



QUINTA DE LA ROSA

2012 NEWSLETTER

The main focus this year has been on our building works...we managed to build 7 new tourism bedrooms and a new winery in nine months thanks to a fabulous team of architects, engineers and builders and managed by my amazing brother Philip. Quite a challenge to build anything on such steep slopes – one of the cranes almost slipped into the river. The new rooms are superb and I urge you all to come and try them out. We successfully moved the old granite lagares into the new building leaving the old adega as a beautiful room with an old schist wall to store barrels full of our reserve wines. Everything is gravity fed and with insulated roofs and air conditioning so I believe our wines/ports will get even better.

Many of you will wonder how we financed this in a year of economic gloom. Half is financed by generous subsidies and subsidised loans from the EU. We successfully managed to launch a wine bond whereby investors are paid in wine/port/oil/holidays as an interest payment on their £5000 tranches. Some has been paid from cash flow over the years and the rest from family capital from my father.

Year in the vineyards: We had a very dry winter/spring which helped with the building works but meant that the vineyard suffered as water stocks were not replenished. Yields were initially low from an uneven flowering and poor weather during this period. We had some rain in the late spring but virtually none fell in the summer months (we normally have some thunderstorms or a few days of low pressure). Lack of water meant the grapes were small and concentrated and took longer to mature. We started picking late and slowly (16th September). As usual Jorge was careful about what to pick and the grapes that came into the winery were in perfect condition. It rained on 23rd and 25th September so we stopped picking for a week and resumed only when the effect of the rain had worn off. The skins of the grapes were in great condition so there was little risk of rot. Yields were 40% down on 2011 and 2010 but these were very abundant years.

The TONNIX story continues and we have much fun celebrating together be it the summer party at Mitch's Seahorse restaurant in Dartmouth or Christmas lunch/dinner at Hixs. Both Mark and Mitch like to give me a challenge and this year it was the launch of GRAND CREW under a newly designed Tracey Emin label.



New importers: Our first order left for Greattime in China at the beginning of the year but it took about six months to get there! We have started working with Veld 21 in Russia and I spent two glorious days in Moscow at their annual tasting. I have visited Belgium many times this year investing time in getting to know our new importer there - Albert Kint. Winesellers has been appointed as our national US importer. La Rosa's regional importers have been very understanding about this and many are about to work with Passagem instead. In Portugal we are now working with Decante who has a fabulous portfolio of leading Portuguese wines. Despite our family name, one of the hardest markets to crack has been Sweden. I hope this will change now that we are working with TOMP.

Recognition: I don't think we have ever had so many good reviews for so many of our wines. La Rosa Reserve 2009 deserves a special mention coming TOP of a 220+ Douro red wine tasting in the Decanter Magazine and gaining many 90+++ points in all the US publications. But our la Rosa white wine 2010 also did well - chosen as one of the top 50 wines of Portugal and being picked out on numerous occasions in the English press.... Jancis Robinson said it should age like a good white burgundy.

Visitors: Many have visited La Rosa this year and have been patient with the building works at La Rosa. Sandy Leong from Macau made her visit in freezing February. Luis Horta from Brazil used La Rosa as a base to explore the Douro for the first time. Nick Arkell managed to water ski on the Douro - one of the things he had dreamt of doing. Adrian Burns (FMV) appeared with four female sommeliers from leading Michelin star restaurants - Ledbury, Pied a Terre, Texture and 45 Park Lane. We had help from Matthew Brass and Tim Elliott from Harvey Nichols who came to help with the vintage. And Krist Vanmelle from Albert Kint, Belgium took some great Vintage photos.

Worried about the Portuguese downturn and the impact this would have on our sales, I have never travelled so much HK/Macau/China, Poland, Russia, USA, Canada (x2), Italy, France, Germany, Finland, Belgium (x3) and Switzerland. As a result, sales have kept up well this year

Other News: We celebrated two birthday parties at La Rosa.... my brother, Philip's 50th and my daughter, Eleanor's 21st. Tim has another grandson, Alexander - a son for Philip and Sarah.

