

GUIMARAENS 2008 VINTAGE PORT



Background Information

In the early 1950's, the rising demand for vintage ports led Fonseca Guimaraens to create a second vintage port under the 'Guimaraens' label in 'non-classic', or undeclared years. Guimaraens vintage port is produced from the same three Fonseca quintas in the Cima Corgo which provide the backbone of Fonseca's vintage ports in declared years. Because they are produced from wines from the same sources as the classic Fonseca vintage ports, Guimaraens vintage ports consistently show the classic Fonseca style.

Somewhat earlier maturing than Fonseca vintage ports, they are aged in Fonseca's lodges in Vila Nova de Gaia and are only released for sale upon reaching maturity, which may be a decade or more after the vintage date. There is a smaller blend of Guimaraens vintage produced and these non classic wines, for their quality and rarity offer an exceptional value.

Notes on Viticultural Year and Harvest

The 2008 winter was drier and colder than normal with only 258mm of rain falling at Pinhão between November and March. Fortunately, a wet April ensured the ground water reserves were sufficiently replenished. Flowering occurred under wet and cold conditions and as a result poor set affected all grape varieties, resulting in lower yields, but with great concentration of flavour.

The temperatures for the 2008 growing season were remarkably similar to 2007, with lower than average temperatures and a mild August. The final ripening of the grapes was greatly enhanced with rain falling between the 4th and 7th September and a further downpour just before the vintage started. Picking started on 25th September at Quinta do Panascal and on the 26th September in the Pinhão Valley. A key characteristic of the entire vintage were the hot days combined with cold nights giving perfect weather conditions not only for the final ripening of the grapes, but also for the fermentation rates. This provided wonderful freshness of fruit, complexity and great structure.

Press Comments

Jamie Goode, Wine Anorak, November 2010 – 93 Points

"Rich, spicy, cedary and warm with dense blackberry and dark cherry fruit. Bold, concentrated and well balanced, with some nice floral violet notes as well as the richer, spicy, woody characters. Firm tannins, too. Very appealing."

Tasting Notes

Very deep purple black with violet highlights. As would be expected of a Guimaraens Vintage Port, the first impression on the nose is of a powerful detonation of blackberry, cassis, strawberry and woodland fruit. These exuberant berry aromas are seasoned with notes of coffee, treacle and spice and surrounded by a fragrant balsamic aura of gumcistus and mint. The intense fruit flows through the palate like a thick blackcurrant coulis. The palate is supported by a taut fabric of closely woven tannins and the long finish resounds with a final blast of sumptuous ripe berry flavour.

Storage / Handling

The ideal storage conditions are up to 16° Celsius and most importantly at a constant temperature. The bottle should rest on its side, thus keeping the cork moist and therefore an effective seal. After uncorking the wine, pour in a slow, steady stream into your decanter, carefully watching the emerging liquid to ensure that only the clear wine is poured, leaving the sediment behind.

Serving Suggestions

Walnuts are an excellent accompaniment to Vintage Port, as are blue veined and other richly flavoured cheeses. So too are dried fruits such as apricots or figs. Alternatively, simply savour the rich and complex flavours of the wine on their own in a generously proportioned glass with good company.

