

# OLÉ & OBRIGADO

WINE & SPIRITS WITH HEART & SOUL

## Mono A



For nearly two decades, Luis Seabra has been at the center of a cultural shift in Portuguese winemaking, leading a movement of young, independent winemakers making history by reclaiming historical vineyards, grape varieties, and techniques. Seabra started his career as a soil research analyst and winemaking professor; later, as a winemaker in Douro, he came to produce some of the most innovative and highly awarded wines in Portugal's history. Seabra launched his own small winery in 2013, dedicated to proving that fresh, elegant, terroir-driven still wines can be made in the Douro Valley.

Seabra is focused on working with old vineyards in Douro, as well as unique sites in neighboring DO Vinho Verde and Dão. He believes that old vines are more resilient and well-equipped to calmly handle the region's volatile weather, making them the best candidates to faithfully communicate a special terroir or vineyard site. Seabra's fundamental understanding of terroir coupled with his philosophy of minimal intervention in the vineyard and winery have launched him into the international eye as a leader of the New Portugal; according to Eric Asimov, he "is now making some of Portugal's most compelling wines, both white and red." In addition to his own wines, Seabra is a highly sought-after consulting winemaker and a mentor to younger winemakers. He is known for his love of cuisine and pairing food with the best wines of the world.

**WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?:** It is rare for a winemaker in Dão (let alone an outsider) to make a statement about Alfrocheiro, which is typically used just for blending. Under the thoughtful mastery of Seabra, Mono A allows both the natural charm and aromatics—backed up by the frontal tannin of granite terroir—to come through in a way that shows the promise of this little-known varietal.

**RATING HISTORY:** 2019 92W&S; 92WA

**GRAPE:** 100% Alfrocheiro. Sustainably grown vines planted around 1987 tended in granitic soils with quartz. This is a vegan wine.

**PAIRING SUGGESTIONS:** Thanks to its aromatic profile and gentle tannins, this wine is excellent on its own, but works wonderfully with mountain fare like mushrooms, meat and vegetable stews, and even earthier game bird preparations.

**VINIFICATION AND AGING:** The grapes are harvested by hand, then fermented with indigenous yeast in a 5,000-liter wooden vat. 40% of the fruit is fermented whole cluster. After a 26-day maceration, the wine is racked into a 3,000L tonneaux made from Eastern European oak (just like those used in Piedmont), and it ages there for 14 months. The wine is bottled directly from barrel, with no fining or filtering. The only addition made is a small amount of sulfur at bottling.

**LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE:** The vineyard is in the Dão region in the foothills of the Serra da Estrela Mountain Range, mainland Portugal's highest point, and a heavily protected natural area known for its excellent stargazing. Dão's cool climate is highly regarded for producing wines that are bright, lifted, and elegant. After experiencing a decline in the 1960s, this region was eclipsed by other regions with more international appeal; thanks to the work of vigneron like Seabra, this area is returning to its former glory.

**ALCOHOL CONTENT:** 13%

