

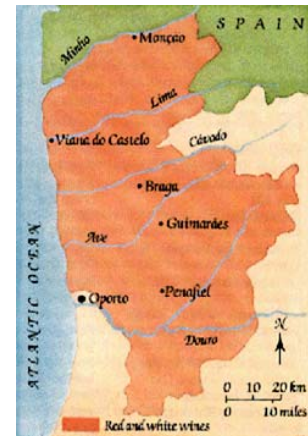


Wines of Portugal from Marquee Selections

The Vinho Verde region

Located in the northwest of Portugal, the Vinhos Verdes region is unique in both landscape and wine. The region is exposed to the sea in the west and mountains in the east. The climate is particularly different from other wine regions in the country with high levels of precipitation and humidity, with lengthy periods of fog and low temperatures. It is here that you will find wines of character, depth and expression.

Vinho Verde was originally demarcated as a DOC in 1908, in the Costa Verde region starting immediately north of Oporto and stretching north to the border. The region is also known as the garden of Portugal because of its engaging green scenery. This is the origin of the name.



The Vinho Verde region is damp and temperate, with no mountain ranges to shield it from the mild influence of the Atlantic. So damp is it, in fact, that vine growers are forced to train their vines high off the ground to avoid fungal infections aggravated by the wet weather. The traditional grapes used in white vinho verde are the Alvarinho, Arinto or Pedernã,

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Avesso, Azal, Loureiro, and Trajadura are particularly adapted to its unique climate.

The traditional way to grow vines was up trellises around the borders of fields, or, even more primitively, up trees. This way of training can produce huge yields as the foliage rampages along overhanging supports or up into the highest branches.



This traditional way of cultivating vines was encouraged by legislation - still in force as recently as the 1974 revolution - which dated from the introduction of maize in Portugal during the sixteenth century. Vineyards were then forbidden in favor of the new cereal, the only dispensation being that vines might be grown round the edges of fields as 'decoration'. The fields themselves contained maize or cows. Recent studies have shown that the biodiversity inherent to traditional vineyards actually produces healthier fruit with less use of pesticides and fertilizers than modern vineyards. In the many small farms in the Minho region this is still the mix, the grapes being delivered to the local co-op.



More common now are the still fairly traditional 'ramadas' – pergola grown vines, creating green tunnels. These too are now being replaced by 'cruzetas' ("like a cross") – a more standard vine-training system.



The Winery

“**Quintas de Melgaço, S. A.**” (pronounced like Kintash de Melgash) is located in in Ferreiros de Cima, Alvaredo, Melgaço; in the North of Portugal, under the Appellation DOC VINHO VERDE, “Monção Sub-Region”, where the best regional varieties of grapes are planted, especially the “Alvarinho” lineage.

The idea of creating the company was developed by a Melgacense who had immigrated to Brazil, Amadeu Abilio Lopes, his financial strength was strong enough to rally around this project the interest of several hundreds producers of Melgaço - there are currently 430 shareholders.



Since its start operating in 1994, the Farms Melgaço tends to assert itself in the market for the origin and quality of their products, ranging from the traditional red wine through wines that combine Alvarinho Trajadura " with unique characteristics resulting from the climate, the soil and the wisdom that passes through generations.

After twelve years in business; “Quintas de Melgaço, S.A.” achieved national and international recognition for the quality of its products. Today, “Quintas de Melgaço, S.A.” has a production unit with a storage capacity of a million liters, with a modern and pleasant architecture, endowed with modern technology.

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The Grapes - Trajadura

Portuguese varietal that is usually included in the wines of Vinho Verde. Trajadura has a certain plush character, yet only when compared to its super acidic blending partners of Loureira and Alvarinho (Albariño). It came originally from the Monção sub-region. Productive, this grape variety produces wines with a delicate and distinctive aroma and flavors. High quality Trajadura makes an excellent monovarietal, delicate, crisp and floral.

The Grapes - Alvarinho

A productive and thick-skinned varietal, high yields can produce wines of less than distinguishing character, but when made with care Albariño can be quite aromatic and satisfying. Expressive aromas of citrus and stone fruits tied to a spine of vibrant acidity are common, making Albariño a wine that pairs wonderfully with seafood, especially shellfish. An ethereal saline quality is often described in young Albariños, probably imparted by the proximity of the Atlantic ocean to its most famous growing regions.

Regional Lisboa History



If you head northwest from Lisbon, there is an exciting area that is not only filled with medieval castles and legendary tales of heroism, but was also considered a mecca for Portuguese wine back in the 19th century. Stretching along the Atlantic coast, Estremadura is the second largest Portuguese wine producing region in Portugal. Also known as the Silver Coast, it was formerly a province that is now divided between the provinces of Estremadura and Ribatejo, with a small part in Beira Litoral.

Estremadura is different from Extremadura, an autonomous community of Spain. The name of both regions comes from the fact that they were at the "extreme" border of Christendom during a phase of the Reconquest.



In April 2009, the Ministry of Agriculture published a decree stating that wines from the former region of Estremadura will be given the Geographical Indication "Lisbon". The Regional Wine Commission (CVR) proposed the name change in order to boost the region's economy, hoping to increase foreign wine sales.

Regional Lisboa

Portugal is an ideal country for wine production. Its long north-south body encompasses several distinct growing areas with unique microclimates and soils. Sound familiar? You see, the latitudes, seasons and soil content is almost identical to that of California's Napa Valley.



The Lisboa region, northwest of Lisbon, presents a gorgeous and diverse the landscape. Containing everything from undulating lush green terrains to steep and desolate mountain ranges of Candeeiros and Montejunto. To the south it's wide plains made up of limestone soils or sand flank the fertile and heavily wooded Tagus River valley.

The Lisboa region is focused on the growing of the noblest

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Portuguese and foreign grape varieties. In 1993, a new type of wine was created - Estremadura Regional Wine. This new type of wine encouraged producers to develop the potential of the different grape varieties and, currently, most wines produced in Estremadura are regional such as our Rio Real because the law for DOC wines is very restrictive on the use of grape varieties.

Lisboa is comprised of ten subregions: Encostas de Aire, Alcobaca, Lourinha, Obidos, Alenquer, Arruda, Torres Vedras, Bucelas, Colares and Carcavelos. Despite their close proximity the terroirs of Lisboa differ significantly, from the marl and hard limestone of Bucelas to the Colares D.O.C. region where specifications require the vines to be planted in sandy ground.

Torres Vedras Sub Region

Rio Real is produced from grapes grown in the northern limit of Torres Vedras, derived from the Latin name meaning 'Old Citadel' from *turris* 'tower' which is centered around the town of Torres Vedras. The area was known by the shorthand "Torres" until Spanish wine producer Miguel A. Torres objected to the association with the region.

A little history: The town of Torres Vedras is famous for the fortified defenses that the Duke of Wellington. 1809, as Napoleon's army was advancing through Portugal towards Lisbon,



Portugal's oldest ally, England, sent a strong force to help the Portuguese resist the French Invasion. The Army of the Peninsula was commanded by the Duke of Wellington, and this famous commander lost no time in erecting the defensive fortifications which would protect Lisbon and

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the sea. These were the lines of Torres Vedras. Wellington personally supervised the digging of these lines.



But the most famous event in Torres Vedras is undoubtedly its Carnival, deeply rooted in the cultural and social identity of the city, it attracts thousands of visitors each year and is considered «the most Portuguese of Portugal».

Torres Vedras is characterized by vineyards covering the hills descending to the plains. The soils are formations from the Jurassic and possibly Cretaceous, being predominantly calcareous clay classified as brown and red calcareous. Vineyards can be found planted in soils ranging from clay and frank for the red to, to sandy loam for some of the white wines. Red wines are typically ruby-coloured and acquire a definite smoothness with ageing.

At a glance

Lisboa – (formally known as Estremadura)

Location: northwest of Lisbon, occupying an area of approximately 40 km

Subregions: Colares, Carcavelos and Bucelas, Alenquer, Arruda, Torres Vedras, Lourinhã and Óbidos and Encostas d’Aire

Hectares of Vines: about 31,000

Production in Hectoliters: about 1,124,000

White: Arinto, Fernão Pires, Seara-Nova, Vital, Baga, Castelão, Malvasia Fina and Chardonnay

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Red: Castelão, Aragonez (Tinta Roriz), Touriga Nacional, Tinta Miúda, Trincadeira, Alicante Bouschet, Touriga Franca, Cabernet Sauvignon, Ramisco and Syrah

Soil: limestone soils or sand

The winery: Quinta do Gradil

Situated in the Carcavelos region the winery is set among the Montejunto Mountains, between the villages of Vilar and Martin Joanes, the landscape is absolutely stunning. Rolling hills covered in pear and apple trees among miles of vineyards, the Portuguese winery Quinta do Gradil couldn't have been situated in a more ideal location.



The current owners weren't alone in realizing the value of the land as seen by the exquisite 36 room palace dating back to the 18th century. Although the lineage has not been directly proven, we were told that the palace was originally bought by the Marquis de Pombal, who is renowned for rebuilding



Lisbon after the 1755 earthquake.

But the story gets

richer and more interesting, because Marquis was also a big proponent of wine, reportedly influencing his decision to settle on the Estate. However, in an effort to protect the vineyards, and the wine he so loved, the Marquis founded the

Companhia das Vinhas do Alto Douro, establishing the first demarcated wine region in the world. He also produced a vinho generoso that was later recognized under DOC Carcavelos where the estate is now, though the winery and vineyard are far from the currently demarcated Carcavelos sub region.

Quinta do Gradil remained in the family until approximately 50 years ago when the Sociedade Agricola da Quinta do Gradil was founded. Restructuring the vineyards to include primarily white varietals, it wasn't until mid nineties when ownership changed hands that the Quinta truly took form.



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Now called, Martim Joanes Gradil, it is currently owned by Luis Viera. Luis Viera is also the owner of Goanvi, one of the largest bottling companies in Portugal, and bought Quinta do Gradil as an opportunity to produce an estate wine. The palace faces a majestic view of the Montejunto mountain.

The Quinta do Gradil Estate is covers 220 hectares, 110 of which are planted with native varietals such as Castelao, Aragonez, Tinta Muida, Alicant Bouschet, Touriga Nacional, Arinto, Cercila and Fernao Pires, along with international varieties like Syrah. The remaining land has been allocated to patches of pine and eucalyptus forests, as well as pear, peach and apple orchards

At a glance

Quinta do Gradil (Martim Joanes Gradil)

D.O.C/V.R.: Vinho Regional Estremadura

Bodega Founded: 1998

Hectares of Vines: 110 ha.

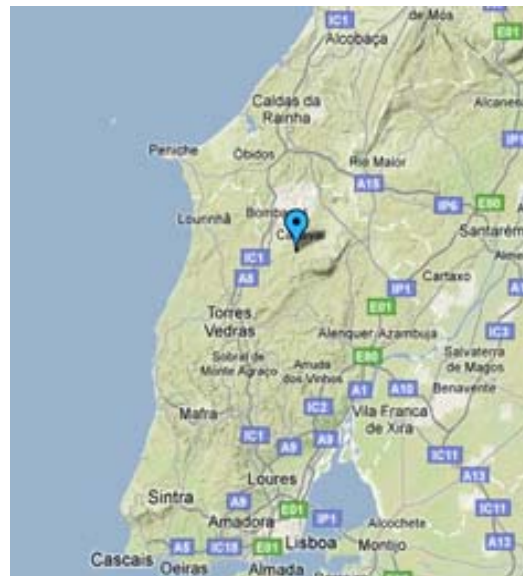
Grape Varieties Grown:

Red – Castelao, Aragonez, Miuda, Alicant Bouschet, Touriga Nacional and Syrah

White – Arinto, Cercial, Fernao Pires, Vital and Chardonnay

Production in Liters: 1,000,000

Winemaker: Carlos Lucas and Antonio Ventura



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Rio Real Reserve 2007

Our vineyards are located in the northern limit of Torres Vedras, described above. Note the red clay soils on the rolling hills in the photo.

Rio Real Reserve is made under the supervision of Antonio Ventura, one of



the more prestigious Portuguese oenologists (Oenologist of the year 2006) who's philosophy is to create fine wines, with a modern style and an excellent quality/price relationship. See interview below.

Using primarily with Syrah, which in our region achieves great maturation resulting in good concentration with spicy flavors and blackberry notes we added Tinta Roriz and Touriga Nacional to give complexity and structure. The wine was fermented under controlled temperature with two weeks of maceration, Then it was then racked into French oak barrels where it was matured for 4 months.

The result is a wine with aromas of ripe red fruit and jam, great balance, soft tannins and a round mouth.



**Mr. Eng António Ventura -
Winemaker**

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wines of
portugal 
a world of difference