

FONSECA VINTAGE 1997 PORT



Background Information

The backbone of Fonseca vintage ports are the wines drawn primarily from Fonseca's three quintas, all located in the Cima Corgo: Quinta de Santo António, Quinta do Cruzeiro, and Quinta do Panascal. The finest grapes from these quintas produce its classic vintage ports. The grapes are still trodden by foot in the stone 'lagares' of Cruzeiro and Panascal.

Fonseca vintage ports are renowned for their voluptuous rich fruit, mouthfilling density, tannic structure and 'grip'. They are wines of breed, balance and great complexity.

Notes on Viticultural Year and Harvest

The Winter and Spring of 1997 were warm and dry. The higher than normal temperatures in February and March brought on early bud burst and the berry set for all the vineyards was very good.

From flowering up to September there were frequent rain showers which meant that the initial advance to the season was lost to a more gradual ripening period. The weather during the harvest was extremely hot and extra effort was made to prolong the fermentations. Yields however were down by around 30%.

The high quality was evident in the wines from the start, with the intensity of the must, good integration of spirit and powerful attractive aromas.

Press Comments

James Suckling, *The Wine Spectator*, July 1999

"Guimaraens' Fonseca '97 is one of the finest wines of the vintage. It is a fabulous young Port, with stunning aromas of liquorice, tar and berries, gobs of thick, chewy tannins and a long finish. I placed this young Port in Wine Spectator's classic quality category, 95-100 points.

Robert Parker, *The World's Greatest Wine Estates*, 2005 – 93 points

"...this dark ruby/purple colored wine offers a floral, exotic, flamboyant bouquet and a sweet, fleshy style, but not a great deal of weight or massiveness. Heady alcohol, sweet tannin, and a velvety texture make for a gorgeous finish."

Roger Voss, *Wine Enthusiast*, February 2001 – 96 points

"Classically sweet, opulent fruit, with fine concentration of sweet black-fruit flavors and chocolate. The typical Fonseca iron fist in a velvet glove."

Tasting Notes

An attractive, floral scented nose, elegant and complex; raspberry and fresh berry aromas. A very elegant, smooth and complete wine. Hints of tobacco and cedar wood spice – enormous depth. Lovely rich fruit and big tannins. Long finish.

Storage / Handling

The ideal storage conditions are up to 16° Celsius and most importantly at a constant temperature. The bottle should rest on its side, thus keeping the cork moist and therefore an effective seal. When coming to decant the wine, stand the bottle upright 24 hours before drinking to allow the collected sediment to fall to the bottom of the bottle. After uncorking the wine, you must pour in a slow, steady stream into your decanter, carefully watching the emerging liquid to ensure that only the clear wine is poured, leaving the sediment behind.

Serving Suggestions

Walnuts are an excellent accompaniment to Vintage Port, as are various cheeses such as Stilton and Dorset Blue Vinny. So too are dried fruits such as apricots or figs. Alternatively, simply savour the unadulterated taste in a good glass with good company.

