

Granito Cru Dão Branco



For nearly two decades, Luis Seabra has been at the center of a cultural shift in Portuguese winemaking, leading a movement of young, independent winemakers making history by reclaiming historical vineyards, grape varieties, and techniques. Seabra started his career as a soil research analyst and winemaking professor; later, as a winemaker in Douro, he came to produce some of the most innovative and highly awarded wines in Portugal's history. Seabra launched his own small winery in 2013, dedicated to proving that fresh, elegant, terroir-driven still wines can be made in the Douro Valley.

Seabra is focused on working with old vineyards in Douro, as well as unique sites in neighboring DO Vinho Verde and Dão. He believes that old vines are more resilient and well-equipped to calmly handle the region's volatile weather, making them the best candidates to faithfully communicate a special terroir or vineyard site. Seabra's fundamental understanding of terroir coupled with his philosophy of minimal intervention in the vineyard and winery have launched him into the international eye as a leader of the New Portugal; according to Eric Asimov, he "is now making some of Portugal's most compelling wines, both white and red." In addition to his own wines, Seabra is a highly sought-after consulting winemaker and a mentor to younger winemakers. He is known for his love of cuisine and pairing food with the best wines of the world.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: While red field blends from Dão are appearing more frequently in the US market, white blends are less common. This example is the perfect representation of what a traditional white wine from this area would have tasted like a century ago, with two local varieties balancing out the region's noble white grape, Encruzado.

RATING HISTORY: 2021 92W&S

GRAPE: 60% Encruzado, 30% Bical, 10% Cercial. Sustainably grown vines planted around 1987 tended in granitic soils with quartz. This is a vegan wine.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: A famously talented home cook, Seabra loves to serve this wine with grilled fish or shellfish, and recommends the bright acidity as a counterpoint to creamy sauces. Other pairings include risotto, anything served with lots of butter, and aged cheeses.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: The grapes are harvested by hand, crushed and destemmed, then pressed and decanted into used 500L French oak barrels. The grapes are spontaneously co-fermented with indigenous yeast. The wine remains in barrel on its lees with no batonnage for 1 year, after which it is racked into stainless steel, where it rests for 6 months. This wine goes through full malolactic fermentation.

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: The Granito Cru parcel is in the Dão region, near Vila Nova da Tázem. This area lies in the foothills of the Serra da Estrela Mountain Range, mainland Portugal's highest point, and a heavily protected natural area known for its excellent stargazing. The Dão's cool climate is highly regarded for producing wines that are bright, lifted, and elegant. After experiencing a decline in the 1960s, this region was eclipsed by other regions with more international appeal; thanks to the work of vignerons like Seabra, this area is returning to its former glory.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13.5%

