

Quinta de Saes Touriga Nacional



Dão is quickly becoming the most sought-after region for Portuguese winemakers to venture into; according to many, it's one of the world's most perfect microclimates: mountains protect it from continental heat to the east and Douro's heat to north, and cool Atlantic breezes come inland to keep the overall temperatures more regulated, making for wines with bright acidity, ethereal aromatics, and compelling complexity. The DO's granitic soils allow indigenous grapes to shine through in the wines, and provide firm, crunchy tannin against the bright fruit. Alvaro Castro has noted that "if God were to design a wine-growing region, what he would come up with would look a lot like the Dão."

There is no modern Dão without one of the region's longtime legends, Alvaro Castro, whose estate encompasses two small properties (or "quintas") known as Pellada and Saes. Alvaro makes wine here with his daughter Maria, carrying on a tradition of winemaking on this property that dates to the 16th century! Together, they have resisted the internationalization push of the '80s and '90s, instead doubling down on their slow-wine approach, using local varieties grown and crafted in the true Dão "field blend" style.

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: 2018 90W&S

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.

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Quinta de Saes is located in the northern part of the Dão, in Northern Central Portugal. The plots for this vineyard are planted to granite at 550 (1811 ft) elevation. The Dão 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 Serra 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