



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HIS MAJESTY THE KING
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
LONDON



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HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
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**CORNEY &
BARROW**

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780

PORTUGAL

2015 & 2016 VINTAGES, EN PRIMEUR

From time to time we take a sample from the tasting room and ask the sales team to taste blind. Whenever I arrive there is a certain amount of eye-rolling and a suggestion that “oh no, she is going to bang on about Portugal again”.

..and I do so now again here, with pride.

Portugal holds a treasure chest of wines of every style and here we showcase two of the country’s finest producers, Wine & Soul and Lemos & Van Zeller, both from the staggeringly beautiful Douro Valley in northern Portugal.

Here the 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 viticulture 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 modern wines.

In 2001, the beautiful Douro Valley was deservedly made a Unesco World Heritage Site. Arrestingly dramatic, the region is almost impossibly difficult to work, with vertiginous slopes and hard schist soils. Planting having been based on instinct, there is extraordinary diversity of grape varieties and a spellbinding, hugely complex, array of high quality vines. Respecting and harnessing this individuality has been key to the Douro’s renaissance. The best producers are inspired by the ingredients they nurture throughout the growing season and by the *terroirs* they aim to translate.

The new generations of talented winemakers which have emerged, combine the best of tradition and modernity to produce slick, rich, balanced wines with a classical feel.

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

ALISON BUCHANAN

February 2018

2015 VINTAGE REPORT

“2015 was an atypical year, with a dry and cold winter and a Spring and Summer abnormally hot and dry.....maturation evolved gradually to perfection.”

CRISTIANO VAN ZELLER
December 2017

The dry, cold winter and hot and dry spring and summer, particularly June and July had a marked effect in the vineyard. The growing cycle was precocious and the vine health in prime condition. Rain early in September, allied to lower temperatures was timely, allowing gradual maturation – which always promotes intensity and complexity – with harvest at the end of September/ beginning of October.

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.

Dona Maria is the flagship – a property formerly owned by Cristiano’s wife Joana’s family which had been let out to the Symington family on an extended lease, much of it destined for Quinta do Vesuvio.

Cristiano bought the property in 1996, having parted company with Quinta do Noval in 1993. It is a wonderful, spectacularly sited property, overlooking the Rio Torto, a tributary of the Douro. 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.

The Quinta has been divided into separate plots, is sustainably farmed and is all hand-picked. Grapes are selected before being destemmed and foot trodden in granite lagares for one to three days. Each parcel is fermented separately either in the lagares or in stainless steel tanks. The resulting wines are racked into 225l new Allier oak casks, from various coopers. Malolactic fermentation is in oak, followed by 21 months in barriques (60% new, 40% one year old) All of the fermentations are kept separately until the final blending, just one month before bottling.

QUINTA DO VALE DONA MARIA 2015

Intense plum ruby, very concentrated in 2015, Vale Dona Maria, as ever, beguiles from the outset, offering fresh, perfumed fruit, violet, rose and dark cherry compote, pepper-spiced. Sweet, supple and silken on the palate, this is accessible and generous whilst retaining poise and focus throughout - underscored by graphitic mineral and velvety tannins – charming.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019–2029+)
£195/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

18

QUINTA DO VALE DONA MARIA VINHA FRANCISCA 2015

From 1996, Cristiano and his team had been plotting the Dona Maria vineyard, identifying individual parcels of exceptional quality. In 2004, when Cristiano's daughter Francisca reached 18, they planted a new plot, with a number of varieties, including Tinta Francisca. Intensely coloured, this offers a really appealing, floral and abundantly fruited nose, lightly smoky, white pepper spiced. Ripe and aromatic on the palate, the tannins are certainly present but beautifully coated in red and black cherry fruit. The finish is protracted, upbeat and fresh, very elegant pretty fruit with schist minerals underpinning a poised, long, balanced finish.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019–2029+)

£265/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CV CURRICULUM VITAE 2015

The grapes for CV, Curriculum Vitae come from very old vines which, year on year, surpass expectations. From north-facing parcels, around 85 years old, a field blend is produced, foot-trodden before fermentation, 50% in *lagares* 50% in stainless steel vats. Thereafter the ageing is for 22 months in 75% new French oak, 25% one year old. Jet plum to rim, intensely coloured, this is a very serious glassful, dark and earthy on the nose with dark chocolate and vanilla notes. Heady, ripe, red and black fruit, more towards the dark spectrum, this is as aromatic on the palate, silky and supple with pepper and mineral complements and an earthy component which adds gravitas - long, layered mocha fruit finish, reminiscent of black cherry *gateau*.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17.5+

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2020–2029+)

£295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

WINE & SOUL

Wine & Soul was founded by Sandra Tavares and her husband Jorge Serôdio Borges in 2001 – both established and renowned winemakers. Sandra was formerly winemaker for Cristiano Van Zellar at Dona Maria, which is where we met.

Sandra and Jorge bought an old port lodge in Vale de Mendiz, rebuilt the *lagares* and painstakingly selected grapes from the Pinhão Valley. Pintas, their iconic wine, was launched in 2001 and then, in 2003, the couple bought the vineyard, seriously tying their colours to the mast. Given their combined talent the wines, unsurprisingly, won accolades from the outset.

The vineyard is very special, south-facing, a steeply sloped two hectares of eighty year old vines, covering thirty different Portuguese varieties. The age of the vines and their sheer variety both contribute to the hugely complex palette of aromatics. 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 – an extraordinarily skilled job, rewarded by the quality of the finished wines.

2015 VINTAGE

"The wines show amazing balance, they are very rich and complete and also very aromatic. It was a great vintage!"

SANDRA TAVARES

December 2017

RED

MANOELLA 2015

The Quinta da Manoella was established in 1838 by Jorge's ancestors and has remained with the family for 5 generations. This is their entry level wine. It reveals cherries and berries on the nose, fresh and candied, liberally spiced and revealing underlying earthy minerals. The palate is rounded and ripe, rather elegant on attack with flowers layered within ripe fresh fruit, violet and rock rose. The finish is layered, upbeat and poised - long. This is a vibrant red with attractive balance. For once we have something other than a field blend. For those interested the grape mix is 65% Touriga Nacional, 25% Touriga Francisca, 10% Tinta Roriz and 5% Touriga Franca.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17.5

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2023+)

£75/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

PINTAS CHARACTER 2015

In order to meet increasing demand, whilst protecting the integrity of Pintas, Sandra and Jorge now source old vine fruit from vineyards surrounding Pintas, also field blends of thirty varieties. The grapes as at Pintas are traditionally foot-trodden and fermented, spending 18 months in 50% new, 50% one year old French oak *barriques*. Deep plum, jet-shot, this presents sweet candied fruit character but also freshness on the nose. The palate is earthy and baked whilst remaining richly-textured and silky.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 – 2022+)

£120/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

PINTAS 2015

This is a beautiful colour. Deep plum ruby, the fruit is warming and generous, gregarious even, the tannins ripe supple and lithe. Powerful, there is nonetheless harmony and elegance, dark fruit layered with warm fruitcake and vanilla cream.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2027+)

£147.50/CASE OF 3 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

QUINTA DA MANOELLA VINHA VELHAS 2015

From a vineyard housing of over 100 years, this is deeply coloured, presenting vanilla-rich red and black fruit on the nose, and macerated cherry. There is very obviously mature fruit intensity from this 104 year old vineyard. Velvet textured, supple and ripe, the fruit is almost honeyed, ripeness underscored and complemented by crushed graphite minerals. It offers an extraordinary bounty of fruit and yet remains graceful- silken on the long finish – very lovely.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

18+

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2024+)

£295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

WHITE

Guru made its debut performance with the 2004 vintage. It comes from a 51 year old vineyard in the Cima Corgo, 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 *bâtonnage* (lees-stirring).

2016 VINTAGE

Sandra's report of the growing season in 2016 reads like roller coaster, a challenging year with the coldest, rainiest spring she can recall – difficult when exercising organic viticulture. Disease had to be kept at bay so there were many man hours required in the vineyard. Flowering went relatively well but due to the cold and rain around 10% to 15% of production was lost.

Summer was then warm and dry, thankfully and the crucial months of September and October were beautiful, devoid of rain and warm enough to allow high phenolic ripeness. Harvest for the whites started on the 31st August.

GURU 2016

Guru is a very special wine. It glitters in the glass and attracts from the outset with orchard, stone fruit and delicate pastry notes on the nose, just touched by vanilla. The palate is luxuriant, sumptuous and yet there is a vibrant energy and mineral intensity which adds focus and drive.

The vines here are treated with the precision and care ordinarily confined to the very finest *crus* in Burgundy – lovely wine – deeply impressive.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018– 2021+)
£135 / CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

18+

VINTAGE PORT

Vintage port is such a lovely way in which to end a meal and gently to set the world to rights. Here we have three options, each with individual style – all complex, fresh and extraordinarily welcoming, even at this early stage.

QUINTA DO VALE DONA MARIA PORT 2015

I love the purity we find in Dona Maria's port. It is intense in colour and aromatics, rich, ripe focused fruit complemented by floral notes, violets and pepper spice, all underpinned by refined minerals. This is a lovely wine, with energy and drive through to a protracted, refined finish.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE
(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2025)
£245/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

17.5

VZ PORT 2015

This is wonderfully refined, mineral rich and embellished with very pretty floral notes, violet and rose and wild berries. There is innate freshness which rather obscures latent power – but power there is, and structure but this is all about charm at this stage, accessible and brightly fruited through to a poised, layered finish. Beautifully balanced, VZ ticks all of the boxes.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17 to 17.5

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2028)

£245/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

PINTAS PORT 2015

Jet-shot plum, almost opaque, this is intensely fruited. Violets blend with pink pepper spice and luscious, ripe, berry compote. The palate is deliciously fresh and airy – so pure and with impeccable balance through to a sustained, ripe, focused finish – lovely energy.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE

17+

RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2025

£275/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, 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.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

TO ORDER

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