

Arinto dos Acores Non Sur Lies



The Portuguese archipelago of the Azores is home to a winemaking tradition that dates back to its colonization in the 15th century, wherein viticulture was introduced by Franciscan friars. This group of islands is home to a singular terroir and microclimate, one that draws close comparison to the island of Santorini.

Like Santorini, the Azores are volcanic islands comprised entirely of black basalt. Pico, the main wine producing island where these vineyards are located, has such poor soil that the vineyard needs to be supplemented with soil from neighboring islands to support vine growth, and even with that, the yields are a fraction of what they are in the rest of the DOC.

Additionally, the vineyards are grown in tiny plots (2-6 bush trained vines per square) protected on all sides by small walls called “currais” to ward off the strong winds that blow in from the nearby beaches.

Arinto dos Açores is a varietal indigenous to the Azores that shares the acidity and potential for longevity of the mainland varietal that shares its name; however, the two are not related.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: This is a micro-production wine from the tiny island of Pico in the Azores. It is grown in volcanic basalt at sea level, less than 50m from the Atlantic. This terroir and the varietal imbue this wine with incredible minerality and purity, as well as unmistakable salinity.

RATING HISTORY: 2015 93WA; 2014 92 WA



GRAPE: 100% Arinto dos Acores. Sustainably grown vines planted from 1984-2004. Tended in volcanic basalt at sea level, less than 50 m (164 ft) from the Atlantic Ocean.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: This is a wine that performs beautifully with all sorts of seafood, owing to its salinity and minerality. Grilled whole fish, oysters, mussels and shrimp are perfect pairings.

VINIFICATION AND AGEING: Grapes are hand harvested to 40kg baskets and go through heavy triage before being whole-bunch pressed. The juice decants for 12 hours and ferments in temperature controlled (vertical and horizontal) stainless steel tanks.

PRODUCTION: 250 cases (6 pack)

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Pico, in the Azores, is about 1000 miles off the coast of Portugal. It is dominated by the volcano Ponto do Pico, Portugal's highest mountain. The soil is entirely black basalt, which puts enormous stress on the vines, lowering yields. Vines are the only crop to speak of on Pico, as other plant life has a difficult time surviving. Temperature averages 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit, with rainfall averaging 1200mm a year.

TASTING NOTES 2015: A potential blockbuster for those who like their wines crisp and fresh, this has big acidity, but fine fruit as well. It shows good concentration, tension on the finish and a certain sternness early on.

2014: It is another big, unoaked white, with big fruit and power. Piercing and penetrating on the finish, it does finally allow the fruit to come through, too.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13.0%

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