

**Tasting Notes  
May 2021 Pick-up  
Wines of Portugal**



Welcome to your May 2021 Smart Wine Club pickup. The theme this quarter is Portugal, which we haven't visited for two years. I always enjoy having Portugal as a theme for a summer pickup, as I think both their whites and reds are such enjoyable warm weather wines.

One fun feature of wines from Portugal is that producers there still tend to focus more on the large number of lesser-known, local grape varietals rather than moving production to the "big name" varietals that are more familiar to Americans.

Portugal is probably most famous for a style of young white wine called Vinho Verde, which is crisp and refreshing, often even spritzy! We'll try one Vinho Verde in this pickup. Also, for your info, Portuguese wines, both whites and reds, are quite often blends of local varietals that are labelled by region and wine color. So, when you see "Douro Branco" that means a white blend from the Douro region. A "Douro Tinto" would be a red blend from that same region.

Don't forget, you can always return your wine club red bags to the store when you come in to pick up. We are happy to re-use them and reduce waste!

- **2019 Portal da Calçada Vinho Verde Reserva** – This white is a blend of Loureiro, Alvarinho, Arinto and Trajadura grapes. The grapes are grown in the sub-region of Amarante, which is a little warmer than the average Vinho Verde region, giving the wine a hint of floral honeysuckle notes. You will enjoy aromas of honeydew and green apple, with flavors of lime zest and a balanced, crisp finish. Tasty with or without food.  
Reg retail: \$12.99 Smart price: \$12

Pairing: Vinho Verde is always the perfect aperitif before dinner, but also try it with Thai green curry or grilled shrimp.

- **2018 Ramos Pinto Douro Branco Reserva "Duas Quintas"** – The Ramos Pinto brand is most well-known for Port wine, but their Duas Quintas label offers blends created from their two best "quintas" or vineyards. This is a blend of 86% Rabigato, 7% Arinto and 7% Viosinho, which are grapes chosen for their high natural acidity and complex aromas. Look for apricots, plum, almond, and lemon on the nose. Reg retail: \$14.99 Smart price: \$14

Pairing: This wine pairs especially well with goat cheese, as well as nearly any type of fish or shellfish.

- **2019 Dow Vale do Bomfim DOC Douro Tinto** – Another famous Port wine producer, Dow also owns vineyards in the Douro region that produce excellent red and white blends. The red blend is a combination of 30% Touriga Franca and 20% Touriga Nacional. The remaining 50% comes from a red “field blend” which is a technique typical of Portugal where multiple varietals are planted together in the same field. You’ll enjoy aromas of brambleberry vines and pepper with flavors of cherry and plum. The wine is medium-bodied with good balance between fruit and acidity. Reg retail: \$13.99 Smart price: \$13

Pairing: This wine has a juicy acidity that makes it easy to pair with a variety of foods. Try it with anything from salmon fillets to pork chops to grilled sausages.

- **2019 Casa Santos Lima “Lisbonita” Tinto** – This easy-to-drink red is a blend of Castelão, Tinta Roriz, Touriga Franca, and Syrah grapes. The grapes are grown in the Vinho Regional Lisboa region just outside the capital city of Lisbon, hence the name of the wine. Very fruity with a velvety medium body and smooth finish. Reg retail: \$10.99 Smart price: \$10

Pairing: If you’d like to explore some Portuguese food, try this recipe for Grilled Piri-Piri Chicken, a flavorful and spicy recipe with interesting roots in both Africa and Portugal: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/piri-piri-chicken-359750>

- **2017 Prats & Symington Tinto “Prazo de Roriz”** – Lastly, we have two lovely reds by the same producer, for you to compare and contrast. The first is a lighter, younger wine which is a blend of estate-grown Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca, Tinta Roriz and a small amount of field blend grapes. It is fresh and fruity with raspberry and cherry flavors, excellent minerality and tasty spiciness; and is ready to drink immediately. Compared with the 2<sup>nd</sup> red (below), this one was lightly aged in French oak for 6 months. Reg retail: \$16.99 Smart price: \$15

Pairing: OK, you might think I’ve gone off the deep end, but I’m going to recommend this with quesabirria tacos, which are really trending right now in Salem. I’ve tried them at Kike’s Taquería and Birriería La Capital and they were both tasty. However, I’ve heard they’re even better at Fruity Mix Café but I haven’t had a chance to check them out yet. If you haven’t heard of quesabirria, it is a taco or quesadilla, filled with chile-stewed beef and cheese, then griddled, then served with the beef broth for dipping.

- **2018 Prats & Symington Post Scriptum de Chryseia** – Prats & Symington is very well known for their acclaimed wine named “Chryseia” which is created from the first (best) selection of their estate-grown grapes. That wine has appeared 3 times in Wine Spectator’s annual list of Top 100 Wines. This wine that you’ll be trying is the “second wine” to that well-known (and much more expensive) one, meaning that it is created from the second selection of grapes from the same estate. The Touriga Franca grape is known for creating wines with a typical fragrance of Gum Rockrose, an interesting Mediterranean flowering shrub which is coated in a fragrant resin used in perfumes and traditional medicine. The wine has great structure and good acidity, with rich dark fruit flavors. In contrast with the wine above, this has been aged for 12 months in French oak. Reg retail: \$27.99 Smart price: \$26

Pairing: Again, similar flavor profiles will work with this second wine, but maybe you want something a little fancier. How about your favorite grilled steak with blue cheese butter?