



## Corney & Barrow's Portugal Release 2009 & 2010 Vintages

The Douro Valley's winemaking history is extraordinarily long-lived. The Romans, greedy for the country's minerals, planted the first vines and, as ever, the Church played an important role in viticultural history. Seeds have been discovered which are between 3000 and 4000 years old – so today's growers have ancient foundations on which to build the reputation of today's wines.

For the UK market, the Douro was all about port in recent memory, until the 1990s saw the re-emergence of unfortified wine – a return to the wines we had purchased in the past. The UK's trading history with Portugal had begun with such wines, though they are now unrecognisable due to their vastly improved quality. The weedy insipid wines produced for volume evolved in to dry, fortified, beefed-up versions, the better to emulate Bordeaux wines which had been lost, through warring with France. Fortifying wines which had not yet fermented out came later. In 1756 the region was demarcated and in 2001, the Douro was deservedly made a Unesco World Heritage Site.

The Douro Valley is, without doubt, amongst the most beautiful wine regions in the world, almost impossibly difficult to work, with its vertiginous slopes and hard schist soils. Planting having been based on instinct, there is extraordinary diversity of grape varieties and a spellbinding array of high quality vines. At a recent tasting, launching the 2009 vintage in London, Dirk Niepoort described his favoured old vineyards as “a mess, but a good mess”. Fellow pioneer in the ‘New Douro’, Cristiano van Zeller suggested that he would rather call it “complexity”. Certainly, respecting and harnessing this individuality has been key and the best producers are inspired by the ingredients they nurture throughout the growing season.

We continue to fly the Portuguese flag with pride, citing that the best wines of Portugal combine top quality with excellent value for money, particularly in the UK where prices are much less than we have discovered in Portugal itself. In increasingly fashionable ‘green’ terms we also have, in Portugal, a world class producer on our doorstep yet, sadly, many of our experiences have been informed by injudicious purchases made on holiday. Few tourist destinations play host to the best that Portugal produces and this clouds our judgement.

We are extremely fortunate to be working with serious people making very serious wines. There is a new generation of supremely talented winemakers who are embracing their tradition and diversity and marrying that with a modern approach in both the vineyard and cellar to produce slick, rich, balanced wines with a classical feel. The wines have captured the eye of commentators the world over, enjoying considerable third party endorsement.

These are world-class wines, by anyone's standards.

**Alison Buchanan**  
Associate Director, Buying  
March 2012

## 2009 Vintage Notes

*“A true example, like those wines of 2007 and 2008 of the best definition I could find for elegance, that from Paul Valéry, a French writer. In a very loose translation, “Elegance is the art of going unnoticed, allied with the extreme care of being distinguishable.”*

**Cristiano Van Zeller (quoting Paul Valéry)**

2009 was a relatively dry year with rainfall over winter, spring and summer between 20% and 40% lower than average. Temperatures were largely average but cold spells at the beginning of winter and in April rather retarded growth. August however brought in a heatwave which brought on a surge in the maturation process. The resulting harvest was beautifully mature, with good levels of acidity, picked in mild, dry conditions. Initially the sheer power of the vintage caused some concerns but, with time the wines have revealed a finely tuned, natural balance, elegance and freshness combined with stunning aromatics.

## Lemos & Van Zeller Quinta do Vale Dona Maria

Cristiano Van Zeller is a tireless ambassador not only for his own wines but for the Douro Valley in its entirety. We have been working together for a great many years and have witnessed the evolution of Cristiano's portfolio first hand, as wine after wine is regaled on the world stage. He began with Quinta do Vale Dona Maria, a wonderful, dramatically sited property, overlooking the Rio Torto, a tributary of the Douro. The estate belonged to Cristiano's wife Joana's family and had been let out to the Symington family on an extended lease, much of it destined for Quinta do Vesuvio. Cristiano bought it in 1996, having parted company with Quinta do Noval in 1993. South/southeast facing, there are 17 hectares of vines ranging between 60 and 80 years old, 10 hectares of 30 year old vines and 5 hectares of new plantings. Some 41 different vine varieties have been identified which, always a challenge, also provides a remarkable palette of flavours, textures and aromatics, with which to create a blend. Vale Dona Maria has been making award winning table wine and port, both LBV and vintage, from the outset and we are delighted to follow this impressive estate.

The grapes were foot trodden in *lagares* for one to three days before fermentation and separated into individual parcels. Fermentation lasted between seven and ten days with *pigeage* by hand. The wine was then racked into French oak barrels, from a variety of coopers, for malolactic fermentation and ageing, the individual fermentations being kept apart until the final blending, before bottling.

## Quinta do Vale Dona Maria 2009

**Corney & Barrow Score 18+**

This is a particularly fine ambassador for both the property and the vintage. An intense, jet-shot ruby-violet, this is enticing from the outset. The nose provides an exotic, captivating array of sweet red and black fruit, cherry compote and spice, suffused with violet notes and set within a savoury backdrop. The palate mirrors the aromatics presented on the nose, set within a beautifully-textured frame. This exhibits that quintessential Douro marriage of power, elegance and freshness, finishing with bright, upbeat and poised flair. Long and indulgent, this bears the Dona Maria hallmark – a lovely wine which warrants patience.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2026+**

**£99/case of 6, in bond UK**

## CV Curriculum Vitae 2009, Vale Dona Maria

**Corney & Barrow Score 18**

Cristiano and Sandra Tavares delight in blending the various plots of Vale Dona Maria. They noted a north facing parcel delivered a certain character, which they opted to set apart, doing a small, separate bottling. This 2009 separates the men from the boys, a dark, earthy brooding mammoth of a wine which entices from the outset with its inky plum, richly textured appearance, clinging to the glass. The nose is something of a paradox, combining intense black fruit, palpable power and ethereal floral intrigue. The palate is similarly balanced, innate concentration and intensity supported by well-integrated, fruit-coated tannins, all punctuated by minerals. Sweet floral notes and a fresh acidity allow this powerhouse to dance – a very impressive achievement.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 - 2024+**

**£245/case of 6, in bond UK**

## Casa de Casal de Loivos

This manor house, beautifully sited on the hilltop above Pinhão, has commanding views of the Douro and the valley. It was constructed in 1658 and has been owned by the Pereira de Sampaio family since 1733. Currently Manuel Sampaio Pimintel is at the helm.

This tiny 1.6 hectare vineyard has an impressive history. Although small, the grapes from the estate played an important role in what had been Cristiano's family port company – Quinta do Noval – for a great many decades, certainly as far back as Cristiano's great grandfather's time there. Cristiano Van Zeller and Manuel decided to work together to create a truly great Douro red from the small vineyard. With the help of fellow winemaker Sandra Tavares, Cristiano has selected grapes from older vines, well over fifty years on average. They have been able to apply all of the experience and knowledge they have amassed over successive vintages at Quinta Vale Dona Maria, where in fact, Casa de Casal de Loivos is made and matured.

The grapes arrive there and are crushed and then foot trodden in small stone *lagares* before fermentation. This, generally, lasts for about 8 to 10 days before the wines are put into *barriques*, at least 50% new, for around 18 months.

The 2009 harvest began on the 27th September, in perfect climatic conditions.

## Casa de Casal de Loivos 2009

### **Corney & Barrow Score 18+**

Shimmering plum-ruby velvet, this offers an enticing marriage of red and black fruit on the nose, with appetising savoury notes, hints of leather and a heady array of flowers and spice – a lovely combination. The palate delivers the promise of the nose, layered and complex with swathes of disciplined fruit, rich, generous, accessible and focused. This is a fine ambassador both for the vintage and for this very special property. Exquisitely balanced, this presents concentration allied to innate charm through to a long, fine, mineral finish. This has real personality and feminine charm, innate elegance underscored by ripe tannins and refreshed by bright acidity.

**Recommended drinking from 2013 - 2021+**

**£135/case of 6, in bond UK**

## Wine and Soul

*“Our goal is to create wines that express all the character of the traditional vineyards and varieties from the Douro Valley - a balance of concentration, complexity and elegance.”*

**Sandra Tavares de Silva and Jorge Serôdio Borges**

Cristiano Van Zeller's business partner and winemaker Sandra Tavares is married to Jorge Serôdio Borges. Previously at Niepoort, he is the winemaker at Quinta de Passadouro as well as being involved in other new projects in the Douro Valley. Sandra, in addition to her work with Cristiano, which she began in 1999, is winemaker at her family's estate in Estramadura, north of Lisbon.

After hours of driving between Chocopalha and the Douro, it was clearly just a matter of time before Jorge and Sandra laid some foundations of their own. They bought an old port lodge in Vale de Mendiz, rebuilt the *lagares* and painstakingly selected grapes from the Pinhão Valley. Thus, in 2001, Wine & Soul was established, making its debut with the first vintage of Pintas, the flagship wine. In 2003, they bought the vineyard, tying their colours to the mast. Given their combined talent the wines unsurprisingly won accolades from the outset.

The vineyard is, south-facing, a steeply-sloped two hectares of seventy-nine year old vines, covering thirty different Portuguese varieties. The age of vines and the variety both contribute to the hugely complex palette of aromatics available. They also however set challenges which are not seen in other wine producing regions. Ruthless sorting is essential as the different vines mature at different times – a skilled job, rewarded by the resulting quality of the finished wines.

In 2009 Jorge inherited Quinta da Manoella, a property in the Pinhão Valley which had been in his family for five generations, established in 1838. 60 hectares in total, 12 are given over to vineyards and 10 to olive trees, with the remainder being forest. This is an exciting addition to Sandra and Jorge's portfolio.

## Red

*“2009 was a great year; the wines are very rich, concentrated with beautiful and ripe tannins.”*

**Sandra Tavares de Silva, March 2012**

### **Pintas 2009**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18+**

The 2009 harvest began during the second week in September, with perfect weather conditions. The grapes, rigorously selected and de-stemmed, were foot-trodden in the restored *lagares* during the ten day fermentation. The wine was then transferred to 70% new French oak and 30% one year old *barrisques* for the malolactic fermentation and the 20 months maturation period. Tasting at the ‘New Douro’ launch of the 2009 vintage in London, this was clearly one of the star performers. It is not so easy to taste a great number of such full-bodied, richly-textured wines so the innate freshness and perfumed poise of Pintas was a welcome oasis. Deeply coloured, its purity of fruit is poignant, ripe cherry compote and cream complemented by violets, white pepper and savoury notes. The palate, echoing the aromatics presented by the nose, is full, complex, layered and generous, blackberry and mocha coming to the fore, supported by firm tannins and clear mineral definition. Long and focused, with upbeat freshness, this is a fine example of the vintage. 5,500 bottles were produced.

**Recommended drinking from 2013 - 2023+**

**£215/case of 6, in bond UK**

**£90/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK**

### **Pintas Character 2009**

**Corney & Barrow Score 17+ - 18**

In order to meet increasing demand, whilst protecting the integrity of Pintas itself, Sandra and Jorge now source old vine fruit from vineyards surrounding Pintas, comprising field blends of thirty varieties. The grapes are traditionally foot trodden and fermented, like Pintas, spending 18 months in 50% new, 50% one year old French oak *barrisques*. Jet-plum, in colour, clinging to the glass, fuschia pink at the rim, this has instant appeal. The nose and palate offer effusive red and black fruit, both freshly picked berries, cherries, plums and spiced, cooked compote. Haunting floral intrigue and minerals also play a role, particularly through a long, controlled, elegant finish. This is probably the best character to date, rich and generous and great value. Although described as their volume wine, Sandra and Jorge still only produced 10,100 bottles in 2009.

**Recommended drinking from 2012 - 2018+**

**£89/case of 6, in bond UK**

**£35/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK**

### **Quinta da Manoella Vinhas Velhas 2009**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18+**

Deeply coloured, 100 years-old vines make for extreme intensity on the nose, very sweet old vine fruit to the fore, a stunning array of blackberry, cherry and cassis with persistent floral notes. The fruit profile on both nose and palate combines both freshly picked berries and spiced compote – complex with a mineral focus. Stylistically Manoella is markedly different from the rest of Wine & Soul reds, delivering an intriguing balance between elegance, refinement and innate power. The palate is rich, generous, persistent and yet so graceful, with an inner spiral of supporting tannins, fruit-coated, which will serve well for cellaring – a really impressive debut for Wine & Soul. In 2009, 3,500 bottles were produced, as well as some larger formats.

**Recommended drinking from 2014 to 2028+**

**£215/case of 6, in bond UK**

**£90/case of 1 magnum, in bond UK**

## **2010 Vintage**

2010 saw a lot of rain between November and June – about 45% higher than the average over the last 30 years, with attendant cooler temperatures in February and March. This provided much needed water reserves. The weather then changed in time for a very successful flowering, with mild weather and very little rain. Summer and autumn were both hot and dry; the warmest summer in the last decade, so that growers were grateful for the wet winter. Although September continued with warm conditions, 11mm of rain provided a welcome boost, facilitating a final spurt towards full ripeness, balanced with attractive acidity.

## White

*“2010 provided a nice production, wines with fresh notes and beautiful acidity!”*

**Sandra Tavares de Silva, March 2012**

Guru made its début performance with the 2004 vintage. It comes from a 49 year old vineyard planted with four varieties; Gouveio, Viosinho, Rabigato and Códaga do Larinho. The wine is fermented at low temperatures in new French oak before being aged for 6 months, with *batonnage* (lees-stirring).

### **Guru 2010**

**Corney & Barrow Score 18+**

This year's Guru continues the upward trajectory it has enjoyed since the first vintage in 2004. Shimmering gold in colour, it has immediate appeal. The nose is at once appetising and inviting, combining warm pastry richness, hints of the exotic and a crisp citrus refreshment, all underscored by stony minerals. The palate is rather luscious and generous but there is a discipline and focus which delivers classicism over hedonism – a beautifully balanced, sensual wine, graceful and long on the finish – highly recommended, though in rather short supply. From low-yielding 50 year old vines, just 5,500 bottles were produced, as well as some larger formats.

**Recommended drinking from 2012 - 2014+**

**£110/case of 6, in bond UK**

## **TASTING GUIDE**

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

**14-16** A very good to excellent wine.

**16-18** An excellent to outstanding wine.

**18-20** An outstanding to legendary wine.

- Wines are judged within their peer group.
- A definitive score of a young wine is almost always impossible. We usually offer a 'spread' (e.g. 14 - 16) which relates to the potential to achieve a higher mark. A '+' adds further to that potential.
- A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes.

**To order, please call 020 7265 2430 (London), 01638 600 000 (East Anglia)**  
**01875 321 921 (Edinburgh) or 01748 828 640 (North of England)**

**For more information about this producer, visit our website:**  
**[www.corneyandbarrow.com](http://www.corneyandbarrow.com)**