



QUINTA DA FONTE SOUTO
PORTALEGRE



The 207-hectare Quinta da Fonte Souto was acquired by the Symington family in 2017 and is their first vineyard outside the Douro. Lying on the slopes of the São Mamede Range at an altitude of 500 metres in the Alentejo sub-region of Portalegre, the property benefits from cooler and wetter conditions than the hot Alentejo plain. The Fonte Souto wines express the freshness and elegance provided by the altitude, as well as the structure and complexity from the estate's extensive collection of mature, low-yielding vines.


SYMINGTON
Family Estates

WINE DESCRIPTION SHEET

QUINTA DA FONTE SOUTO WHITE 2021

THE WINE

The Fonte Souto Estate white wine embodies all the strengths of the property's unique terroir: the freshness and balance afforded by the altitude; the concentration, which derives from mature, low-yielding vines, and the complexity and structure provided by the barrel fermentation sur-lie (on the lees) with bâtonnage. This white allows for maximum expression of the Arinto, widely regarded as Portugal's finest white grape variety and has a smaller Verdelho component.

VINTAGE OVERVIEW

We had a long harvest, starting on August 17th and ending on October 8th. First to be picked was Verdelho, closely followed by Aragonez. The Arinto was harvested in stages from the end of August, to produce wines with differing profiles. During early September, we picked a second batch of Aragonez and started picking Alfrocheiro. A cool July provided excellent levels of acidity in the white grapes, delivering fresh, expressive aromatics. From mid-August, rising temperatures provoked a rapid advance in maturations, pointing to an early vintage. That wasn't to be, though, as lower temperatures and rain returned at the end of the month, slowing maturations, and prompting us to pause the vintage, which only picked up again from September 16th – for the remaining reds: Alicante Bouschet, Syrah, Touriga Nacional and Trincadeira. This is a year of elegance, with the acidity and aromatic exuberance expected from a cooler year, combining with very fine textures and balance.

WINEMAKING

The hand-picked grapes are placed in small, shallow boxes and taken to the on-site winery. Manual sorting is followed by destemming and gentle crushing after which the grapes are transferred to a pneumatic press for a light pressing. Fermentation begins in stainless steel vats but immediately after alcoholic fermentation commences, part of the must is transferred to 500-litre French oak barrels (this higher capacity minimises the impact of the wood on the aromatic component). The must is left in contact with the lees with frequent bâtonnage (stirring the lees) in order to encourage extraction of compounds that contribute complexity and structure and that balance very well with the good acidity provided by the altitude of the São Mamede Range.

WINEMAKERS

Charles Symington, Pedro Correia and José Daniel Soares.

GRAPE VARIETIES

75% Arinto
25% Verdelho

AGEING

60% of the blend was fermented in 500-litre oak barrels in contact with the lees. The final blend was aged seven months in a combination of new French and central European oak (55%); in second and third-year wood (40%), and in stainless steel vats (5%). Bottled in July 2022.

STORAGE & SERVING

Ready to drink but has good ageing potential.

TASTING NOTE

Initial aromatic impression of light smoke with a touch of gunpowder (flint), followed by citrusy notes, peach, and apricot, as well as some vanilla and wild white flowers in the background. On the palate, the complexity is highlighted by the well-integrated barrel and some good bottle aging, which blend harmoniously with the pronounced freshness from the good acidity. This is a stunning white wine from the mountains, displaying poise, elegance, and generous amplitude.

WINE SPECIFICATIONS

Alcohol: 14.5% vol.
Volatile acidity: 0.39 g/L (acetic acid)
Total acidity: 6.1 g/L (tartaric acid)
pH: 3.22
Total sugars (gluc+fruct): 0.6 g/L
Allergy advice: Contains Sulphites
Compatible with vegetarian and vegan diets