



HARVEST REPORT 2023

“2023: Water gave it all but took its part.”

Carlos Peixoto

THE YEAR

METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

The annual precipitation has doubled over the past decade on average, except in the Quinta de Ervamoira region, where it has decreased by 14%. The distribution of precipitation over the vegetative cycle was not ideal. Indeed, from November to mid-January there was intense rainfall, forcing a two-month suspension of trench-ploughing works. There was practically no rainfall until the end of May, but in early June more than 80 mm fell in the form of a storm, although this added no extra water to the soil. The months of July and August were extremely dry and hot. Intense rainfall with thunder and hail (which did not affect the Ramos Pinto Quintas) fell after the second week of September).

Average temperatures were higher at the start of the vegetative cycle compared with the last ten years. However, there were specific times when the temperatures were too high.

It was a good year for the new plantings. Quinta do Bom Retiro was the most challenging, as a few fields had been planted in July, with plots with close to 100% success, and others at a slightly lower rate.

VEGETATIVE CYCLE

All phases of the vegetative cycle were precocious. The first treatment was carried out in mid-April and flowering had begun by the end of the month. The maturation of many varieties occurred much earlier, and the harvest at Quinta de Ervamoira began on 2 August for the D.O.C. Douro white wines.

In terms of plant health, 2023 was a positive year, except for late May and early June, when rainfall led to the emergence of mildew attacks, although the situation was overcome without causing damage.



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HARVEST

QUINTA DE ERVAMOIRA

The harvest began here at Quinta da Ervamoira, with Viosinho grapes being picked to make D.O.C. Douro white wine. Harvesting went at speed and by the 14th red grapes began to be harvested for D.O.C. Douro red wine. Under the intense heat of the following week, grapes began to be picked for red Port wine. The harvest was very promising given the high production figures and concentrated aromatic musts.

During the third week of August, a heatwave brought forward the harvest of certain plots of the Touriga Nacional variety, which were suffering from the high temperatures. Rainfall in mid-September led to a more careful selection of the Touriga Francesa grape bunches, harvested in the last ten days of the month.

At Ervamoira the harvest ended on 29 September.

QUINTA DOS BONS ARES

The harvest started early, on 14 August, with the Sauvignon Blanc grapes being picked, and ended on 20 September with the Rabigato and Touriga Francesa varieties.

The good production at this Quinta was basically due to the new plantings, which are four to five years old. Following the September rainfall, the careful selection of the Rabigato grapes was key to ensuring the quality of the white wines.

At this Quinta, the quality of the Sauvignon Blanc and Touriga Nacional grape varieties is prominent and has given us very fresh wines with great aromatic potential.



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QUINTA DO BOM RETIRO

Here in this Quinta the harvest ran from 28 August to 22 September. It began in the centenary “Vinha do Rio” plot that presented excellent colour and aroma in the lagares. As the harvest progressed, expectations grew and not even the thunderstorms of early September made them falter.

Meteorological forecasts predicted some atmospheric instability, so we decided to start the harvest on some of the plots of Touriga Francesa grapes (a very late grape variety) at the same time as the Touriga Nacional variety. This turned out to be the right decision, for the best plots were harvested before the heavy rainfall of 14 and 15 September.

VINHA DA URTIGA

A good year more than reinforces the quality of an exceptional vineyard.

In mid-August, the most representative varieties of this vineyard presented signs of good maturation, indicating that they would soon be ready for picking. Each day, we checked the development of the grapes and the maturation of the 63 different grape varieties to find the right moment for the harvest. 26 August saw the first sweep through the vineyard to remove all bunches of grapes that were not in optimum condition.

Early on 28 August, we harvested Vinha da Urtiga, with good results in terms of the quantity of grapes. This quantity might seem small in comparison to other vineyards yet this centenary vineyard has a unique identity.

The aromatic complexity and vivacity, the maturation of the tannins and the natural freshness of the Vinha da Urtiga grapes offer us high expectations for the wine produced from this harvest.



PORT WINE

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"2023 was a high quality but equally high quantity harvest. Excellent Port wines, with good concentration and structure. A very promising year!"

Ana Rosas

WHITE PORT WINE

Wines with great fruit and freshness. An excellent year in terms of the quantity and quality of the grapes harvested.

RED PORT WINE

The harvest began with high expectations for Port wine. On arrival at the winery, the grapes were healthy, aromatic and with great sugar content, producing intense coloured wines with firm tannins.

The Touriga Nacional variety from our Quintas produced excellent wines. The Touriga Francesa variety showed higher quality at Quinta do Bom Retiro, with a good structure, essential for the blend of our Vintage Port wines. The Tinta Barroca variety at Quinta da Ervamoira was very interesting, while the aromatic intensity of the Tinta Roriz variety was an excellent surprise. As always, the Tinto Cão grape variety showed its resilience.

The grapes from the centenary "Vinha do Rio" plot were fermented with Touriga Francesa grapes and proved to be the great surprise of this harvest, producing an excellent wine. This year, for the first time, we picked the grapes from the more recent plantings because, although the vines were quite young, they show promise of high quality wines.



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“The aroma of a great year permeates the winery.”

João Luís Baptista

DOURO AND DURIENSE WINES

WHITE DOURO AND DURIENSE WINES

It was a long harvest. It began with the Viosinho grape variety at Quinta de Ervamoira and ended with the Rabigato variety at Quinta dos Bons Ares on 20 September. There was a substantial quantity of grapes with good yield and great quality potential.

The 2023 white grape must have good acidity and above all great aromatic potential.

One more year in which 95% of the white grapes were pressed without crushing or destemming, enhancing the aromatic purity and freshness of the musts. Adding a third pneumatic press made all the difference to the daily pressing capacity and to the possibility of separating grape varieties and parcels, in a year with such a great quantity.

The Rabigato grape variety stands out clearly in terms of quality and quantity, and it is the most representative of our white wines.

RED DOURO AND DURIENSE WINES

A great harvest, both in terms of quantity and quality. The sharp aroma of red berries could be felt throughout the winery. We began the harvest with the Quinta de Ervamoira red grapes on 14 August, starting with Tinta Amarela, and followed by the sunnier plots of the Tinta da Barca variety. The harvest ended on 29 September at this Quinta, with the Touriga Francesa grape variety.

We encountered three different styles of wine in this harvest. Mature and concentrated, in the case of the plots with greater exposure of the Touriga Nacional and Touriga Francesa grape varieties at Quinta de Ervamoira. Others were more elegant and fresher, in the case of less exposed plots of the Touriga Nacional grape variety at Quinta de Ervamoira and Quinta dos Bons Ares. There were also instances of lighter wines, mainly from plots of Touriga Francesa grapes, harvested in the last weeks of September. In all of them, the common denominator is the 2023 fruit. It was quite definitely the year with the largest quantity of grapes vinified in the lagar. Note, also, the excellent quality of the press wines.



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CONCLUSION

The 2023 harvest will be remembered for its abundant production and excellent quality.