

Client: Tagus Creek
Source: Woman & Home (Main)
Date: 01 November 2013
Page: 179
Reach: 353731
Size: 537cm2
Value: 13301.49



Discover Portugal

For our expert Tim Atkin, MW, Portuguese wines are great value and waiting to be discovered



What's the most underrated wine-producing country in the world? You could make a case for Greece, Argentina and even Germany, but I'd choose Portugal. Put Mateus Rosé and a glass of Ruby Port to one side and this comparatively small nation on the edge of Western Europe is undiscovered territory for most wine drinkers.

We are missing out. Portugal has a more interesting line-up of native grapes than neighbouring Spain and makes a diverse range of wines, from fortified Madeira to light, thirst-quenching Vinho Verde, via exciting reds from regions such as the Douro and Alentejo.

Portugal shares two grapes with Spain (Alvarinho and Aragonez are synonyms for Albariño and Tempranillo), and uses international varieties such as Chardonnay, Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon, but it's the local varieties that are most interesting. Look out for whites made from Arinto, Encruzado and

Portugal has a more interesting line-up of native grapes than neighbouring Spain

Fernão Pires, and reds from Baga, Castelão, Trincadeira, Touriga Franca and (best of all) Touriga Nacional. They are all thrillingly distinctive.

Thanks to Port, that famous, sun-baked wine from the Douro Valley, and the beaches of the Algarve, people think of Portugal as uniformly hot. There are certainly parts of the country, such as the Alentejo, where temperatures reach 100°F, but the more northerly, coastal areas, such as the Minho, Dão and Bairrada, are cooler and produce wines with more bite and acidity.

The upshot of all this is a group of wines unlike anything you'll find elsewhere in Europe. They taste great in situ, especially with Portuguese food, but they are delicious back in the UK too. They also represent cracking value for money. So pull a few corks. It's time you discovered life beyond Mateus Rosé.

2010 The Wine Selection Dão, Sogrape (£5.75, 13%, Asda)

Dão is not as well known as the neighbouring Douro Valley, but it makes wines that are every bit as good. This Touriga Nacional-based blend is bright and violet perfumed, with refreshing red fruits.



What I'm drinking...

2012 TAPADA DE VILLAR VINHO VERDE (£6.99, 10.5%, MARKS & SPENCER)

This is a typically fresh, spritzy, tangy white with low alcohol and refreshing, citrus-like acidity. It's a perfect, wet-your-whistle aperitif, but works perfectly with seafood too. Try it with food editor Jane's Moules marinières*.



*Find the recipe on womanandhome.com

Client: Tagus Creek
Source: Woman & Home (Main)
Date: 01 November 2013
Page: 179
Reach: 353731
Size: 537cm2
Value: 13301.49



2012 Tagus Creek Shiraz/Trincadeira, Tejo (£6.19, 13.5%, Tesco)

A rare sighting of an international grape (Shiraz) in Portugal, although it's blended with local Trincadeira. The result is a stylish, juicy red with notes of blueberry, plum and subtle, smoky oak.



2010 Tinto da Anfora, Alentejo (£8.99, 14%, Waitrose)

This blend of Aragonez, Trincadeira and Cabernet Sauvignon hails from the Alentejo region. It's a serious red, and boasts fig, plum, sweet vanilla oak flavours and a firm tannic backbone.



2011 Esporão Branco Reserva (£11.99, 14.5%, Cambridge Wine Merchants)

The grapes may be unfamiliar (Roupeiro, Arinto, Antão Vaz, Semillon), but this will appeal to lovers of oaked Chardonnay and southern Rhône blends. Nutty, creamy and savoury, with underlying citrus fruit acidity.



2011 Aliança Bairrada Reserva (£6.50, 14%, The Wine Society)

Local Baga is blended with Touriga Nacional and Merlot here, producing the acidity and tannin of classic Bairrada but with more softness and sweetness. The wine works best with rich food.



2011 Quinta do Crasto, Douro (£11.50, 14.5%, greatwestern wine.co.uk)

A key member of a dynamic group called the Douro Boys, this sleek, scented, sensitively oaked red is soft and ripe, with sweet, spicy, clove and blackberry fruit intensity, and a long finish.



2007 Taylor's LBV Port (£13.99, 20%, Morrisons)

This was one of the best recent vintages for Port, and it shows in the intensity of this dense, smoky, fiery LBV from one of the region's best producers. Flavours of chocolate, black plums and sturdy tannins mean that this will keep well too. **w&h**



PHOTOGRAPH TREVOR LEIGHTON STILL-LIFE PHOTOGRAPHS FULL STOP PHOTOGRAPHY PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS