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DOC Alentejo - Portalegre

White 2018

The Tapada do Chaves estate, with a total area of 60 hectares, is located in the hamlet of Frangoneiro in the outskirts of the town of Portalegre in northern Alentejo and has been making wine for nearly a century. There are 32 hectares of land under vines planted on granite soils on the hill side of the São Mamede Mountain, 23 of which with red varieties and nine with white. The estate benefits from a microclimate derived from the low altitude of its vineyard which in turn contributes to a slow maturation of the grapes and the youth and freshness of its white wines, and local Mediterranean-type forestry. Both make the “terroir” that identify its wines.

Not many Alentejo wineries are a century-old, and Tapada do Chaves seems to be a unique case-study in Alentejo wine growing. Its origins go back to the turn of the 20th century when the Chaves family planted the first vines on his small estate (“Tapada”, or enclosure). Presently, and despite land renovation, there are still two plots of land under vines yielding grapes, dating back to 1901 (red grapes) and 1903 (white grapes).

Grape Varieties: Arinto, Antão Vaz and Fernão Pires

Soil: Granitic

Analytical Data: Alcohol (%) – 13.0; Total Acidity (g/l tartaric ac.) – 5.3; pH – 3.26; Total sugar (g/l) – 0.8

Vineyard: “Castanheiro” vineyard

Harvest Notes: Low rainfall and cold temperatures defined the beginning of the 2018 growing season. While the sunny mild spring was favorable, summer brought long periods of warm days, with uninterrupted heatwaves above normal during August. Vine maturation peak was delayed by several weeks. A vintage with extreme work during maturity control, a challenge to allow gradual increases in phenolic development without loss in acidity and freshness. The harvest began later, with the benefit for higher altitude and older vineyards, better adapted to support climate variations during stressful years.

Vinification. Hand-picked grapes, followed by all bunch press. Fermentation is 100% in stainless steel tanks.

Ageing: On tank *sur lies* for 9 months with *batonnage*. On bottle during 12 months.

Drink between: 2020 and 2030

Serving temperature: 14°C

Tasting Notes @mar2021: A classic Alentejo unoaked white wine, with intense nose and rich body. Freshness and fruitiness from the granitic slopes found on the Tapada, showing melon, pear and delicate orange leaf notes alongside mineral edges of struck match. Well balanced with crispy acidity, the finish is fruity and plenty of character.

Winemaker: Pedro Baptista

Producer: Tapada do Chaves – Sociedade Agrícola e Comercial, Unipessoal, Lda