

# PANASCAL 2008 VINTAGE PORT



## Background Information

Quinta do Panascal is a substantial Grade A property located in the heart of the Tavora valley, in the Cima Corgo region of the Douro. The Quinta undertook an ambitious planting programme from 1987-1995 and is now one of the largest Quintas in the Douro valley, producing top quality port.

A Quinta do Panascal Vintage port is produced only when a general Fonseca declaration is not made, as this wine forms the backbone of a Fonseca Vintage port blend. The decision to bottle a Quinta do Panascal vintage is taken when the wine is judged to be of exceptional quality. Like a Fonseca vintage port the wine spends two years ageing in wooden casks before being bottled. However, the wine is not released immediately after it is bottled but left to mature in Fonseca's cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia until it is ready for drinking; normally ten years after the harvest.

## Notes on Viticultural Year and Harvest

The 2008 winter was drier and colder than normal with only 258mm of rain falling at Pinhão between November and March. Fortunately, a wet April ensured the ground water reserves were sufficiently replenished. Flowering occurred under wet and cold conditions and as a result poor set affected all grape varieties, resulting in lower yields, but with great concentration of flavour.

The temperatures for the 2008 growing season were remarkably similar to 2007, with lower than average temperatures and a mild August. The final ripening of the grapes was greatly enhanced with rain falling between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> September and a further downpour just before the vintage started.

Picking started on 25<sup>th</sup> September at Quinta do Panascal. A key characteristic of the entire vintage were the hot days combined with cold nights giving perfect weather conditions not only for the final ripening of the grapes, but also for the fermentation rates. This provided wonderful freshness of fruit, complexity and great structure.

## Press Comments

### Jamie Goode, Wine Anorak, November 2010 – 95 Points

“ Beautiful nose: sweet blackcurrant fruit with a savoury spiciness and some blackcurrant bud richness. The palate is dense and spicy with great concentration and lovely savouriness. Rich blackcurrant and blackberry fruit with nice tannic structure. A superb port with lovely density and structure.”

## Tasting Notes

Opaque purple colour with narrow violet rim. The nose opens with an unrestrained surge of dense concentrated cassis and black cherry laced with a sumptuous confection of molasses and dark chocolate. As it develops, notes of damson and plum emerge from the seemingly impenetrable layer of dark berry fruit followed by heady scents of aromatic herbs and exotic notes of black pepper and sandalwood. On the palate the wine's rich luscious fruitiness combines with the close grained and wonderfully integrated tannins to produce an unrestrained eruption of texture and flavour. The opulent black fruit flavours are seemingly endless and are lifted by a zesty freshness on the 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. 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.

