



QUINTA
DE LA ROSA

2014 NEWSLETTER

We've had a fabulous year in terms of sales helped by the continuing recognition of La Rosa's quality. Portuguese wines are finally becoming better known and we have had many new customers wanting to buy our wines. Based on La Rosa Reserve 2011 winning the Berlin Wine trophy Best Wine of Portugal, we even won a free all expenses paid trip to South Korea!

Investments continued but this time in the private part of our house which was falling down onto the railway! Now we have two modernised bedrooms, a light and airy dining room with new terrace and a house with new roofs and rewired electricity! For the first time in my life, we can put aside the buckets, no chance of water dripping through the ceilings!

In Switzerland La Rosa was appointed Winery of the Year 2014/15 which has meant many trips to Switzerland and Baur au Lac has visited the Quinta three times this year!

Year in the vineyards: The vineyard stood up surprisingly well to a challenging year. The flowering was late and then the Douro suffered from caterpillar attacks and oidium. The caterpillar digs deep into the youngly formed grape and forms its chrysalis. This mainly affected Touriga Franca. The summer seemed to be marginally cooler and wetter than normal with numerous thunderstorms but the meteorological data shows otherwise and we seemed to have had a pretty normal, hot summer. There were plenty of hail storms, especially in the early summer, and the top part of the Lamelas vineyard got quite badly hit. The vine leaves had huge holes taken out of them. We did lose about 20% of our crop but only in a small area around the Lamelas house. In general the vine recuperated quite impressively.

By mid August we were looking at a two week delay in starting the vintage at La Rosa. But a few days of intense heat brought the grapes on with a great spurt and suddenly some were ripe. We picked the more delicate Touriga Franca first starting slowly on 25th September (relatively late for recent years). At Bandeiras we had started almost a month earlier. We had a few days of blissful sunshine but then thunderstorms built up and we ended up having rain almost every afternoon over a two week period. For a few days the rain was longer and heavier and we stopped picking. The harvest ended up in being very drawn out and we ended up finishing picking on 9th October.

I cannot remember having had so consistent rain over a long period and we were all fearful for the grape quality. But the grape stood up to the wet weather incredibly well even though the vine was quite stressed after the difficult year (caterpillar, oidium and hail). I believe better vineyard management over the last decade meant that the vine was stronger and more able to stand up to the stress. We have worked hard at making sure the vine is in balance with its environment and age - pruning so the vine produces what it is capable of. Being sustainable we spray much less and listen to the vineyard more. We have worked hard on canopy management as well.

Jorge said 'When I started working in the Douro over fifteen years ago, a year like this would have resulted in a mass of powdery mildew. The boxes of grapes would have given off a cloud of white powder when they arrived in the winery.'

Special bottlings: For the first time we have bottled 18L, 9L and 3L bottles of La Rosa Reserve and Red wines. 18L is seriously large – you can visit Hedonism in London to see one!

Importers/Sales: Sales in the US have really taken off with several large orders including winning the port tender for Delta Airways. We have started working with a few new importers: Rabelo in Belgium, Curious Wines in South Korea (it was worth my brother's visit!) and Liquor Mountain in Japan. Lots of travelling especially to Scotland that seems to be taking off thanks to the Woodwinters team. I have managed to host wine dinners in three Galvin restaurants – a record!

Visitors: We have had many visitors both from the trade as well as paying guests. Our new rooms are so popular that we have had full occupancy for much of the summer. The Douro seems to be the place to visit. Harry May from Berry Bros, #mynephewJack & Tania Davey (Merchants Tavern) all helped during the Vintage. A team from Hawksmoor, Great Fosters, The Lucky Onion and Harewood Arms helped with treading as did many others! We also had wine makers of some the top French producers in the world – Krug, Yquem, Beychevelle to name a few – impressed by the quality/value we offered.

Opposite Hill Challenge: For the first time we had an 'official' Opposite Hill Challenge consisting of swimming the river and climbing the hill. Worth the effort as there was a great party on arrival! Next year we will be holding the same event on **Saturday 20th June**. Fastest time to beat 33 mins; mine must have been one of the slowest – 2 hours! Come and join us!

Other News: I have been elected as a Vintner – it's a huge honour to eat in the Vintners Hall. Follow me on Instagram now!



View of Opposite Hill & Award Ceremony



My parents dancing at Vindima party Jack & Harry sorting grapes 18Lvs 0.75L

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