

GUIMARAENS 1996 VINTAGE PORT



Background Information

In the early 1950's, the rising demand for vintage ports led Fonseca Guimaraens to create a second vintage port under the 'Guimaraens' label in 'non-classic', or undeclared years. Guimaraens vintage port is produced from the same three Fonseca quintas in the Cima Corgo which provide the backbone of Fonseca's vintage ports in declared years. Because they are produced from wines from the same sources as the classic Fonseca vintage ports, Guimaraens vintage ports consistently show the classic Fonseca style.

Somewhat earlier maturing than Fonseca vintage ports, they are aged in Fonseca's lodges in Vila Nova de Gaia and are only released for sale upon reaching maturity, which may be a decade or more after the vintage date. There is a smaller blend of Guimaraens vintage produced and these non classic wines, for their quality and rarity offer an exceptional value.

Notes on Viticultural Year and Harvest

The viticultural season began with a very wet winter. January and February were colder than normal resulting in a late bud burst. Cool, wet conditions continued until just prior to flowering on 25th May. Flowering took place in hot weather and, when combined with the large number of inflorescences at bud burst, resulted in the largest potential yields since 1900.

There was a considerable amount of rainfall in September which caused many people to start picking. However, strong winds and hot weather, between the 27-30th followed which dried out the bunches and allowed the grapes to ripen fully. This was reflected in a marked improvement in all ports produced from 29th September onwards.

Press Comments

International Wine Challenge, May 2013 – Silver Medal

Wine Advocate Magazine, March 2013 – 92 Points

James Suckling, Wine Spectator, Special report: 1996 Vintage Port

"The 1996 vintage is not a great year for Vintage Port by any means, but it is a very good one..."

"Lovely, ripe wine with lots of berry and cherry aromas and flavours. Medium-bodied and very sweet, with soft tannins and a fresh fruit finish."

Tasting Notes

Rich ruby, pale rim. Ripe mature fruit. Strawberry and cassis. Delicate spicy, floral and woody notes. Firm grip, dense centre with good plummy fruit and fine almost tarry, liquorice flavours.

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. After uncorking the wine, 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 blue veined and other richly flavoured cheeses. So too are dried fruits such as apricots or figs. Alternatively, simply savour the rich and complex flavours of the wine on their own in a generously proportioned glass with good company.

