

Quinta da Pellada Primus Branco



Dão is quickly becoming the most sought-after region for Portuguese winemakers to venture into; according to many, it's one of the world's most perfect microclimates: mountains protect it from continental heat to the east and Douro's heat to north, and cool Atlantic breezes come inland to keep the overall temperatures more regulated, making for wines with bright acidity, ethereal aromatics, and compelling complexity. The DO's granitic soils allow indigenous grapes to shine through in the wines, and provide firm, crunchy tannin against the bright fruit. Alvaro Castro has noted that "if God were to design a wine-growing region, what he would come up with would look a lot like the Dão."??

There is no modern Dão without one of the region's longtime legends, Alvaro Castro, whose estate encompasses two small properties (or "quintas") known as Pellada and Saes. Alvaro makes wine here with his daughter Maria, carrying on a tradition of winemaking on this property that dates to the 16th century! Together, they have resisted the internationalization push of the '80s and '90s, instead doubling down on their slow-wine approach, using local varieties grown and crafted in the true Dão "field blend" style.???

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: Primus Branco is an old vine field blend harvested from a single high-altitude parcel at over 500m (1,500 ft) elevation. Comprised of 19+ indigenous white grape varieties, Primus is a rare creature, and a delicious throwback to the traditional field blends of the Dão.

RATING HISTORY: 2023 94JS; 2022 95WA; 2021 96WA, 93W&S, 91WE; 2019 96 WA; 2016 92 WA; 2015 96 WA, 91 VFTC

GRAPE: Field blend of 19+ indigenous grapes including Encruzado, Cercial, Bical, Verdelho, Málvasia, Terrantez, Cachorrinho, Douradinha, etc. planted to granite with lines of quartz, clay and sand at 500m (1,640 ft) elevation.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: Roast chicken and pork, dishes with mushrooms – really anything with a hefty dose of herbs and umami.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: After 24 hours of maceration on the day of harvest, a very slow cold fermentation took place, first in stainless steel tanks and then in used barrels. The wine aged for 9 months in concrete eggs on the lees with no additional sulfur. No additional years of élevage in bottle prior to release. This is a vegan wine.

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Quinta da Pellada is located in the northern part of the Dão, in north-central Portugal. The plots for this vineyard are granite and quartz soils at 500m (1640 ft) elevation. Dão has a temperate continental climate, protected from the cold winds of the Atlantic by the Luso Mountains, from the warm winds of Extremadura to the east by the Sierra da Estrela, and from the arid heat of the Douro to the north by the Serra do Caramulo. Average temperature in the growing season is 57F (14C). Rainfall is 26 inches per year. No irrigation.

TASTING NOTES Brilliant pale gold. On the nose, mineral-driven scents of wet stone, stone fruits and lemon curd. On the palate, restrained and elegant, with more of that precise cut and mineral-driven character. Finishes with incredible persistence and length – this wine will continue to improve for some time.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13.0%

UPC CODE: 5606686000874

