



985 CASES 12/75CL · 20% OF THE QUINTA'S PRODUCTION



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.



*Touriga Franca vines close to the house and chapel at Senhora da Ribeira*



*The 'Vinha Grande' Touriga Nacional vines at Senhora da Ribeira*



*Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira, alongside the Douro River*

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## 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 Vestúvio 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*.

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## 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.

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## THE YEAR

Charles Symington, head winemaker, summarised the 2019 harvest as follows: *'Moderate summer temperatures, with an absence of heat waves (as we've had in recent years) and exceptionally well-timed rain just before and during the vintage, were determinant in shaping a very good year.'*

We had an unusually dry winter and spring and come summertime the vines were in need of water to sustain maturations. However, the virtual absence of rain between May and late August was counter-balanced by cooler than usual summer conditions. This favoured steady phenolic ripening, but it was clear that more rain was needed to achieve complete ripeness. Perfectly timed heaven-sent showers on August 25th immediately began to recover lagging maturations, bringing sugar levels up to a desirable 14° Baumé.

The vintage started at Senhora da Ribeira on September 9th, picking the Tinta Barroca, Alicante Bouschet and Sousão. On the 21st, bang on the equinox, we had some further welcome rain, and this water top-up was perfect for the balanced development of the Touriga Franca, as well as for fine tuning the Touriga Nacional. Picking was briefly paused to allow the vines to rehydrate and was resumed on the 23rd with the Touriga Nacional from the prized 'Vinha Grande' parcels, which was in an ideal state of ripeness and looking particularly promising with small berries indicating good concentration.

The later ripening Touriga Franca, from the vineyards surrounding the estate house and winery, was picked from the end of September and into early October, benefiting from clear skies and moderate temperatures. It came into the winery phenolically ripe and in excellent condition, although a little less concentrated than the Touriga Nacional. The lagares looked very promising with good colour and expressive aromas and it was evident that some very fine wines were in the making. Freshness and liveliness, in contrast to the concentration of recent years, are the hallmarks of this vintage. Yields were closer to average following the exceptionally small years of 2017 and 2018.



## THE WINE

### TASTING NOTE

This typically floral wine shows the hallmark violet aromas so characteristic of this terroir, with some secondary aromas of the typical Douro flower, rock rose, also coming through – all lifted, fresh and elegant, reflecting the year's cooler profile. Rich, ripe black fruit flavours, simultaneously forward and rounded fill the palate, with juicy tannins complementing the fruit and providing balance to the wine's fine structure.

While tasting the wine Charles commented that it has, "Senhora da Ribeira written all over it."

### WINE SPECIFICATION

Alcohol by volume: 20% v/v (20°C)

Total acidity: 4.8 (g/l)

Baumé: 3.5°

pH: 3.6

Bottled: May 2021 (no filtration)

Winemakers: Charles Symington and Ricardo Carvalho

## GRAPE VARIETY COMPOSITION

TOURIGA FRANCA: 53% | TOURIGA NACIONAL: 26% | SOUSÃO: 21%

### QUINTA DA SENHORA DA RIBEIRA

Vineyard Layout · *Disposição da Vinha*

