

OLÉ & OBRIGADO

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Poço do Lobo Cabernet



Founded in 1920 by the Costa brothers, Caves São João became a key player in Portuguese winemaking with its iconic brands "Frei João" from Bairrada and "Porta dos Cavaleiros" from Dão. Initially focused on fine Douro wines, the winery shifted to Bairrada table and sparkling wines after a 1930 regulation restricted Port production. Under French enologist Gaston Mainousson, Caves São João gained a reputation for quality wines. Though demand for Bairrada and Dão wines waned in the 1990s, they saw a resurgence 20 years later as consumers sought finesse and freshness. In 2013, the Costa family began releasing library vintages from 1959 to 2000, showcasing the remarkable aging potential of their wines.

Today, Caves São João remains the only Portuguese winery to offer such historic vintages commercially, blending tradition with continuous innovation.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: This is an opportunity to drink a perfectly aged, matured Bairrada wine, showcasing the capacity for longevity in which this region is known. A library release from the winery itself, with the bottles kept in pristine condition for decades, these wines show a complexity that cannot be derived in any other way. Caves São João is the only winery in Portugal offering library releases of still wines commercially, with vintages going back to the 1950's.

RATING HISTORY: 1995 91 WA

GRAPE: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Vines planted in late 1970s. Tended in clay and limestone soils at 164 feet elevation.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: Roasted Lamb

VINIFICATION AND AGING: Grapes fermented on their skins in open-top bins for several weeks before aging 24 months in concrete vessels. It was filtered and then bottled.

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Originally sourced from vines planted in the famed Bairrada DOC in the Beiras sub-region, an appellation in northern Portugal that reaches toward the Atlantic coast. Soil here is largely clay-limestone and, with the proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, there is a significant maritime influence here.

TASTING NOTES This Reserva has more power than the regular reds and much riper fruit. It is bigger and fresher in every respect. Intense and powerful, this is nuanced by cassis and red fruits. It ends with a big finish. There are some typical nuances of aging Cab too. So, while it is fresh for its age, it hardly tastes like a young red. - Mark Squires

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13.5%

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