

November 2021

Robert Parker

MARK SQUIRES

Robert Parker created the original rating system with the first issue of The Wine Advocate, and it remains unchanged to this day. The Wine Advocate takes a hard, very critical look at wine. Get to know the latest scores here.



2017 QUINTA DO BRONZE

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 92
Drink: NA
Cost: \$90-92

The 2017 Quinta do Bronze is a blend of 40% Touriga Nacional, 30% Touriga Franca, 20% Tinto Cão and Sousão for the rest, all aged for 24 months in new French oak, then held back in bottle before release. It comes in at 14% alcohol. There's a hefty amount of oak treatment here to go with a big price spike for a producer normally thought to make nice values. So, this is a lot different on many fronts, even if on paper the blend looks a lot like the Andreza Reserva this issue. (This, however, is a single-quinta wine while the Andreza is not.) If this lacks the purity of the winery's fresher reds (like the Andreza this issue), it adds more power and it seems richer, better able to absorb power. Is the price spike worth it? That depends on your taste as well as your pocketbook. It is a little too marked by the wood for my taste, but it is a wine that is also polished and mouth coating, with good structure and enough fruit to pop up from beneath the wood at times. It is not wholly overwhelmed by the wood. That said, while ultimately I think most will find this better than the more transparent Andreza and the Bronze will also age better, I'm not so sure it does enough to justify the huge price spike (over four times). This, in short, will have to earn its spurs over time, if it can. It's only the second vintage I've seen of this. Let's start here and give it time to evolve and acquire some nuance.
in www.robertparker.com, October 2021

2017 PEGOS CLAROS RESERVA

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 91
Drink: 2021-2033
Cost: \$23-25

The 2017 Reserva Vinhas Velhas is all Castelão, aged for one year in well-used French oak of varying ages. It comes in at 13.9% alcohol. The 'old vines' designation on the back label means 70+ years here. There's an effort at Pegos Claros on a regular basis to make fairly fresh and elegant Castelão. It is a grape that sometimes can be overbearing and overwhelming if not handled correctly. This is similar to recent vintages, showing off some freshness and mid-palate finesse to go with some power on the finish. There's a real backbone here, but the tannins are not very hard. Overall, it is an elegant package with structure and brightness, a perfect food wine. It adds some red fruit flavor to seal the deal. It may and probably will improve over the next couple of years. It should hold well thereafter, maybe longer than anticipated. There were 8,265 six-packs produced. *in www.robertparker.com, October 2021*



2018 ANDREZA RESERVA

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 90
Drink: 2021-2030
Cost: \$16-18

The 2018 Reserva Andreza is a blend of 40% Touriga Franca, 30% Touriga Nacional, 25% Sousão and a dollop of Tinta Roriz for the rest of the blend, all aged in a 70/30 mixture of used French oak and stainless steel for 10 months. It comes in at 13.9% alcohol. Pure, focused and precise, this is a tightly wound Reserva that emphasizes freshness as well as good fruit, but always in a dry and very understated fashion. It is textured as well as moderately gripping on the finish. This is a lovely offering in this vintage. Given the reasonable price point, it is a pretty nice choice for a house pour or restaurant wine too. The only remaining question is how well it will age. It seems able to hold for a reasonable time, and it may yet improve a bit. It has something to prove, but let's lean up on this for the moment.
in www.robertparker.com, October 2021

2020 PEGOS CLAROS BLANC DE NOIRS

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 89
Drink: 2021-2027
Cost: \$28-30

The 2020 Blanc de Noirs Castelão Vinhas Velhas was aged for six months in a 65/35 mixture of stainless steel and new French oak. It comes in very dry and at 13.1% alcohol. The average vine age here is around 80 years. Deep and dense this year, the aggressive Castelão grape seems quite ripe and in full bloom. A little hard to handle just now, I suspect this will show better next spring or summer in 2022. It is certainly a full-bodied wine with a lot of personality that has some upside potential. No matter what happens, it is best used as a food wine, not a standalone sipper. There were 665 six-packs produced. *in www.robertparker.com, October 2021*



2017 TYTO ALBA RED

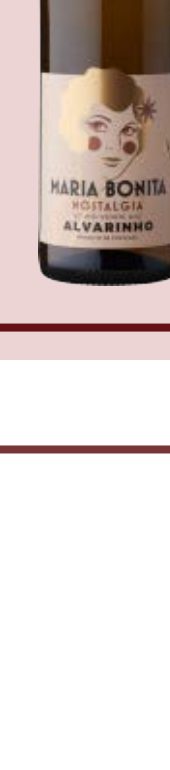
Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 89
Drink: 2021-2026
Cost: \$21-23

The 2017 Tinto Tyto Alba is a blend of 40% Touriga Nacional, 40% Touriga Franca and 20% Alicante Bouschet, all aged for 12 months in a mixture of new and used French oak. It comes in at 13.7% alcohol. One of the more beautiful examples yet in this brand, this polished Tinto is fresh and expressive, an elegant wine that has a bright feel yet also very good fruit. There's not much power, so this can be drunk right now. It should still hold a reasonable time and it might improve over a couple of years, but this is one to drink young. A bit soft, it is unlikely to reward long aging, no matter how long it theoretically holds. While that gives it a ceiling in my view, it doesn't make it any less enjoyable now. Maybe it can prove me wrong in five years or so. *in www.robertparker.com, October 2021*

2019 MARIA BONITA NOSTALGIA ALVARINHO

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 88
Drink: 2021-2025
Cost: \$18-20

The 2019 Maria Bonita Alvarinho Nostalgia is an Alvarinho, unoaked, without fizz, dry (1.5 grams of residual sugar and 8.4 of total acidity) and comes in at 13% alcohol. A solid Vinho Verde, this is textured and elegant, but it still fills the mouth well while adding some expressive fruit. The fine acidity is a more dominant feature here than concentration, though. This is laser-like focused and rather intense, a fresh white that will be refreshing. This is nicely done, the first I've seen in this Maria Bonita Nostalgia brand. (This is not to be confused with the winery's regular 'Nostalgia,' which is a single-vineyard wine from Melgaço.) *in www.robertparker.com, October 2021*



2020 CLARO

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 87
Drink: 2021-2025
Cost: \$23-25

The 2020 Claro is all Castelão that was aged in a 60/40 mixture of stainless steel and neutral French oak for three months. It comes in at 12.6% alcohol. This youthful wine is meant to be fresh, light, fruity and immediately approachable. It's all that. It tastes great, with a touch of strawberry, without becoming jammy or overbearing (which this grape sometimes is). The fruit is always lifted, dancing across the tongue. This is not meant to be anything terribly profound, but as an easy drinker with a fresh feel, it works well. Drink it very young, as it is unlikely to reward much aging. *in www.robertparker.com, October 2021*

2020 PEGOS CLAROS ROSE

Review by Mark Squires
RobertParker.com # October 2021 Week 2
Rating: 87
Drink: 2021-2024
Cost: \$18-20

The 2020 Rosé is a Castelão that was aged for five months in a 65/35 mixture of stainless steel and neutral French oak. It comes in at 12.9% alcohol. As with the Blanc de Noirs, this is an aggressive rendering of Castelão this year. This is fruitier and filled with more obvious red fruits in particular. Over that is a layer of wood, at least in terms of its smooth texture. The price on this has suddenly spiked, but I'm not sure the quality spiked with it, at least not this year. Still, this is a pretty solid pink and a very distinctive one. Some may like the distinctive bits—the baked strawberries and wood influence—more than others. *in www.robertparker.com, October 2021*



Wine Aging in Barrel



In the wine production, the use of wooden barrels may occur, by producer's option, in alcoholic fermentation (for conversion of sugars into alcohol, first fermentation), in malolactic fermentation (for conversion malic acids into lactic acids, second fermentation, which is optional and can occur naturally, be interrupted or induced) as for the ageing of the wine after it is ready.

The wooden barrels are produced mostly with French oak or American oak, and in a smaller scale with European oak from Hungary, Poland, Romania and Russia.

The rest or ageing of the wine for a certain period of time in oak barrels allows the wine to have minimal contact with the air during its maturation (micro-oxygenation), with two consequences: the first is that the wine breathes, matures and evolves better; and the second is that the oxygen molecules that enter the micro pores of the barrel (estimated at about 2mg month/litre of wine), unite and combine, forming more pleasant compounds to the taste.

In addition, during the wine ageing many of the characteristics of the wood are transferred to the wine.

The existing tannins in the wood itself are passed to the wine, which gives the drink more body and density. The wine acquires what is called "woody savours", which can be more intense (if it is a new barrel, unused, and if the ageing time is longer) or softer (used barrels, shorter ageing time).

Due to the burning of the inside of the barrels for sealing them before receiving the wines, they transfer to the drink the "empyreumatic savours" or smoked, easily identified as smoke, coffee, chocolate, burnt caramel (always roasted or toasted savours), and which can also be more intense or smoother, depending on the degree of burning.

Because of these effects of the barrel on wine, not all grapes have enough structure to age in wood, or will end up losing their characteristics and their fruity and floral savours, giving way only to the savours and nuances coming from wood.

White grapes and light-bodied reds, if exposed to wood, age in new barrels for a short time, or in barrels already used, to mitigate the interference of the wood in the wine.

NEW WINE RELEASES

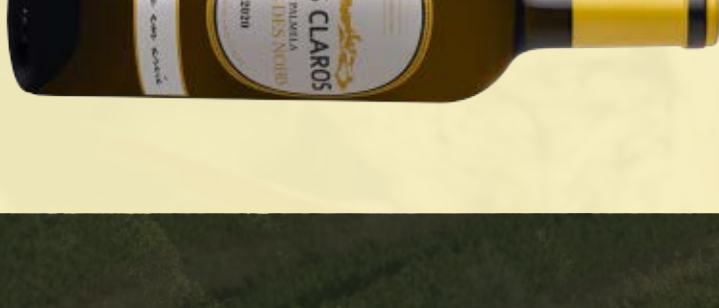
Check out our new Wine Releases and try it!



Andreza Reserva Red
D.O.C. Douro
2019



Colleja Red
D.O.C. Douro
2020



Herdade de Catapereiro Escolha Red
Regional Tejo
2020



Pegos Claros Blanc des Noirs
D.O.C. Palmela
2020