



1,030 CASES (12 x 75cl) - 16% OF THE QUINTA'S TOTAL PRODUCTION IN 2022



Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira is one of the classic riverside Douro Quintas and has belonged to Dow's Port since 1890. Famous for being one of the two principal estates that make up the legendary Dow's Vintage Ports, the Quinta is also renowned for producing magnificent Single Quinta Vintage Ports.



Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira, viewed from Quinta do Vesúvio



The 'Vinha Grande' vineyard at Senhora da Ribeira



Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira

THE PROPERTY

Senhora da Ribeira (*The Lady of the River*) is named after the small chapel which has stood for centuries next to an ancient river crossing guarded by two castles, one on either bank.

Five generations of Symingtons have produced wine at Senhora da Ribeira and unsurprisingly we have a special affinity for this far-flung corner of the Douro. Older generations remember that there was no road access until well into the 20th century, and the adventurous journey from Porto took place by train to the Vesúvio station on the opposite bank, followed by a boat trip across the river.

All the Senhora da Ribeira wines are produced at the property's specialist on-site winery where small batches of grapes are trodden and fermented in modern *lagares*.

THE VINEYARDS

The Quinta is situated in the remote, hot, dry Douro Superior sub-region and commands a magnificent position on the north bank, overlooking a broad sweep of the Douro River. The schist soils, challenging conditions, and high proportion of old vines result in very low yields – amongst the lowest of any wine-producing region on earth. Yields can be as low as 500g per vine and are rarely above 1 kg.

The late ripening Touriga Franca, which thrives in abundant sunshine, is particularly suited to the southern orientation and is a key component of the Senhora da Ribeira Vintage Ports. The finest Touriga Franca parcels are found in the Pedreira vineyards, surrounding the house and winery and descending to the river.

The other essential part of Senhora da Ribeira Vintage Ports is Touriga Nacional. The best Touriga Nacional parcels are in the Vinha Grande, planted in two swathes behind the house, rising to 400 metres. Not as resilient as the Franca, the Touriga Nacional benefits from this cooler east-facing aspect and the higher altitude. This is crucial in delivering the acidity that gives Senhora da Ribeira Vintage Ports their freshness, balance and staying power.

THE YEAR

Charles Symington, head winemaker, began his 2022 harvest report as follows: *'On the eve of the 2022 harvest, we faced some of the greatest challenges that our family has seen. While we have multi-generational knowledge of farming our vineyards, the conditions this year were so extraordinary that nobody knew how the vines would react.'*

As our harvest preparations began, we knew that we were facing unprecedented conditions in the Douro. The three months before the vintage were among the hottest and driest ever recorded and, according to the Portuguese Met Office, the country had been in severe drought since the winter. At Senhora da Ribeira, between November 2021 and August 2022, we had two-thirds less rainfall than the 30-year average.

Over the last few years, we have grown accustomed to breaking records; from the earliest harvest in 2017, to the wettest spring in 2018, and the lowest yields in 2020. With rising average temperatures, increasingly erratic and declining rainfall, and more frequent and more intense summer heatwaves, the impact of the climate crisis is very real in the Douro.

August maturation studies showed low sugar readings and acidity levels due to the drought. However, phenolic ripeness was advanced, and the thin skins of the Touriga Nacional and Touriga Franca suggested we could produce wines with good structure. Given that the hot and dry weather was forecast to continue, we decided to start picking in the Douro Superior on 22nd August, including Senhora da Ribeira. This was the earliest we have ever picked grapes in the Douro.

The turning point came in the first week of September when average daytime temperatures thankfully dropped to between 22°C and 25°C, allowing maturations to progress evenly and gradually. At this time we began to pick our prime Touriga Nacional from the Vinha Grande plots at Senhora da Ribeira, which delivered very fine, deep-coloured wines with moderate baumés of 13°. Unsurprisingly, these wines provided the backbone of the Dow's Senhora da Ribeira 2022 Vintage Port blend.



THE WINE

TASTING NOTE

This wine is a perfect exponent of the year as defined by our head winemaker, Charles Symington with its perfumed, floral aromas and exquisite purity of fruit. This Senhora da Ribeira gifts a sublime fragrance of roses and secondary notes of orange blossom. The lithe, sinewy fruit suggests kirsch and traces of strawberry pierced by streaks of piquant acidity that provide lifted freshness. The wine is seductive, graceful, and irresistibly charming.

WINE SPECIFICATION

Alcohol by volume: 20% vol.

Total acidity: 4.77

Baumé: 3.45°

pH: 3.60

Bottled (unfiltered): May 2024

Winemakers: Charles Symington and Ricardo Carvalho

GRAPE VARIETY COMPOSITION

TOURIGA NACIONAL: 55% | TOURIGA FRANCA: 26% | SOUSÃO: 19%

QUINTA DA SENHORA DA RIBEIRA

Vineyard Layout · *Disposição da Vinha*

