

## WINE DESCRIPTION

# DOW'S 1997 VINTAGE PORT

  
ESTABLISHED 1798

# DOW'S PORT

### Dow's

Dow's is owned and managed by the fourth generation of the Symington family, Port producers since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The family, whose experience dates back over 100 years, supervises all the vineyards, winemaking and ageing of this wine.

Dow's owns two of the Douro's finest Quintas, Senhora da Ribeira and Bomfim. They were acquired in 1890 and 1896, making Dow's one of the first houses to invest in premium vineyards.

### Tasting Notes

The Dow's 1997 Vintage is an outstanding wine, made slightly drier in the classic Dow tradition, which due to its superb structure will evolve into a classic vintage port. Very dark opaque purple colour, with a typically spicy nose and intense underlying aromas of blackberries and blackcurrants. On the palate enormous weight and structure with a marvellous balance of dense black fruit flavours wrapped in a tannic cloak.

### The Viticultural Year

The winter of 1997 was brief albeit short. The lodge at Quinta do Bomfim is only at 100 metres altitude, alongside the banks of the Douro, nevertheless it was completely covered in snow for a few days in January. The weather changed dramatically in February, when daily temperatures were 4 degrees centigrade above average, and no rain fell at Bomfim until March, leading to bud burst some two weeks earlier than usual. Wet weather returned in April and May and temperatures cooled down through to August, allowing for a well balanced maturation. High temperatures throughout the end of August and September brought about an excellent final ripening period. During this time the difference between day time and night time temperatures was higher than usual creating optimum conditions for colour synthesis in the grapes. Picking started at Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira on the 18<sup>th</sup> September some two weeks after the heavy rainstorms of the end of August. At Bomfim we started picking on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and ended on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. Conditions for picking at both Quintas were ideal, cool and dry. Sugar readings averaged an excellent 13° Baumé.

### Reviews & Awards

#### Wine Spectators 2000 TOP 100

Dow Vintage Port: 25<sup>th</sup> in this elite list of the Worlds best wines.

"Their racy style renders Dow Vintage Ports very enjoyable at a young age, yet they evolve beautifully with time. The 1997, firm in tannins, comes primarily from the Quinta do Bomfim vineyard. 10,000 cases made."

Bruce Sanderson, Wine Spectator, December 31<sup>st</sup> 2000

#### 95 Points out of 100

Special Report: Vintage Port:

"Super. I love the nose of this young Port, which shows raisin, spice and a little stemminess. Full-bodied, medium-sweet, with loads of ripe tannins and a long, long finish. Really racy and exciting. Even better than when tasted from barrel."

James Suckling, Wine Spectator, February 29<sup>th</sup> 2000

#### 18 Points out of 20

"Backward nose. Very complete. Full. Lovely fruit and grip. Very stylish indeed. Very long on the palate. Very Dow. Very lovely. Very fine."

Clive Coates, The Vine, September 1999

Peter Symington, responsible with his son Charles for the vineyards and wine making, has been made 'Fortified Wine Maker of the Year' an extraordinary 6 times by the 'Wine Challenge'. Nobody else has won this important award more than twice. In 2003, his son Charles won the same award.

### Vintage Overview

One of the great Vintages of the decade, with full-bodied and harmonious wines. General declaration.

### Contemporary Family Comments

"All the wine at Senhora da Ribeira was made in the lagares by foot treading in the time honoured way. For the first time some of our finest wines were also made in the small ultra-modern stainless steel fermenters at our new Quinta do Sol winery, the most modern in the Douro. All the equipment at Sol worked fantastically well and allowed us to make a very high degree of selection and separation of the best grapes. The results have been quite excellent and have more than fulfilled our objectives".

Peter Symington  
October 1997

### Wine Specifications

**Alcohol:** 20% vol (20°C)

**Total acidity:** 4.35 g/l tartaric acid

**Baumé:** 3.1

