



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
WINE MERCHANTS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON



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HIS THE PRINCE OF WALES  
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# CORNEY & BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780



## THE WINES OF PETER SISSECK

2014 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

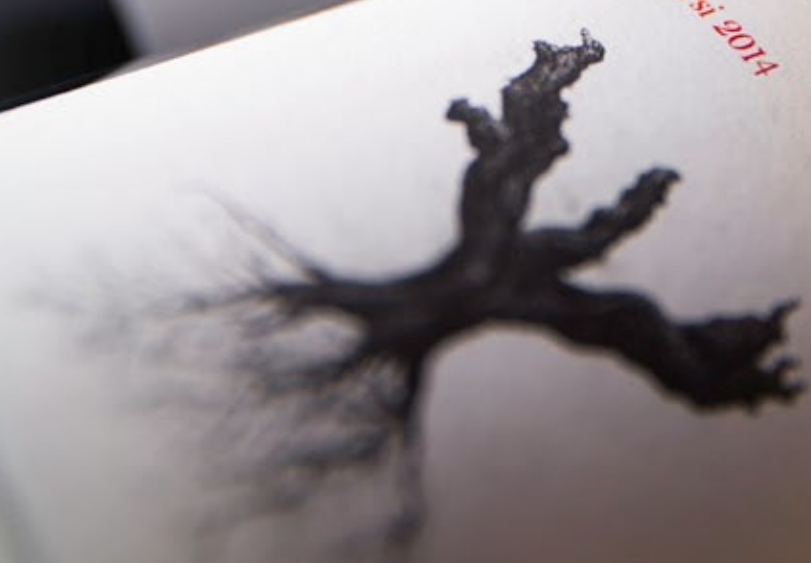
EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK AND HONG KONG



*“There is no doubt that this exceptional vintage will make its way into the annals of the finest wines made in the short history of our winery.”*

PETER SISSECK, JUNE 2015

*ψ Psi 2014*



# THE WINES OF PETER SISSECK

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## HISTORY

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There are of course customers who know the wines of Peter Sisseck really well and who will therefore skim over this section of the offer but for newcomers it is worth our re-visiting the conception and burgeoning early life of Dominio de Pingus, an estate of which we are extremely proud to be the exclusive agents in both the UK and Hong Kong. There are two highly sought after, iconic wines, Dominio de Pingus and Flor de Pingus and now, a relatively recent project, presents us with Psi, the newest, exciting recruit to the Peter Sisseck, "Pingus" portfolio.

Over twenty years ago, a young Dane, Peter Sisseck, had a crazy idea that he wanted to become a winemaker – a rather unlikely ambition perhaps, certainly extraordinary. The germ of the idea was perhaps planted by his uncle, a great friend of Corney & Barrow, Peter Vinding-Diers, who was in fact an established producer in the Bordeaux region. Time passed and Peter remained resolute in his seemingly impossible dream. He studied in Bordeaux and worked with his Uncle, amassing vineyard and cellar experience. Restless and looking abroad to broaden his knowledge Peter sought adventure. He got it in spades. Uncle Peter suggested his travelling to Spain to assess a project in the relatively unknown Ribera del

Duero. Exaggerating to prove a point, one imagines, he talks of vineyards in chaos, set in an extraordinarily bleak landscape, tumbleweed rolling along the streets of the nearby town and vines planted upside down. The report he submitted, unbeknownst to Peter, was viewed as a job application. The die was cast.

Peter, a young Dane, unable to speak the language, schooled only in the traditional winemaking of Bordeaux was about to show the locals how to make wine.

It is hard to imagine how that went down initially but Peter gained their respect and those prophesying Peter's imminent demise would have been somewhat chastened when the first vintage astounded the critics. It took the wine world by storm with its balance of classicism and a totally authentic sense of place.

That wine was Hacienda Monasterio, a wine which Peter still oversees but, from those very early days, observing the very particularity of the region, the hot days and the cold nights, he had envisaged an entirely different project, his own wine, made from gnarly, ancient vines. This dream would become a reality in Pingus.





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## TODAY

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Peter's cellar today is in a wonderful spot, on the bank of the river, at Quintanilla de Onésimo in the Ribera del Duero. From the outside, the building is simple and traditional, yet those outer walls frame a winery of inspired vision and complexity.

The pristine, whitewashed walls of the upper cellar make for an almost monastic feel. The fresh morning air flows freely through wide open windows, which look onto an inner courtyard, cooling the cellar naturally, before the sun is too high. The place is immaculate, housing large, open-topped vats and glistening stainless steel. Below, a surprise is to be had in a very rare, underground, vaulted barrel cellar originally built in 1832, hidden for years and now beautifully restored by Peter.

Returning to ground level, across the courtyard, are a state of the art laboratory and a wonderfully modern set of offices, one area of which is dedicated to the preparation of biodynamic treatments.

This juxtaposition of traditional and modern is of course extremely apt, as it reflects the style of Peter Sisseck's wines, all of which have a very modern look and feel, whilst retaining classical balance at their core.

We are delighted to present here Peter Sisseck's portfolio from the 2014 vintage – three exceptional, inimitable wines which are so true to their origins.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alison Buchanan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ALISON BUCHANAN

June, 2015

# THE VINEYARDS

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## DOMINIO DE PINGUS

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Planted at altitudes of more than 800m above sea level in La Horra, Pingus vines enjoy warm, sunny days ordinarily and refreshingly cool nights during the growing period. These swings in temperature ensure increased complexity and vibrant freshness. There are two complementary *terroirs* covering 4.5 hectares. The first, “Barroso” lies on gravel and sand over alluvial limestone. The second, “San Cristobal” is on southwest facing clay slopes. From the outset for vines, Peter favoured indigenous Tinto del País and determined to push the varietal to dizzying heights. Unusually for this grape, in this region, he decided to use French, rather than American oak.

From these squat, gnarled vines (Tinto del País being the local name for the Tempranillo grape) of sixty

years and more, Peter coaxes a ridiculously small production ranging from 20 hl/ha at best, to as little as 9hl/ha. Organic from day one, Pingus has been farmed according to biodynamic disciplines since 2000. Pruning and sorting are rigorous and ruthless. For a farmer, consciously and deliberately producing low yields is an anathema, but therein lies the secret and obsession for quality.

Production in 2014 was 11hl/ha – a mere 4,500 bottles for the world market.





## FLOR DE PINGUS

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A jewel of an estate, Pingus was nonetheless a precarious stand-alone business, as production would always be subject to the whims of Mother Nature. Other opportunities beckoned and Peter chose a pragmatic option which would allow him to protect the integrity of Pingus, spread risk and increase production. He sought out different plots of land, well-sited, with younger vines. The fruit from these plots would produce Flor de Pingus.

Flor exhibits a very individual style, albeit bearing the peerless Sisseck hallmark of purity and freshness. Flor de Pingus is a great wine in its own right, with its own, richly-deserved, faithful followers. It is the product of 16 different vineyard sites, some older and some younger vines, with a very respectable average age of 35 years. The more recent plantings are set at between 6,000 and

10,000 vines per hectare to encourage competition. In this way, the individual vine's roots need to dig more deeply for nutrients, the aim being added complexity. The parcels are vinified separately in stainless steel with the malolactic and subsequent ageing in French oak, 50% new, 50% one-year-old.

Both Pingus and Flor de Pingus are in great demand. Having set enormously high standards from the outset, Flor de Pingus has become even more focussed as Peter, mirroring Pingus, has fully embraced organic principles, with biodynamic viticulture being the goal. Pingus has been fully biodynamic since 2000 and Flor de Pingus from 2005.

Production in 2014 17hl/ha, 86,000 bottles in total.

## PSI

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Before long, Peter saw that Flor de Pingus was following a similar path to that of Pingus. Despite the greater volume, in a very short time demand for Flor began to exceed supply, which left Peter with a dilemma. He had access to additional vineyards where he could access more grapes, but he was keen not to change the path he had created for Flor.

Instead, he accelerated progressing a new idea. Peter had established a network of complementary growers with interesting *terroirs* and old vines. Together they created a new company under the name of Bodegas y Viñedos Alnardo, a vehicle for Peter's most recent endeavour.

Thus Psi was born, the first vintage being 2007.

The Psi project (his initials make up the Greek letter Psi Ψ) is very different from either Flor or Pingus. With Psi, Peter seeks to capture and protect the very essence of the Ribera del Duero, revisiting and reinventing tradition, whilst adding a philanthropic touch for good measure.

For all his relaxed, convivial *bonhomie* and his passion for wine, Peter has a serious side. Over recent years, wine production in the Ribera del Duero has soared, although not always at the quality end of the spectrum. The region's heritage of old vines is under threat, as

they are seen simply to be an impediment to efficiency and growth. Peter has forged relationships with growers who might otherwise have been tempted by the promise of an easier life, offering them an alternative way of working. The threat to these old vineyards is very real. Peter has watched desperately as farmers run their vineyards into ruin. Incentivised by payment based on weight, they are effectively encouraged to overproduce, using labour-saving chemicals and pesticides which add to the problem.

Peter is conscious that these are proud people and that as a fair, blue-eyed Dane, he would be ill-advised to try and instruct them. He therefore began by working alongside the farmers in an advisory capacity, encouraging moves to organic viticulture, which he rewards by paying a premium. He pays three or four times the going average rate for his grapes – a powerful incentive. Over the years these farmers have developed a deep trust and respect for Peter, who has a great deal of passion for Ribera del Duero, as well as a profound sense of gratitude. Psi has become so much more than a wine: it is a philanthropic endeavour to preserve the traditions and way of life built up over decades and is a means to give something back to the region. The fact that the wine happens to be hugely characterful bears witness to Peter's almost obsessive focus on quality and sustainability.



# VINTAGE REPORT

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*“Every now and then you can have a vintage that totally changes your views and thinking of what you do. 1995 was like that for me. 2014 is doing the same. It has taken 20 years... and I guess 20 more years until I see something like that again.”*

PETER SISSECK  
June, 2015

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*“The most remarkable vintage made since 1995... balanced but also rich... has remarkable qualities.”*

2014 was generally warm in Spain, with average rainfall and a glorious, warm Autumn – one of the warmest since October 1961. The Ribera del Duero specifically, was slightly warmer than the Spanish average and rains over winter made for sufficient water reserves. Summer consistently produced lowish minimum temperatures with dew often seen in the vineyards in the morning. With sufficient sunshine and water, the vines thrived during the dry, hot summer months. So far, so good. On July 2<sup>nd</sup> however, hail hit the two vineyards which produce Pingus; San Cristobel and Barroso. Happily those supplying Flor de Pingus were untouched. Massive investment in terms of man hours in the vineyards effectively nursed the vines through this trauma, protecting both the plants and their fruit. Autumn, as indicated, was warm and also humid. Two significant bouts of rain occurred, the first between the 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September and the second between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October. Peter chose to begin picking on the last week of September.

# 2014 TASTING NOTES

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BY ADAM BRETT-SMITH

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## PSI 2014

Is this the best Psi to date? Probably. Wonderfully primary nose bursting with black fruits and leafy, peppery spice almost port-like in its richness. The palate is initially mineral then intensely juicy, sweet. This is a very pure, refined Psi from very old vines, concentrated and long. Will drink early and keep long. Very, very good.

Corney & Barrow Score 17 to 18

Recommended drinking from 2016 – 2022

£185/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

£105/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

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## FLOR DE PINGUS 2014

Unsurprisingly given Psi's quality, Flor de Pingus is a great opaque, rusty colour. Once again we have that primary, almost arterial fruit on the nose, a dark, soaked, and densely rich black fruit perfume, cocktailed, pure. The palate is sweet on entry, with beautifully coated tannins, layered flavours which are both intense and rich. There is a lovely freshness and purity, refined concentration and richness to the finish. 'Floats like a butterfly stings like a bee' I wrote rather stupidly in the margin. Unquestionably the best young Flor I have ever tasted – and I have tasted them all!

Corney & Barrow Score 18 to 19

Recommended drinking from 2018 – 2022+

£425/Case of 12 bottles, in bond UK

£215/Case of 3 magnums, in bond UK

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## 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 (eg 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.

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## PINGUS 2014

This is a sublime Pingus, in Peter's words 'the most remarkable vintage made since 1995.' Impenetrable ruby colour. It seems amazing that such old vines – many of them over 100 years of age – should produce a nose of such piercing freshness and elegance alongside the more profound, fatty red fruited and darkly rich perfume. Like so many truly great wines, Pingus in 2014 is in so many ways a paradox. The nose is both high tensile, taut and profound, and then the palate finesses this, by being initially calm, measured, authoritative just so relaxed with powder fine tannins. But then a freshness, purity and intense concentration to the finish. Richly flavoured and super refined this is a magical wine with the subtlety of one year old barrels (ex Flor de Pingus) to frame this profound quality. 'Utterly natural concentration – it made itself – what we had to do... was nothing.' Peter Sisseck.

Corney & Barrow Score 19

Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2030+

£2495/Case of 6 bottles, in bond UK

£845/Case of 1 magnum, in bond UK

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# TO ORDER

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