



2011 Harvest Report

Overall, 2011 was marked by low rainfall and relatively fresh temperatures, except for the early summer heat wave. Indeed, germination, followed by blooming took place two weeks earlier than in 2010, giving rise to major vegetative growth in late April, early May. This advance was maintained throughout the summer, forcing the initial harvests to start in early August.

Primary infections of downy mildew in late April were immediately circumscribed by sulphate, limiting secondary infections which, along with the major expansion of vegetation, could have resulted in a great loss of production as with many vineyards in the region. However, it was really the persistent drought and a heat wave at the end of June that caused the most damage to certain vineyards or reduced the average weight of the bunches. In short, quantities almost identical to the vintage of 2009 were harvested, yet 23% lower than those of 2010.

Thus, the yield of Quinta dos Bons Ares remained stable, that of Ervamoira was reduced by 22% and that of Bom Retiro declined 38%. Mainly the Touriga Francesa, Barroca and Mistura grapes were those that suffer most from the weather conditions, with yield losses of 40% compared to 2010.

The Ervamoira white grapes (Upper Douro), harvested at generally low temperatures but with optimal maturity, produced fresh, long and complex wines. Viosinho wines, picked at higher temperatures, turned out less fresh but with more body and ripe fruit aromas. The red wines coming from plantations in Ervamoira since 2001 show a clear improvement in quality, namely the Touriga Nacional grapes that give rise to very elegant wines with unusual freshness. Some Touriga Francesa wines give the impression of being a little light but remain flavorful. Most of the wines from this estate are fresh, concentrated and have many aromas.

Quinta do Bom Retiro (Cima Corgo) also had an increase in quality for Touriga Nacional vines planted in 2001. The latter produced more complex and interesting wines than those from other years. As for the older vines, they were picked at a higher temperature, resulting in more mature and heavy wines.



At Quinta dos Bons Ares (Upper Douro, an altitude of 600m), the Viosinho white wine, harvested at 12º, is quite interesting, complex and mineral. Rabigato, harvested a little later at 13.5º is quite fruity, although less fresh. In summary, this estate's white grapes show themselves to be fresh and fruity with a long finish. The red wines of Quinta dos Bons Ares were all deliberately picked at high temperatures in order to obtain a ripeness rich in aromas. These wines are aromatically fresher and less concentrated than those produced by other estates. They have, however, different and interesting characteristics: minerality, a fresher fruit and optimal acidity.

Misleading with respect to quantities, the harvest of 2011 ultimately provides a broad selection of fresh, fruity and elegant wines which provide very interesting batches.