



# Portugal



## The Regions

### Minho

This is the land of Vinho Verde! Portugal's largest and most northern wine region, known for crisp aromatic whites with hints of effervescence. These wines are perfect next to salads, fish, veggies, and citrusy sauces. Part of the reason these wines are so well suited to seafood is Minho's proximity to the Atlantic. It right on the northern coast! There are two rivers that influence this region; the Minho, which acts like a natural boundary between Portugal and Spain and the Douro River. Some tell-tale indicators for Vinho Verde are a slight spritz with lemonade flavors and thirst quenching *chugability*.

### Alentejo

In the south-central part of Portugal we find generous red wines with rich with fruit, mocha, and elegant tannins. The climate here is warmer than in Minho, actually it could be described as hot; with varying soil types. The region has a long history of producing wine, and some ancient techniques are still used today. One in particular is "Talhas de Barro," which is the practice of maturing wine in clay vessels like during the time of the Romans.

### Dão

Named after the river that runs through it; this inland wine region is just south of Minho. Here we are seeing some wines come from higher elevation; most vineyards falling between 200-500 meters above sea level. Being highlighted by wine lovers as "the region to watch for quality." These wines are typically lighter in style than some of the other regions, but posses great potential for age-ability.

# Tasting Notes

## Dom Diogo Vinho Verde 2019

100% Azal

**Notes:** Fruity nose that jumps out of the glass. Soft and fresh on the palate with balanced acidity.

**Pairing:** Salads, grilled chicken, summer time sitting in your kiddie pool.

## Dom Diogo Rosé Vinho Verde 2020

100% Padeiro

**Notes:** Super bright rich pink in color with a fresh red berry nose to match it's crisp, intense aroma.

**Pairing:** Perfect appetizer wine, also great with fresh pasta and light tomato sauces.

## Lagar de Darei 2015

40% Touriga Nacional 30% Tinto Roriz 15% Jaen  
15% Alfrocheiro

**Notes:** Complex and earthy on the nose, and boasts bright red cherry and fresh purple flowers. The wine has soft tannins and bright acid

**Pairing:** Savory dishes, stewed and cured meats.

## Bojador 2019

50% Aragonez 30% Touriga Nacional 20% Trincadeira

**Notes:** Lively red berry aromas and flavors with a medium to full body, soft tannins, and hints of chocolate.

**Pairing:**



## A Short(ish) History of Portugal

Wine cultivation started in Portugal around 2,000 BC, and a lot of the ancient history here is fairly similar to what we covered with Spain and other parts of Europe. So lets skip ahead a little...

Portugal was founded in 1143 by Dom Alfonso Henrique, several years after he defeated his mother, Countess Teresa of Portugal. By the 14th century into the 15th & 16th there was a great expansion for Portuguese wine. Especially in 1386 when the Treaty of Windsor was signed between England and Portugal, creating a beneficial trade climate, and allowed Portuguese wine to fill the gaps that were often left by disputes between the English and the French. In 1703 the Methuen Treaty was signed; providing preferential tariffs for Portuguese wines at the expense of wines from other neighboring countries, but namely France. During this time fortified wines like Port and Madeira were gaining popularity for their flavor and stability. These wines were able to make long sea voyages without spoiling, and so they became choice among the American Colonies. With the rise in popularity also came a rise in fraud and adulteration. Elderberry juice, sugar, and spices were added to grapes grown from outside of the Douro, and then passed off as Port.

As a result the Marquis de Pombal created the Douro Wine Company, and the very first regulation was to sanction that the Douro was the only region that could produce Port. As a result of previous fraud; all elderberry plants were removed from the Douro.

So tied was Port to the English that during the Napoleonic Wars; French and Spanish troops invaded Portugal in an attempt to hurt British trade interests. The economic damage of the invasion far outweighed the vineyard damage; British merchants fled before the arrival of the French, cellars were raided, and by 1809 the invasions had ended, but other beverages were gaining popularity so Portuguese wines sales were slow to return.

Like lots of other countries that had colonies; they abused their power over wine trade in Brazil; forcing them to exclusively import Portuguese wine at astronomical prices. That is until Brazil won their independence in 1822.

In the 20th Century; revolution gave way to democracy in Portugal, and eventually lead to Portugal's entry into the European Union in 1986. This provided much needed funding for smaller producers; while encouraging upgrades in wine technology.

# The Wineries

## Quinta de Raza

- Family owned estate since 1769
- Around 50 hectares located in the heart of the Minho
- Microclimate influenced by the Tamega River and the Mario Mountains
- Aims to preserve the natural balance of the environment by preserving biodiversity

## Bojador

- Named for the Western Sahara Cape the Portuguese Sailors navigated around the 15th century
- Organic farmed indigenous varieties
- Uses traditional Talhas (clay pots) for fermentation

## Casa de Darei

- Third generation estate of the Rivvo Family
- Located in the Dao Valley in central Portugal
- A dedicated nature reserve comprises of a vast majority of the area
- Plants clovers as a natural ground cover to encourage healthy growth
- Striving to showcase natural terroir

## A little bit About Vinho Verde

A personal summer favorite! These wines are usually a blend of up to six varieties including Azal, Arinto, Alvarinho(Albariño), Avesso, Loureiro, and Trajadura. These in your box are more unique, since they are single varietal. Azal is known for super high acidity, and bright lemondade flavors for days. The Padeiro is especially interesting since it was on the verge of extinction, and was brought back by Quinta de Raza. This rosé is so juicy and fun, but is balanced with just the right amount of acidity. These wines are perfect for everything from fish tacos to a perfect beach day! One of the most common markers for Vinho Verde is it's classic light spritz, which can make this wine feel like soda for adults. Once upon a time this was a naturally occurring effervescence, but today several more entry level producers will blast the wine with CO2 like they would with Prosecco. The cool thing about that is that CO2 can act as a stabilizing agent for the wine opposed to introducing sulfur.

### Sources:

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