famed Douro and Porto producer, Luis Seabra decided that he no longer wanted to make wines to someone else's tastes and specifications. Thus, he began his eponymous winery, and set about shattering preconceptions of what Douro wines represent.

The Granito Cru Alvarinho is one of a series of wines that Luis makes that exemplify and express the intensely terroir-driven style in which Luis operates. He is a particularly gifted winemaker, one who sees wine as a medium through which a piece of land can speak. "Cru" translates as "raw" in Portuguese, and the transmission of terroir here is unadulterated and singular. This series of wines is one in which he removes every variable but that of the land itself, and the stark expression of the soil that results is extraordinary. He works exclusively with spontaneous fermentation, native yeasts, and large format tight-grained oak for all the wines in this series.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: Rather than single vineyard, this is a single soil Alvarinho, intended as a clear expression of terroir and place. Sustainably farmed vines, and vinified using only spontaneous fermentation and indigenous yeasts. This way he removes all potential variability other than the soil type as an expression of terroir.

RATING HISTORY: 2018 92WA; 2017 90WA; 2016 92WA, 90WS; 2015 94 D

GRAPE: 100% Alvarinho. Sustainably grown vines planted in 1989. Tended in granite soil at 50-150 m (164-492 ft) elevation. This is a vegan wine.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: Raw or roasted oysters, shellfish, grilled whole snapper.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: The pressing of destemmed and crushed grapes was done with no added sulfur and without maceration. The wine was decanted cold for 48 hours. The fermentation and aging took place in two used, oval vats of 1000 liters and a new oval vat of 2000 liters, all made from Eastern Europe Forrest oak. Fermentation was carried out during 4 months with full malolactic fermentation. Total ageing in the barrels took 9 months in the presence of lees without stirring them.

PRODUCTION: 538 cs (3pack)

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Vineyards located in Monção e Melgaço in Vinho Verde, the birthplace of Alvarinho/Albarino. Vinho Verde is the coolest sub-region of the Douro, and there is a good deal more maritime influence here, lending acidity to the wines. Vines planted exclusively in granite soil at roughly 50-150 m (164-492 ft) elevation.

TASTING NOTES Brilliant straw. On the nose, high toned and mineral driven aromas of lemon peel, green apple, lemongrass and seashells. On the palate, impressive weight combined with laser-focused acidity. Incisive flavors of lemon, unripe peach, green apple, green mango are at the core, with focused and pervasive mineral notes.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 12.5%

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Luis Seabra