



*Portuguese Grape Varieties*



## *Portuguese White Grapes*

### **ALVARINHO**



An old grape variety of exceptional quality, deservedly famed for the varietal wines it produces in the Vinho Verde region, specifically in the two sub-regions of Monção and Melgaço. Alvarinho has a highly characteristic floral and fruity profile with notes of lime tree, balm mint, honeysuckle, peach, grapefruit and apple, all well-married with the high acidity typical of crisp white wines from north-west Portugal. The grapes yield balanced wines with good structure and alcohol levels. Alvarinho's qualities are being "exported" to more southern wine regions such as the Setubal Peninsula and Estremadura.

### **ARINTO / PEDERNÃ**



One of Portugal's oldest indigenous varieties, with a long tradition in the Bucelas region, it has now spread to most wine regions given its adaptability to different terrains and climates. Arinto, known as Pedernã in Vinho Verde, holds good acidity as one of its key features combined with structure and a velvety feel. Its aroma is relatively discreet, whose strongest notes are mineral, with green apple and lemon. Arinto yields wines that evolve very well in bottle, acquiring elegance and complexity.

### **ENCRUZADO**



Regarded by many winemakers as one of the great Portuguese varieties, Encruzado is capable of producing excellent white wines. It is grown almost exclusively in the Dão and requires particular care and attention to extract its finest aromas. If well-treated the resulting wines are elegant and complex with aromatic mineral notes and green peppers, roses, violets and citrus fruit. Age confers aromas and flavours of hazelnut and resin and when fermented in oak, vanilla comes to the fore with good integration and unctuousness on the palate. Encruzado's quality confers longevity to its wines, which can age well for decades.

### **FERNÃO PIRES / MARIA GOMES**



Another of Portugal's oldest varieties and by far one of the most cultivated. It is found in virtually all winegrowing regions, being strongest in Ribatejo and Bairrada, where it is known as Maria Gomes. A high-yield vine, Fernão Pires comes under criticism for producing one-dimensional wines lacking in acidity and prone to oxidation. But attentive care can bring out its extraordinary aromas and capacity to produce distinctive wines with strong character. It shows ripe citrus aromas and notes of mimosa, lime and orange tree, putting it in the family of aromatic grapes with Alvarinho, Loureiro and Moscatel.

### **LOUREIRO**



Grown mainly in the upper Minho region along the River Lima valley, Loureiro is a very old grape variety yet is largely responsible for the success of white vinho verde in recent years. Aromatically exuberant, Loureiro (along with Moscatel) is considered the most perfumed of Portuguese grapes, evoking bay leaf, lime tree, acacia, orange and peach. As with Alvarinho, Loureiro is a grape of great typicity, producing varietal wines as well as in blends. In blends with other regional grapes, its exceptional aromatic qualities construct some of the best white wines in Portugal.

## *Portuguese Red Grapes*

### **ARAGONÊS / TINTA RORIZ**



Tinta Roriz is a very fine variety of extraordinary quality, attested by its presence in two legendary wines produced on the Iberian Peninsula: the Portuguese Barca Velha and the Spanish Vega Sicilia. This grape has also been grown for centuries in the Alentejo, but under the name of Aragonês. In good years it produces full-bodied, inky and highly aromatic wines. The grape has fine and delicate aromas of pepper and berries. Aragonês has high yields and is indispensable in the blend of a good Port. Varietal red wines are also showing good results, particularly in the Dão region.

### **BAGA**



One of the highest yielding Portuguese grape varieties, spread throughout the country but most concentrated in Bairrada and Dão. The grapes come into their own when well ripe, showing wines of deep colour and great structure, with powerful tannins and everything in place to evolve well in the bottle. The aroma starts out with berry fruit developing into purple plum, tobacco and coffee, finishing in a crescendo of complexity.

### **CASTELÃO**



The most widely-grown red grape variety in Portugal. It is highly adaptable to different climate conditions and its remarkable versatility enables winemakers to make distinctive wines – powerful and intense reds for lengthy cellaring. It has adapted best to the Setubal Peninsula, where it makes meaty and intense wines with aromas of red berries and forest flowers that integrate well with the wood of French oak.

### **TOURIGA FRANCA**



Better known as Touriga Francesa, this is the most widely grown grape for in the region that produces Douro wines and Port. Growers love Touriga Franca as it is easy to cultivate, hardy and can produce good yields. Touriga Franca shows delicate yet intense aromas with notes of black berry fruit and flowers, combined with good body and colour. It is one of the principal varieties used in Port blends, along with other indigenous Douro varieties like Tinta Roriz and Touriga Nacional. Yet it can stand alone, having proved itself in a number of varietal wines.

### **TOURIGA NACIONAL**



In days gone by Touriga Nacional was the dominant variety in the Dão region, responsible almost single-handedly for the fame of Dão wines. Nowadays it is one of the most popular varieties in the Douro and is considered one of Portugal's finest grapes. Touriga Nacional yields inky, full-bodied, powerful wines with exceptional aromas. It frequently shows blackberry, blueberry, rock rose and rosemary notes. Its renown has caused its spread throughout all regions from the northernmost corners and down to the Algarve, and it is even exciting the interest of vine growers abroad. Touriga Nacional wines age well and gain aromatic complexity with barrel aging.

### **TRINCADEIRA / TINTA AMARELA**



One of the most widespread Portuguese grape varieties. It shows best, however, in hot, dry and very bright areas, tailor-made, in fact, for the Alentejo. It is not easy to grow, however, having irregular yields and prone to disastrous moulds. But in good years Trincadeira will produce great wines. It has excellent acidity, soft tannins and abundant, intense aromas of plum and blackberry, producing elegant and balanced wines. A Trincadeira blend with Aragonês in the Alentejo or Touriga Nacional in the Douro will result in top quality wines.