



QUINTA DO VESUVIO
2011 VINTAGE PORT



QUINTA DO VESUVIO: THE HOUSE AND CHAPEL

PRODUCTION: 1,250 CASES - 12/75CL

Foot-trodden in lagares

Quinta do Vesuvio experienced a generally dry viticultural year in 2011, although the previous autumn and winter rainfall had been above average; 312mm were recorded between November 2010 and February 2011, or 70% of the total rain during the entire viticultural year at Vesuvio. This replenished the water reserves in the subsoil and thus helped to offset the almost complete lack of rain during the early to mid-summer. As is the case in so many classic Vintage years, abundant winter rains are key to the development of the vines during the spring and summer leading up to the harvest.

April and May were very warm and sufficient rain fell to encourage vine growth and brought about the earliest flowering for decades on the 13th of May. This also gave rise to fungal infestations, which were swiftly addressed, successfully safeguarding the potential of the crop.

Hot temperatures in late June contributed to some crop reduction but otherwise vine development advanced at a good pace with veraison coming precociously in early July. Sugar readings progressed steadily but phenolic development lagged behind. The very hot and dry conditions compounded this situation, which was attenuated to some degree by slightly below average temperatures through July and August with surprisingly cool nights, temperatures dropping as low as 10°C on occasion.

However, as the viticulture and winemaking teams quietly prayed for rain, a decisive turnaround was about to unfold. One of the Vesuvio viticulturists summed up the sense of relief felt by all, writing: “After a bit of a non-summer came an extraordinary autumn, bringing weather that the gods of grapes wouldn’t have dared to dream about.” He was referring to two heaven-sent showers at Vesuvio, one on August 21st (22mm) and the other on September 1st (16mm) — enough to refresh



the vines and place phenolic development back on track; as Baumés dipped, so the phenolics quickly recovered. He was also alluding to the perfect summer conditions which ensued, culminating in absolutely perfect picking weather. In fact some remarkably hot temperatures were felt through September at Vesuvio, registering what the Portuguese Meteorological Office classifies as ‘tropical nights’ — those on which the temperature does not drop below 20°C.

The first lagares were filled at Vesuvio, on September 13th and 14th and treading got off to a start in time-honoured fashion; it immediately became apparent from the fantastic colour of the musts and the rich aromas (in particular from the Touriga Nacional) that filled the winery that Vesuvio was producing some very special wines. Great rewards were beginning to be reaped from what had started out as a challenging viticultural year.

The usual picking order was followed under clear blue skies day after glorious day. The Touriga Nacional, which makes up 40% of the Vesuvio 2011 Vintage Port, was sourced from the Pombal and the Raposa vineyards, lying at altitudes of 150-200 metres and 300-350 metres, respectively. The Nacional delivered freshness, structure and phenomenal colour, as well as gorgeous aromas of esteva (rockrose). The other principal component, the late-ripening Touriga Franca



THE VALE DA TEJA VINEYARD AT QUINTA DO VESUVIO



TRADITIONAL TREADING

(45% of the blend) took maximum advantage of the warm, sunny conditions, ripening fully and evenly, and realizing its full potential. Sourced from the predominantly west-facing Vale da Teja vineyard (30 years is the average age of these plantings), the Franca provided superb floral characteristics (violets, roses) and velvety tannins, contributing exceptional elegance to the overall blend. True to its later ripening cycle, the Franca was last to be picked from the 1st to the 9th of October. The newly installed possibility of gently warming the must in the stone lagares proved its worth in aiding colour extraction from the Franca grapes, which were arriving in the winery at a cool 12°C.

Tasting Note: Quinta do Vesuvio 2011 Vintage Port is a beautiful, powerful and aromatic wine with a heady floral fragrance. On the palate it ripples with sumptuous liquorice and blueberry flavours, which coat the well-integrated peppery tannins. A crisp acidity underscores the wine’s profile, revealing a wine that is supple, yet taut. This is a beautifully balanced wine with the classic Vesuvio velvet-like elegance that has turned this Quinta into one of the greatest producers of Vintage Port in the Douro over the last 20 years.

Grape Variety Percentages:

- Touriga Franca: 45%
- Touriga Nacional: 40%
- Tinta Barroca: 10%
- Tinta Amarela: 5%

Wine Specification:

- Alcohol by volume: 20% v/v (20°C)
- Total acidity: 4.45 (g/l)
- Baumé: 3.90
- Bottled during April / May 2013 without any fining or filtration
- Winemakers: Charles Symington and Mário Natário