

Quinta de Saes Tinto



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?: This is an authentic, unmitigated Dão red – an archetypal expression of the elegance and minerality of this terroir. Explosive aromatics and freshness of fruit are the hallmarks of this entry level red.

RATING HISTORY: 2018 93 W&S, 2014 91 IWR, 91 W&S (Year's Best Bairrada, Dao & Douro)

GRAPE: 25% Touriga Nacional, 25% Alfrocheiro, 25% Jaen, 25% Tinta Pinheira. Sustainably grown vines planted between 1997-2002. Tended in granite-based soil with lines of clay sand at 500 m (1,640 ft) elevation.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: The fresh red fruit and delicate aromatics of the Quinta de Saes Tinto pair very well with roast poultry and game. Mushrooms and other umami-laden dishes are also fine pairs.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: This wine is macerated for 10 days, cold soak, to maximize aromatic extraction. Wild yeast fermentation in stainless fermentation vats, then aged for 18 months in 2nd and 3rd use large format French oak. Fined and filtered

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 500m (1640 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 26 inches per annum, with no irrigation.

TASTING NOTES Bright ruby-garnet. On the nose, bright fresh cherry, pomegranate, candied violet, rose petal and flint. On the palate, elegant and fresh, with floral and spice notes wrapped around a core of fresh cherry fruit. Finishes long, with mouthwatering acidity and a consistent beam of minerality through the finish.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13.0%

UPC CODE: 5606686000621

