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DOC Alentejo - Portalegre

White 2023 – Old Vines

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 in 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 have century old vineyards, as Tapada do Chaves seems to be unique in Alentejo. Its origins go back to the beginning of the 20th century when the Chaves family planted the first vines on their small estate (“Tapada”, or enclosure). Presently, and despite different vineyard renovations over time, there are two original old vineyards with low yield productions remaining that date back to 1901 (red grapes) and 1903 (white grapes).

Varieties: Arinto, Fernão Pires and others

Vineyard: Old vine (1903)

Soil Type: Granite

Analytical Data: Alcohol(%) – 13.0; Total Acidity (g/l tartaric acid) – 5.7; pH – 3.18; Total Sugar (g/l) – 1.6

Energy Value: 76 kcal/100ml (320kJ/100ml)

Harvest Notes:

In addition to being a dry year, 2023 was extremely challenging, with a viticulture that required significant intervention. Although there were no major diseases, there was high pressure from mites. The low nighttime temperatures created large thermal amplitudes, which allowed for rapid, homogeneous, and balanced ripening in white grape varieties, preserving excellent acidity and freshness levels. The intense heat in August made the end of the harvest more difficult, requiring greater patience and precision in vineyard monitoring. The later-ripening varieties benefited from the cool October nights, achieving very high-quality ripeness and showcasing the full expression of the severe and unique terroir of the Alentejo region.

Winemaking: Hand-harvested from the century-old vineyard planted on the estate in 1903. The grapes were manually selected and then whole-cluster pressed, without destemming. The must was clarified using the traditional low-temperature gravity settling method. Fermentation took place in both stainless steel tanks and French oak barrels, using neutral yeasts in order to showcase the character and terroir expression of the vineyard.

Aging: 6 months in stainless steel tanks and French oak barrels with bâtonnage followed by 24 months in the bottle.

Drink Between: 2025 to 2038

Serving Temperature: 14°C

Tasting Notes: Straw-green in color. The nose is complex and layered, combining vegetal and citrus notes with hints of ripe white fruit, orange blossom, dried herbs, and flint, alongside delicate nuances of dried nuts and freshly baked bread. Rich and full-bodied on the palate, with a creamy texture and highly expressive fruit, it achieves an exceptional balance between depth, firm acidity, and minerality, revealing all the elegance and character of the old vineyard.

Winemakers: Pedro Baptista | Duarte Lopes