

Dão Encruzado 2016

Dão, Portugal



Grape Varieties	100% Encruzado
Winemaker	Beatriz Cabral de Almeida
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	13%
Residual Sugar	2g/L
Acidity	5.7g/L
Wine pH	3.3
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Sustainable

PRODUCER

Quinta dos Carvalhais is credited with spearheading the quality renaissance of Dão wines in the early '90s and continues to make some of the region's finest wines today. After being purchased by Sogrape in 1988, significant improvements were made to the winery and vineyards, including the replanting of near-extinct Dão varieties such as Encruzado, a grape now heralded as one of Portugal's finest. Current Quinta dos Carvalhais winemaker Beatriz Cabral de Almeida continues to champion these varieties, making an impressive range of estate wines that show lovely depth, vibrant fruit, and exceptional elegance.

VINEYARDS

This 105-hectare property, situated at an altitude of 465-500 metres above sea level, has 50 hectares under vine. Warm days and cool nights at this altitude slow down the grape ripening process and result in wines with lovely depth yet vibrant fruit and a signature freshness. The vineyards are planted on poor granite soils with a predominance of indigenous Dão varieties including Touriga Nacional, Alfrocheiro and Encruzado. Microzoning studies have been carried out on the estate, identifying nine different soil types and a multitude of different microclimates, and each grape variety has been matched to its ideal plot. This precision viticulture provides Beatriz with a great diversity of blending options. All of the vineyards are farmed sustainably and harvesting is carried out by hand.

VINTAGE

The start of the year was dry and warm, triggering budbreak earlier than in 2015. Below average temperatures in spring mitigated the early start to the season. Vegetative growth was subsequently slower and flowering and ripening occurred later, but still with plenty of fruit. Summer was warm, affecting the rate at which vines matured. The harvest started early and lasted for a long time.

VINIFICATION

The Encruzado grapes were collected at the winery in small 20kg boxes and unloaded directly into the pneumatic press. After crushing, the must was protected from oxidation by the use of inert gases and subject to low temperature static decanting for 24 hours. Selected yeasts were added ahead of fermentation in new French oak barrels, at temperatures of 19°C for approximately 20 days. The wine was then matured for six months in new French oak barrels where bâtonnage took place before filtering and bottling.

TASTING NOTES

A core of bright citrus fruit, melon and pear is overlaid by floral, herbaceous and mineral aromas on the nose. The perfumes are complemented by the spicy French oak. On the palate, it is fresh and balanced with vibrant acidity.