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wines worth sharing

Barros Ruby Port

Grape Varietals: Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca, Tinta Roriz & Tinta Barroca

Growing Region: Douro Valley, Portugal

Head Winemaker: Carlos Alves



Established in 1913 - Barros is renowned for producing consistently high-quality Port wines. Like most, they have vineyards and primary processing facilities in the heart of the Douro Valley - with their ageing cellars located in Vila Nova de Gaia. A great deal of their success came from Old Tawnies - complex wines matured in oak casks. On two occasions I have had the pleasure of visiting their stunning terraced vineyards located in the heart of the Douro Valley.

A great deal of media focus is given to vintage, aged and rare styles of Port wines and typically in the cooler months. So even during the southern hemispheres recent heat-wave, there is a Port wine that can be enjoyed and pairs with some many lighter occasions. So, it is time to talk about another unsung hero - one of the most approachable and versatile Port styles - Ruby.

Harvest is carried out by hand, due to the nature of the traditional varietals, growing on steep, narrow stone terraces cut into mountain faces lining the Douro River. The fruit for this wine traveled only a short distance down to their pressing facilities.

The wine was vinified in traditional lagares along with maceration and ageing in vats. The grapes undergo stalk-removal and crushing before fermentation, with an extended maceration on skins with the aim to obtain a vibrant wine both in colour, aromas, flavours and character. This process took place in vats at controlled temperatures between 28-30°C, until reaching the desired alcohol and sugar level. Fermentation was arrested by the addition of grape spirit in order to produce a naturally sweet wine. The resulting wine was matured in wooden casks (*pipes = 550 litres*) for up to 3 years. The addition of grape spirit at the ideal moment sets the balance between the wines structure and flavour profile. This moment is chosen by Carlos and depends on the varietal mix, maturation and the final style required - later transported to Vila Nova de Gaia for ageing, blending and bottling.

As you pour this vibrant rich ruby red Port wine into your glass - your senses are greeted by inviting aromas of red berries and subtle spice. It has a very fresh, fruit driven and naturally berry sweet palate, with residual sugar of 104g/L. The palate is bright and engaging, marked by harmonious candy characters provided by the generous red fruit flavours resulting in a lingering, well-balanced, vibrant summer berry finish. *Treat yourself - this wine is definitely worth sharing.*

This Barros Ruby Port has 19.5% Alc./vol. Chill gently and serve in a small wine glass at 8-10°C.

Cellaring Potential:

Drinking perfectly well now, when 'opened' store in a cool place and ideally enjoy within 4-6 weeks - so as not to miss any of its vibrant character.

Food Pairing Suggestions:

Perfect wine as a chilled aperitif (*with lemonade*) or served chilled straight and paired with an accompaniment to fresh fruit-based desserts and ice - *enjoy.*

A well balanced, vibrant style Ruby Port.

