



Niepoort Merlot 2012

Although Bairrada is considered to be the perfect terroir for Baga, there is in Quinta de Baixo a plot of Merlot variety, with just over one hectare, planted around 20 years ago, which is a real challenge for Dirk Niepoort, who has always been passionate for the old Bordeaux Wines, the birth place of this variety. The intention is to produce a 100% Merlot, showing the fantastic potential of the calcareous-clay soils, characteristic of this region.

The Merlot 2012, first edition, was vinified in used French oak barrels, with minimum intervention, following the first steps of Biodynamic.

VINIFICATION

2012 was marked by the lack of rain in Bairrada's region and, as a result, the growing cycle began on average 15 days later than the previous years. In addition, the winter was also marked by low temperatures, allowing a proper and balanced growth of the vegetation. The ripening period was not as warm as usual and the cool temperatures provided a good total acidity in the grapes, which was essential for the wine's freshness and balance. After selection in the vineyard, a second selection was made on the sorting table. The wine fermented in "lagar" with 20% of stems and with foot treading. It aged for 20 months in French oak barrels, where the malolactic fermentation took place.

TASTING NOTES

Dark red of medium concentration, the Merlot 2012 has a red fruit classic aroma with bush and very delicate leather notes. The wood is fully integrated, giving an aromatic complexity in an elegant profile but with some rusticity.

On the palate, it shows strength and intensity, with a good balance between tannins and acidity. It has a long and mineral finish, with freshness and persistence. The long ageing in bottle allowed the wine to come out polished, very harmonious, and perfect for traditional dishes.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

PRODUCER Quinta de Baixo (Vinhos) S.A. REGION Bairrada SOIL TYPE Calcareous-clay
AVERAGE VINE AGE 20 years GRAPE VARIETIES Merlot VINES PER HA 5000 PRUNING METHOD Guyot
ALT. FROM SEA LEVEL At sea level HARVEST PERIOD Mid-September 2012 HARVEST METHOD Hand picked
MALOLACTIC Barrels FERMENTATION Lagar with 20% stem BOTTLED June 2015 AGEING 20 months in barrels
RESIDUAL SUGAR (G/DM³) 1.9 ALCOHOL (%) 13.5 TOTAL ACIDITY (G/DM³) 6.08 VOLATILE ACIDITY (G/DM³) 0.55
TOTAL SO₂ (MG/DM³) 49 PRODUCTION 2.700 bottles/0.75L

FOOD SUGGESTIONS Game dishes, mushrooms. Veal stew. Portuguese duck rice.
Vegetarian suggestions: shiitake mushrooms and/or porcini mushrooms.
Truffles.

