

Primus Branco



Since 1980, Alvaro Castro has been the winemaker for his family's properties at Quinta da Pellada and Quinta de Saes in Dão. In that time, he has established himself as the region's pre-eminent winemaking mind, crafting elegant wines of place that showcase the explosive aromatics and cool-climate freshness intrinsic to this special terroir. Today, he farms these two sites with his daughter Maria, and the two are committed to minimal-intervention, organic practices. Most of Alvaro's wines are field blends, drawing on local tradition—and he is a fierce and vocal traditionalist! He is passionate about making wines that “reflect the soil,” and his wines embody the idea that “wine is made in the vineyard.” The results are undeniable – his wines represent the absolute height of this beautiful appellation. Primus is just such a wine – an old vine field blend comprised of more varieties than even Alvaro can count, but a wine that showcases this unique minerality and terroir without compromise.

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: 2016 92WA; 2015 94WA, 91VFTC ; 2014 92WA, 2013 93 W&S Magazine Year's Best Portuguese Wines

GRAPE: Field blend of 19+ indigenous grapes including Encruzado, Cercial, Bical, Verdelho, Málvasia, and Terrantez 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: 24 hours of maceration with the skins, followed by cold fermentation in stainless steel and used large format wood, using only indigenous yeast. Aged for 9 months in concrete egg, on the lees with no additional sulfur. 2 additional years of elevage in bottle prior to release. This is a vegan wine.

PRODUCTION: 580 cs (6 pack)

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

