

Quinta de Saes Touriga Nacional



“If God were to design a wine-growing region, what he would come up with would look a lot like the Dão.” – Alvaro Castro

Since 1980, Alvaro Castro has been the winemaker for his family’s properties at Quinta da Pellada and Quinta de Saes. In that time, he has established himself as the region’s pre-eminent winemaking mind, crafting elegant wines of place that showcase the explosive aromatics and cool-climate freshness that are intrinsic to this special terroir. Quinta de Saes’ reds, for the most part, are field blends, drawing on the tradition of interplanting varieties in a place to give a more cohesive and complete picture of the terroir, as well as the ability to adapt to vintages and maintain a thread of continuity from one vintage to the next. He is a fierce traditionalist, and the “old-school” nature of his wines showcase the brilliance that comes from an honest expression of place and time without intervention or mitigation. His wines embody the idea that “wine is made in the vineyard,” and he is unapologetically critical of winemakers who mess with their raw product too much. He speaks most passionately about making wines that “reflect the soil.” He doesn’t put much stock in winemaking as an exact science – the wine is what it is, and it’s made that way because that’s what the land and the fruit are telling him to do. The results are undeniable – these wines are unmistakably Dão, and represent the apotheosis of this beautiful appellation.



WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: The Dão is home to the finest plantings of Touriga Nacional in Portugal. The microclimate that protects it from the extreme heat of the eastern winds and the overly wet conditions to the north and west provides a cool, temperate setting for Touriga to showcase its hallmark rose petal aromatics and soft fruit. Aged in neutral oak, this is a pure, unadulterated expression of Dão Touriga.

RATING HISTORY: 2016 88WA

GRAPE: 100% Touriga Nacional, with an average vine age of 15 years. Tended in granite and clay soil at 550m (1811ft) elevation.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: The bright red fruit, savory mineral and floral tones and clean, fresh salinity make this Touriga a beautiful pair with roast pork, lighter game like rabbit and quail, and mushroom dishes.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: Whole cluster fermented in stainless steel using ambient yeasts; 7 days cold soak to maximize aromatic extraction. Aged for 24 months in second-use French oak.

PRODUCTION: 833 cases

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Quinta de Saes is located in the northern part of the Dao, in Northern Central Portugal. The plots for this vineyard are planted to granite at 550 (1811 ft) elevation. The Dao has a temperate continental climate, protected from the cold winds of the Atlantic by the Luso Mountains, from the warm winds of Extremadura to the west by the Sierra da Estrela, and from the arid heat of the Douro by the Serra do Caramulo. Average temperature in the growing season is 57F (14C). Rainfall is 39 inches per annum, with no irrigation.

TASTING NOTES Bright ruby-purple. Expressive, swirling aromatics of raspberry, pomegranate, rose petal, orange peel, and pepper. On the palate, bright and generous, with mouthwatering intensity to the red berry fruit. Finishes floral and salty, with a precise mineral edge. There’s a savory umami quality that overlays the whole thing, making it positively gulpable with or without food. Elegant and refined, but playful, this is a gorgeous expression of unadulterated Touriga and the Dão.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13.0%

UPC CODE: 5606686001314



TOURIGA NACIONAL