

American Wine Society – Lone Star Chapter (March 2015)

The Lone Star Chapter March tasting was held at the home of Suely and Tom Lohr. The theme was the “Wines of Portugal” and consisted of an ice breaker (for those old enough to remember): Mateus and Lancers. It was surprisingly pleasant and fruity. The actual rated wines consisted of two whites, three reds and three Ports. Since the Ports pair so well with chocolate, the ‘official’ tasting stopped after the three reds, dinner was served and then the tasting continued with the three Ports along with a number of chocolate and non-chocolate dessert. The meal consisted of the traditional ‘bacalhau’ fish dish. Bacalhau is cod fish that has been preserved in salt. The process of de-salting the fish involves soaking it in cold water, placing in the refrigerator for 3 days, and changing the water 3-4 times a day. The fish is then baked in the oven along with potatoes, caramelized onions, olive oil, hardboiled eggs and olives. There were 26 members and guests in attendance.

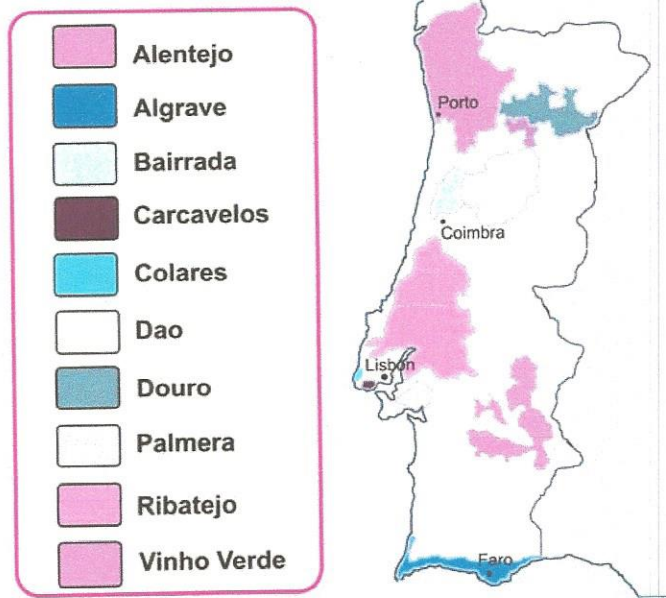
Wines Tasted	Price	
Mateus (Ice Breaker)		
Caiu a Noite – Vinho Verde	9	
Monte Velho – Blend – Alentejo Region	12	
Ramos Reserva – 2012 - Alentejo Region	10	
Crasto 2013 – Douro Region	17	
Fonseca Ruby Port	15	(3)
Dow’s Vintage Port – 2000	65	(2)
Sandeman Tawny Port – 30 years old	100	(1)

The Wines of Portugal – Tom & Suely Lohr (Mar 2015)

Portugal is the 10th largest wine producer in the world, exporting half of its production. There are 10 Portuguese wines in the top 100 wine list! Traditionally associated with the famous Mateus label, our ice breaker, or Ports, today Portugal is producing wines using indigenous varietals to Spain and Portugal like Touriga Nacional and Tinta Roriz.

Portuguese wine is the result of traditions introduced to the region by ancient civilizations exporting its wines to Rome during the Roman Empire. Modern exports developed with trade to England after 1703. And, in 1758, one of the first wine-producing region of the world, the *Região Demarcada do Douro* was created in the Douro Valley. Portugal has two wine producing regions protected by UNESCO as World Heritage: the Douro Valley Wine Region (*Douro Vinhateiro*) and Pico Island Wine Region (*Ilha do Pico Vinhateira*). When Portugal joined the European Union 21 years ago, the rapid economic expansion brought the modernization of winemaking techniques.

In looking at Portugal's wine regions, it's helpful to split the country in two, by drawing a line about a third of the way down. This separates the northern regions of the Douro, Dão and Bairrada, and the central and southern regions of the Alentejo, Ribatejo and Estremadura. As a useful generalization, the future for the northern regions lies in focusing on high-quality, top-end wines, while the strength of the southern and central regions is their ability to produce accessible, full flavored red wines in large quantities and at affordable prices: new world-style wines with a Portuguese twist.



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Regions are grouped into three levels of classification .

Denominação de Origem Controlada (or DOCs) which are Quality Wines Produced in Specified Regions (QWpsr) under the European Union wine regulations

Indicação de Proveniência Regulamentada (IPRs) also QWpsr. IPRs are used for OC candidates "in training"

The Vinho Regional (VRs)- table wines with a geographical indication under EU regulations. VRs each cover a larger area

There are 26 DOCs (not counting sub-regions); 4 IPRs and 11 VRs

Ice Breaker

MATEUS - Total Wines-Lewisville

Mateus is a brand of medium-sweet frizante rosé wine. The brand was created in 1942 and production began at the end of World War II, especially styled to appeal to the North American and northern European markets. Production grew rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s accounting for over 40% of Portugal's table wine exports. By the 1980' worldwide sales were 3.25 million cases per year.

Some interesting facts:

- It was amongst the brands which were said to be stockpiled in the vaults of Saddam Hussein's palaces.
- The wine is mentioned in the lyrics of the 1973 Elton John song "Social Disease": "I get juiced on Mateus and just hang loose."
- The original Frontier Airlines (1950-1986) featured complimentary Mateus wine as part of its meal service on selected flights and advertised this fact.

Wines Tasted

VINHO VERDE REGION - CAIU A NOITE - Total Wines - Lewisville

Produced from the Loureiro, Trajadura, and Arioto grape varieties traditionally used in Vinho Verde. Vinho Verde is its own DOC located in the northwestern corner of the country. The white wines of Vinho Verde are slightly effervescent with higher acidity, hence their fresh, crisp and refreshing nature. Most of these wines are vinified dry and meant to be consumed while they are lively and young. This is a balanced natural acidity similar to green apples with fresh flavors of apple, pears and flowers.

ALENTEJO REGION - MONTE VELHO – 2014 - Whole Foods – Highland Village

Antao 40%; Roupeiro 40%; Perrum 20%. Located in southern Portugal, benefits from the Mediterranean climate. Following the region's centuries-old winemaking tradition, its diversity of grape varieties and vinification techniques, this wine reveals the typical character of the region: rich aromas, soft palate and an excellent gastronomic aptitude.

DOURO REGION – Quinta do Vale Meao Meandro - 2010 – Total Wines-Lewisville

45% Touriga Nacional, 30% Touriga Franca, 13% Tinta Roriz, 12% other additional grapes. If sometimes the mid-palate does not seem all that concentrated and the wine not terribly rich, it is concentrated enough and the fruit is awfully tasty, becoming more and more expressive with aeration.. Drink now-2022.

ALENTEJO REGION - RAMOS RESERVA – 2012 – COSTCO

This is a dark and dense wine, serious with its firm tannins and solid black fruits. It has spice, blackberry and currant flavors, along with a pure line of acidity. It is a blend of native Alentejo grapes, Trincadeira and Aragonez plus a touch of Syrah for added body. The fruit is sourced from 1,000-foot high schist and limestone vineyards. Unoaked, it is fresh and fruity while maintaining a plush mouth feel.

DOURO REGION – Castro 2013 – Whole Foods – Highland Village

35% Touriga Nacional; 30% Tinta Roriz; 25% Touriga Franca; 10% Tinta Barroca; Produced in the rugged Douro Valley famous for its striking river, granitic soils and steeply terrace slopes. This wine is symbolic of its origins with deep color, refined aroma, ripe and rich plum and spicy flavors.

PORTS –

FONSECA – RUBY PORT – GOODY GOODY – Highland village

Fine young port made from grapes grown in the steep terraces of the Douro Valley. Full young fruity port. Ruby port is a traditional style of port. The wine is aged for three years in large wooden vats where it softens and develops without losing the fresh, intense fruity character and the deep ruby color. Fonseca Ruby is bottled for immediate drinking. Fresh, vigorous and youthful nose, full of intense cherry and blackcurrant aromas. Full bodied on the palate, with solid but well integrated tannins, and a long rich fruity finish.

DOW'S VINTAGE PORT – 2000 – GOODY GOODY – LITTLE ELM

Dow's Vintage Ports have been produced for over two centuries. This Port has a very dark opaque purple color, with a typically spicy nose and intense underlying aromas of blackberries and blackcurrants. On the palate—enormous weight and structure with a marvelous balance of dense black fruit flavors and firm tannins.

SANDEMAN TAWNY PORT – 30 year old – Courtesy of Dave and Pernod Ricard -

Specially selected Portos are chosen for ageing in wooden casks, Gradual exposure to air concentrates the flavors and matures the ruby colors to amber, creating the rare and delicious Sandeman Porto Tawny 30 Years Old. The ageing process intensifies the fruit creating the complex flavors characteristic of Tawny Porto, a perfect ending to any meal and an inspiration for good conversation.

Old gold amber colors with the intense aromas of honey and spices, underscored with deep flavors of dried apricots, hazelnuts and vanilla, creating a rich yet elegant combination

Maturation

After the harvest, the wines remain in the Douro until the following Spring when they are taken to centuries-old lodges for ageing in oak wood casks, as required by Porto Wine traditional ageing system. Along the years, the exceptional wines selected for this Sandeman Porto Tawny 30 Years Old are carefully tasted and analyzed, racked from lees and all corrections deemed necessary by the tasters are carried out. The final blend results from the strictest selection of wines usually between 25 and 40 years of age, masterfully and skillfully combined.