

QUINTA DO VESUVIO 1996 VINTAGE PORT



QUINTA DO VESUVIO

Quinta do Vesuvio is arguably the most magnificent estate in the Douro valley. Located in the beautiful and austere Port-growing region of the Upper Douro valley, its history dates back to the 16th Century. All of the grapes are hand-picked, with a careful selection being made. Vesuvio is one of the very few estates in the Douro where all of the wines are made using the traditional treading method in granite lagares, among the largest in the Douro valley, and offered exclusively as a single Quinta Vintage Port. In 1989, Quinta do Vesuvio was purchased by the Symington family whose involvement in the production and shipping of Port began more than a century ago. Vesuvio is now ranked as one of the top-tier Vintage Port producers. Over the last decade, Quinta do Vesuvio has amassed an impressive number of awards at international tasting competitions around the world.

THE VITICULTURAL YEAR

January 1996 was one of the wettest on record at Vesuvio. The abundant rainfall was beneficial in replenishing the water table following a succession of very dry years. Budding at the Quinta was prolific and the vines showed vigorous growth in the initial stages of development. Further progress, however was slowed by a mild and humid spring. Flowering and fruit set, which took place in late May, were both high and this, combined with the favourable conditions, lead to a large vintage. Picking at Vesuvio started on September 16th, two weeks later than the previous vintage, but was soon halted due to rain. Once it resumed, the weather conditions were perfect and the fruit quality was quite exceptional. A very high degree of maturation was achieved producing above average sugar readings.



Vintage Overview

One of the finest Vesuvio wines produced to date in one of the largest harvests in the Douro valley. A very small batch, representing around 12% of total production was selected for bottling.

Contemporary Family Comments

"A new feature introduced to the 1996 vintage was the employment of two separate teams of pickers and treaders. This meant that a minimum of 25 people constantly worked the lagares throughout the day. In the evenings, after picking, as many as forty people were on hand to 'cut' and tread the grapes. This experience proved very positive as the additional manpower in the lagares allowed for even better colour extraction and contributed to the production of simply excellent wines."

Charles Symington, November 1996

Tasting Notes

It is Peter and his son Charles Symington's opinion that the 1996 is one of the finest Vintages ever produced at Vesuvio. The wine is deep purple and opaque in colour with richly lifted floral aromas of violets and a massive flavour of blackcurrant fruit with firm tannins balanced with the usual Vesuvio sweetness.

Food pairing suggestion and serving

Quinta do Vesuvio 1996 will surely make any lunch or dinner a memorable one. It is a fabulous accompaniment to chocolate desserts, such as chocolate pudding, but can also be enjoyed on its own - it is an experience in itself.

Storage

Store the bottle horizontally in a dark place with constant temperature, ideally between 12°C and 15°C.

Decanting

Stand the bottle upright for a short while before you intend to decant (20 to 30 minutes at most). Pull the cork slowly and steadily and leave the bottle for a few minutes. Clean the neck of the bottle. Pour the wine into a clean and rinsed decanter. Once you have started pouring do not stop until you see the very first traces of sediment begin to appear out of the bottle. You may prefer to use a decanting funnel.

Wine Specifications

Alcohol: 20% vol (20°C)
Total acidity: 4.88 g/l tartaric acid
Baumé: 3.9

Reviews & Awards

18.5 out of 20 Points

"Putty/linseed on the nose and very sweet, round and rich. Flattering, lovely, smoky, exciting! Dense. Very, very good! Long, concentrated, explosive."

Jancis Robinson, jancisrobinson.com, 8th December 2008

SILVER MEDAL

International Wine Challenge 2006

"Intense, savoury, gamey, fruit cake elements coupled with liquorice. Intense, hugely aromatic sandalwood elements on the palate leads through to mid-length spritzy finish."