

Herdade do Mouchão 2019 Dom Rafael Branco (Alentejo)

WineWise Code	PMO-DRB19
Country	Portugal
Region	Alentejo
Color	White
Alcohol by Volume	13
Acidity	7
Residual Sugar	0.3
Closure	Natural Cork
Annual cases produced	1200
Varieties	Antão Vaz & Arinto
Maceration Notes	Skin contact on press, after de-stemming
Pumpover or Punchdown?	No
Destemming	Complete
Fermentation duration	12 days
Aging method	Stainless Steel 100%
Aging duration (months)	6 months
Filtered?	Yes
Fining agents	Bentonite
Yeast	Cultured
Lees Contact or Stirring	Yes, both contact and stirring
Malolactic	No
Added Sulfur	Yes, 110ppm
Vineyard Name	Vinha do Zé Rovisco
Soil Type(s)	Alluvial, Loam
Elevation (meters)	206
Vineyard Aspect	Northeast
Vine age (years)	15 years
Farming practices	Sustainable
Grape Picking	Hand-harvested
Vine Yields	50 hl/ha

WineWise Notes on the Wine:

Our introductory vintages of this wine were 2015 and 2017, which were enthusiastically embraced for their waxen complexity and suave elegance. 2019 is understandably less evolved, but lends force to the proposition that even “basic” wines like this are capable of worthwhile development. We are beginning to regard Arinto much as we do Macabeo, a seemingly “simple” grape in fact offering dazzling levels of complexity.



WineWise Notes on the Producer:

It is no exaggeration to say that we have been interested in this great estate since we began importing from Portugal over a decade ago. However, we were only recently able to taste their wines and connect the dots between the press accolades, their iconic status in Portugal and the wines themselves. It turns out that the oldest active winery in the Alentejo, beloved of luminaries as diverse as Jancis Robinson, Sarah Ahmed and Hugh Johnson, makes not just the world-class reds we were hoping to find, but stunning, seriously age-worthy whites as well. Their methods are entirely traditional, down to foot-treading in lagares and prolonged aging in barrel and bottle. Only in their adventurous approach to trellising in the vineyards do they show a tendency to modernity.

A bit of history is in order here : originally (and continuously) a cork harvesting farm, they planted vineyards in the mid 19th century, bottled their first vintage in 1949 (after selling wine in every other kind of container previously), were expropriated by the government after the 1974 revolution (and returned to the Reynolds family 11 years later), and finally got electricity in 1991. Although most of their wines are a blend of grapes, Alicante Bouschet, brought to Portugal late in the 19th century and first planted at Mouchão, dominates the upper-end bottlings and reaches its highest expression here. In virtually all areas - age, history, status, and adherence to tradition - Mouchão is akin to López de Heredia. We are immensely proud to have this new “éminence grise” in our portfolio, to cast a benevolent gaze on the younger Portuguese stars whom you all already know so well.

