

OLÉ & OBRIGADO

WINE & SPIRITS WITH HEART & SOUL

Quinta da Pellada Alto Tinto



Dão is increasingly regarded as one of Portugal's most compelling fine-wine regions, prized for its protected mountain setting, granitic soils, and balanced climate that combines continental warmth with cooling Atlantic influences. Framed by the Serra da Estrela, Caramulo, and Buçaco ranges, vineyards planted at elevations of roughly 450 to 600 meters benefit from slow ripening conditions that foster bright acidity, ethereal aromatics, and finely structured tannins. The historic estate of Quinta da Pellada, first documented in 1527, lies near Vila Nova de Tazém and has been a key reference point in the modern revival of Dão wines. Álvaro de Castro inherited the property in 1980 and dedicated himself fully to restoring the family's winemaking tradition, later joined by his daughter Maria, trained in oenology, who continues to shape the estate's contemporary vision alongside a small technical team.

Today, Pellada wines are rooted in a philosophy of minimal intervention and deep respect for nature, combining traditional field-blend viticulture with thoughtful modern practices. The estate's old vineyards, often averaging 70 years or more and composed of dozens of indigenous varieties such as Touriga Nacional, Jaen, Alvarelhão, Tinta Pinheira, and Tinta Amarela, are cultivated to express the nuanced character of each parcel. Granitic soils and the moderating influence of nearby river valleys contribute mineral tension and structural precision, while the region's diurnal shifts preserve freshness and complexity. This slow-wine approach results in age-worthy, terroir-driven reds that reflect both the historic identity of Dão and the Castro family's ongoing commitment to authenticity and site expression.

WHAT MAKES THIS WINE UNIQUE?: Only the best parcels from Pellada go into this wine; both are adjacent to the 16th-century house, where enormous boulders of granite studded with quartz are found scattered across the property. This wine is a showstopper that any lover of the world's greats will cherish, and a great window into the historic style of Dão winemaking.

RATING HISTORY: 2023 96WA; 2022 94WA; 2019 96JS, 93WA; 2018 94WA; 2017 94WE

GRAPE: Old vine field blend of some 40 different varieties, mainly Jaen, Alvarelhão, Tinta Pinheira, Tinta Carvalha, Bastardo, and Touriga Nacional. Average vine age of 75 years. Planted to granite, sand and quartz at an average altitude of 500m (1,640 ft) above sea level.

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS: The fresh red fruit and delicate aromatics of the Quinta de Pellada Tinto pair very well with roast poultry and game. Mushrooms and other umami-laden dishes are also fine pairs.

VINIFICATION AND AGING: The wine typically undergoes spontaneous fermentation with native yeasts and relatively gentle extraction to preserve finesse and terroir expression. It is then aged for about 28 months in well-seasoned French oak barrels, often fourth use, allowing slow micro-oxygenation and structural integration without imparting significant oak flavor. This is a vegan wine.?

LOCATION, SOIL, CLIMATE: Quinta da Pellada is located in the northern part of the Dão, in Northern Central Portugal. The plots for this vineyard are planted to granite, with lines of sand and quartz at 500m (1640 ft) elevation. The 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 west by the Serra da Estrela, and from the arid heat of the Douro by the Serra do Caramulo. Average temperature in the growing season is 57F (14C). Rainfall is 26 inches per annum, with no irrigation.

TASTING NOTES Bright ruby-garnet. On the nose, powerful aromatics that gain explosivity with some air. Sour cherry, raspberry, cranberry, flint, truffle and violets come on the nose. On the palate, this is an elegant, finessed wine with restraint to its power and structure. Built to age, this is tightly wound in its youth with mouthwatering acidity but a beautiful purity to the core of red fruit and minerals. Finishes long, with impeccable balance.

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 13%

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