



FOR THE LOVE OF PORT™
COLLECTIVE PORT WISDOM

2011 Vintage Port Review



Roy Hersh © July 2013

Much has already been written about this infant of a vintage. Compelling comparisons to other great vintages aside, I don't believe anyone doubts whether 2011 is one for the history books or not. The question remains, which of the Ports from this particular year are worthy of inclusion in your cellar? I hope to provide you with unbiased information and detailed tasting notes that will enable you to make a sound decision, from this individual's viewpoint.

With all of the popular Port pundits already having released their ratings and tasting notes, my review may be seen as just an also ran. I certainly understand that rationale and have received my share of *scolding* for releasing this report so late in the game from individual's opinions that I greatly respect. The majority of media "buzz" took place between last May and July when nearly all of the renowned professionals that critique Port, came out with their views and tasting notes.

I intentionally chose a late release for my review and realize it won't have the same impact it could have if written months ago. Maybe in the future, I'll change my way of thinking. My tasting methodology is way different than all of the others who report on Port and that somewhat influences the timing. However, most of that media buzz was over and done by mid-summer in 2013, while many of the 2011 Vintage Ports, (VPs as I've always called them) had not even been bottled yet, and certainly none had been shipped. So while it can be argued that I have lost all relevance and won't have any serious effect on the marketplace; that is not my modus operandi. Nor do I care to provide scores early on in order to gain a place on retailer's shelf talkers or to insure my tasting notes will be promoted on Port shipper's websites or used in PR firm's adverts.

Delivering unbiased blind tasting notes that will stand the test of time based on thoroughness and consistency is all that drives me. My second and more critical reason for waiting this long is my belief that a truly great, if not historic vintage like 2011, is so important to the future of the Port industry that it deserves to remain in the newsfeed. So keeping the 2011 vintage in front of Port consumers, (novices and aficionados alike) is my main goal, as this vintage is no longer talked about except on two Port-centric forums: FTLOP and TPF. Otherwise, 2011 is practically "yesterday's news" to consumers, which for me is just not acceptable. But let's get on with it!



Having spent more than a month in Portugal in 2011 during three separate visits, (the year that *Zev Robinson* joined us to film the documentary, **Life on the Douro**) I had an excellent vantage point to see grapes growing, but my earliest impression of the 2011 Ports was formed during the weeklong harvest tour that year. I've seen good, mediocre and excellent harvests up close and have gained enough empirical knowledge to draw some basic conclusions. Speaking to the heads of the Port companies, winemakers and occasional viticulturist during the harvest each year, one glean important information and picks up on the vibe in the Douro. Walking the vineyards, picking and/or tasting the grapes and paying close attention when treading in or photographing lagares also provides some hints as to the basic character of the grapes. But often times it is the body language and excitement of the Duriense which gives the greatest clue as to the quality vs. hype of the current vintage at hand. Of course, there is nothing like tasting the wine.

The first time I "felt" there was a huge difference was 2007, when the excitement from pickers to owners and everyone in-between was way different than anything I had experienced in prior years. By the time I caught my flight back to the US in mid-October 2007, I would've bet the ranch that two years hence, I'd be making a special trip to Porto for a generally declared vintage. Comparatively, in 2011 the excitement and energy level was elevated a couple of notches above what was experienced in 2007 and I'd been there every year inbetween too. And while I don't pretend to be the "Port Grape Whisperer" -- that energy level is definitely palpable.

Tasting the sweetness of the grapes from vine and triage tables and noting the colors of the fermenting musts and even dipping a glass into the lagar at one of the properties we visited, there was no question that 2011 was something special. Then again, there was the excitement in the air and individuals generally known for their lack of hype and calm demeanor were atypically animated that particular September into October.



Dominic Symington shared his thoughts on his family's ownership of nearly 1000 hectares in the Douro region, "We are caretakers and not owners." He elaborated about the 2011 vintage, "We knew right away that we had something very special." As stated by one Port making veteran we visited that autumn, "I can't remember seeing this quality of grapes in, well, a couple of decades." Christian Seely, Managing Director of Quinta do Noval explains, "Immediately after the foot treading in the lagares that September, we knew we were in the presence of what could be a great vintage year." Another well-known Douro superstar confided that he'd never seen such balance, freshness and near-perfect tannins achieved from the grapes in his lagares. Charles Symington mentioned, "The conditions for ripening and harvesting were as good as perfect and almost unprecedented ...". Unlike some wine regions where every other year is seemingly yet another "vintage of the century" the Duriense are different, they almost always downplay their hand and don't get too carried away. 2011 seemingly broke the mold.



Pictured above (L to R): Dominic, Rupert and Charles Symington; and Rui Ribeiro, (USA Brand Manager).

There's no rushing a vintage and it would take until the early spring of 2013 before the full story would become more evident. By the end of February, after speaking to several people *off the record*, it was apparent that I needed to arrange some time in Porto and plan for a visit up to the Douro. Fast forward to May 2013, after declarations had been rolling in one after the other. **The Symington Family Estates** in conjunction with their importer **Premium Port Wines** were the first group to visit the USA and put on a multi-city tour to present their 2011 VP's to *on-premise* accounts (food and beverage/hospitality industry establishments) and **off-premise** (wine retailers) as well. These well-organized trade tastings were held in key markets and were the first best chance to taste 2011 Ports on this side of the

Atlantic. I flew down to San Francisco for the day to attend the afternoon session and met FTLOP's Andy Velebil there which was great.

This was an outstanding opportunity to taste seven of the SFE's eight 2011 Vintage Ports, as well as several older vintages, mostly from magnum, going back to 1955 Cockburn's. There was a tutored tasting, discussion of the growing conditions, historical comparisons, and a pre-release sales opportunity for the trade. A brief Q&A session followed and a lot of great information was disseminated at this event. Attending this type of event helps to provide an early glimpse as to the overall quality of these fledgling Ports, and I returned home that evening, duly impressed.



San Francisco is a hot spot for Port and wine tastings in general, and less than a month later, **The Fladgate Partnership's** CEO *Adrian Bridge* and talented Port winemaker *David Guimaraens* joined forces with **Quinta do Noval's** Managing Director, *Christian Seely* (also the co-owner of Quinta da Romaneira) to host a fabulous and comprehensive trade event. Together they presented all seven of their combined 2011 Vintage Ports and all told, this was a stunning array of excellent Ports accompanied by other recent vintages for the sake of comparison.



2011

VINTAGE PORT DECLARATION





You are cordially invited for one-on-one conversations and a vertical vintage port tasting with 5th generation Winemaker David Guimaraens, Managing Director of Quinta do Noval and Quinta da Romaneira, Christian Seely, and CEO of Taylor Fladgate, Fonseca & Croft, Adrian Bridge.

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Christian Seely, Adrian Bridge and David Guimaraens discuss their 2011 Vintage Ports

FTLOP's *Stewart Todd* and *David Spriggs* also attended this fine event and it was a ton of fun to be able to taste these VPs with my colleagues. Thus, having ventured to California twice in a month, (actually thrice, if you count a FTLOP weekend of Madeira) I was able to evaluate fourteen excellent 2011's, with the luxury of time to take detailed notes on each. Now if the rest of the Port shippers produced quality like this, 2011's reputation would be quickly cemented.

My preferred mode of analyzing VPs for reports like this is complicated and lengthy, so trade tastings provide valuable details directly from the heads of the participating companies such as harvest yields, baumé levels, and case quantities produced for each brand, etc. I was grateful for the opportunity to learn from the experts and found it extremely educational to have David, Adrian and Christian address the audience and then walk around to answer specific questions more casually. They delivered enormous amounts of vital intel on all aspects of the '11 growing season, harvest and declaration. A great event! Exactly a week later, I was heading to Portugal.



Porto Immersion

After the two inspiring trade tastings in northern CA, I was jazzed to begin my own deliberately slow and methodical tasting of as many 2011 Vintage Ports that I could assemble. First, I had to find a flexible venue to hold these blind tastings and choosing a place over the internet or phone was no easy task given the many factors involved. I was not only concerned with having enough storage space, but a

place that I could trust to receive dozens of bottles and hold them until my arrival. I needed direct light, cool temperature, lots of glassware and the ability to have them washed once per day; 24/7 access without interference and a separate comfortable room for sleep. That complete package in Porto wasn't easy to unearth from over 5,000 miles away.

Not having a lot of luck at first, fortunately my friend *Cynthia Jenson* mentioned she had come across a place that had been renovated a half year earlier that would likely be very suitable. She put me in touch with the owner and after sending photos, several phone discussions and loads of emails; I rented two separate adjacent rooms for an entire month. I was very relieved and my sincere gratitude to **Carlos Gartner** at **Linha 22**, located just down the hill from Porto's well known landmark, Torre de Clérigos @ **Rua dos Clérigos nº 23; 4050-205 Porto**.



Carlos totally understood my mission, and before my arrival he was instrumental in receiving, cataloging and properly storing the delivery of bottles of Port. He actually built a large desktop that went over furniture in the room used for my tastings and storage of bottles, which fit perfectly in that space. Carlos went above and beyond the call of duty and purchased a special wine bottle refrigerator which came in very handy towards the end of my project. As great as this sounds, downstairs from the guest rooms, his shop sold gourmet food products, Douro wine, Port and served meals as well. Additionally, Carlos had a fantastic, friendly and well-trained staff. Here is an indication of the great location that was in the heart of Porto:



Tasting Regimen

Samples continued to arrive through my first couple of days in Porto. There had been no way to know prior to my arrival in Portugal, exactly how many shippers decided to actually provide samples. Was I going to be able to taste twenty 2011's or fifty, or more? Having sorted through all of the packaging materials while unpacking the 2011 VPs, it dawned on me that the Port trade had been very kind in their response in support of this project. By "support" ... to be transparent ... I solely mean delivery of these 64 distinct bottles of Port; a mix of cask samples and finished bottles.

Realizing there were a slew of events over the next month, including a week hosting a private tour for a group of Rotary Club members, it was important to pencil out my tasting schedule. In doing so, it became immediately apparent that it would only be possible to do three consecutive days of tasting for each flight of Ports; whereas for 2007, I had time to do four days in a row. That being said, the first flight's bottles wound up being tasted a 4th day as I wanted to make sure my theory about the miniscule difference between days three and four was accurate; but thereafter I stuck to the plan of just three days apiece.

At first, I considered doing larger flights to make that happen. However, looking back at my 2007 Vintage Port tasting notes, I did not see that my scores or impressions changed almost at all between days three and four; while there were significant transformations that took place between days one and two and more so,

between days two and three. Decision made! Keep the flights more manageable with only 13 Ports per flight for the first four flights and a final flight of 12 would ensue, upon my return from guiding our tour up river.



The other change from my tasting protocol of the 2007 VPs was planned back in the USA. As had become painfully obvious during my sessions in 2009, trying to taste through a flight of Ports three times a day took its toll on my palate, due to the astringency of tannins. I decided it was superfluous and that once in the morning and again in the evening would suffice. That would still provide me with six distinct impressions for each bottle.

Fortunately the staff at Linha 22 was obliging and my sincere thanks to both Diana's who made sure I had everything necessary and assisted with my regimen. Additionally, a pair of friends helped in the selection of the bottles for flights, cutting foils, removing corks and placing the bottles in my blue numbered bags which I brought from home. This enabled me to

keep all tastings truly *blind* and beyond reproach. The bottles remained bagged until each set of wines was completed. In all, I returned home with 410 distinct tasting notes from these sessions.

I found time to enjoy Porto between tasting as well, which really wasn't the case when I did the 2007's. That being said, for the entire first week, I never even made it as far as the Ribeira section of Porto or even across to Gaia, both of which were a 10-15 minute walk from where I was staying. Wanting to remain focused, knowing that activities like the annual Confraria enthronement ceremony and Barco Rabellos regatta, plus the São João festival were all taking place during the upcoming weeks; I had to make steady progress in order to have my free time.



Each tasting of 13 Ports averaged just over three hours and I was able to spend approximately an hour and a half with each Port over the course of the three days. That allowed me to not only focus on the organoleptic qualities of the wine and not rush to rate them, but also to grasp some clue as to a projected aging curve. Friends as well as our guests on FTLOP tours can attest that even when evaluating wines sighted, I am typically the last one to finish a flight.

Having the responsibility of being historically accurate, or at the very least, consistent, when putting tasting notes into the public domain; is something I take quite seriously. I pride myself in getting to “know” these Ports ... even more so when tasting blind for a generally declared vintage. There really is a method to my Port madness!



Vintage 2011 Port Wine World Presentation

After spending time in the Douro during 2011, and finally tasting some of these 2011 Vintage Ports in the two aforementioned seated trade tasting sessions, (and learning more from my own evaluations in Porto) I had one further opportunity to experience this generally declared vintage.

The **IVDP** (Port and Douro Wine Institute) and **AEVP** (Association of Port Wine Companies) in collaboration with the **Confraria do Vinho do Porto** (Port Wine Brotherhood) hosted one of the largest purely Port events in the history of the trade. Focused solely on 2011 Vintage Ports, this full-day event was unlike anything I had ever attended. Part seminar, followed by an intensive tasting, then lunch and another tasting session; all I can say is I am glad I did not miss this one!



Dirk, Bento and Charles

The event kicked off in the morning with *Bento Amaral*, (who heads up the IVDP tasting room, and is featured later in this newsletter in *Port Personalities, In Focus*) delivered the opening remarks about the impact of this declaration. Next up, *Charles Symington* spoke at length about the growing season and its weather conditions. He was followed by *Dirk Niepoort* who shared his views of the 2011 vintage and gave some historical perspective. These three wise men provided a detailed understanding of the nuances of this highly regarded vintage, for all in attendance.

From about 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. we were presented with “blind” flights of nine or ten VPs, with a total of fifty six 2011 Vintage Ports, all of which had already been approved by the IVDP at that point. Although I took notes on all 56 glasses that were poured, I thought the task at hand was difficult at best, not because it was done in the same amount of time that I typically spent assessing a flight of thirteen of these same Ports, but because it is nearly impossible to do justice to that quantity of Ports in one sitting. One needs a super palate to be able to do so.



Dirk Niepoort amidst the 4th of six flights

I am not complaining. I was able to power through and finish on time. We had water and crackers, and only about 4 minutes per glass; the ultimate *snapshot* view. I managed to take copious tasting notes nonetheless, and was happy when the mission was finished as my palate had been worked over and I am used to evaluating cask samples of young Vintage Ports. It was interesting to see some of the bloggers tweeting scores of their favorites once we were given a list of what we'd just tasted. After twenty samples, do you think you could still make sense of the unique character of each Port, through the ripe tannins and acidity and primary fruit with any real acuity? How about trying 30 or 40 no less 56 young VPs? Challenging.

Although I loved being at this event and found it so well organized, hopefully next time this type of tasting can be broken up over the course of two days. It's just not fair to the Ports. That being said, I enjoyed the *challenge* of tasting through 56 Ports in one 3 hour session. I'll never forget it and my take away is that although there were some in the lineup that were not particularly to my liking, it had more to do with the style of those Ports, rather than their organoleptic qualities.

I knew to bring a tooth brush with me as I don't think I've ever attained that color in my mouth that rivalled that of a pitch black Port bottle. It felt like there was a carpet on my tongue. Lunch was wonderful and at that afternoon affair, the entire Port trade showed up to meet and greet with the participants and I was truly amazed that nearly all of the winemakers and owners of the Ports we had tasted were in this room at the same time. Literally it was quite a spectacle, a "who's who" of the Port trade with very few people missing, just a couple of noted exceptions.

Lunch included a fantastic array of food, as well as the most prolific selection of Douro wines I've ever seen assembled in one place, from almost every producer imaginable. I would have been happy to spend a full day just sampling dozens of these still wines. Afterwards, we went back upstairs to taste any or all of the 2011 Ports "sighted" with the ability to talk to the winemakers and owners of these Vintage Ports. It was a very nice set up for sure, all bottles placed on a large open square bar top with servers in it to pour the wines. I went up to taste only a handful that I specifically wanted to check out, to gain further. It was a fantastic learning experience for me, as I paid close attention to what would have been label bias and it further cemented my view that my own tastings had to be done blind.



From my perspective, by far and away the most unique facet of the entire program was the last few hours, when the Confraria do Vinho do Porto celebrated the official declaration of the 2011 Vintage, in full Confrade attire. *George Sandeman*, Chancellor of the Port wine Brotherhood gave the opening speech in Portuguese and followed that up in English too. It was an excellent speech and delved deeply into the history of Vintage Port and the early days of the Confraria, etc. Then *David Guimaraens* who holds the title, "Head Cupbearer" (English translation) of the Confraria was next to speak, and like Charles in the morning, he gave a very thorough walk through 2011's growing season and also his impressions on the year in historic and comparative terms. It was fascinating, brilliant, comprehensive and likely my all-time favorite dissertation by David.



The Chancelaria of the Confraria do Vinho do Porto

The fun was about to begin! With the tap of a very long sceptre with a dragon's head representing the city of Porto, each Port house (represented by an active member of the Confraria present) was called upon to bring up their 2011 Vintage Port and ceremoniously pour the full bottle into a five foot tall wine glass that probably could have held 100 bottles of Port, or more. It was very cool to see! Pictured below is Cristiano van Zeller pouring his Vale d. Maria VP.



It was a joyous yet rather serious ceremony until David Guimaraens inserted a special mixing device, then a wine thief into the glass and everyone in the room (150-200 guests) received a sample of the cuvee to drink a toast. I was thrilled to see this live for the first time. I know one of the bloggers shot a YouTube video, but I couldn't find it to include here, which is a shame.

There was a musical quartet that played and this turned out to be an extraordinary and festive moment that I will never forget, especially considering it was my 10th anniversary of being inducted into the Port Wine Brotherhood. My sincere thanks and toast to the IVDP, AEVP and Confraria for organizing one of the greatest single events of my month long sojourn in Porto.



Vintage 2011 Seasonal Growing Conditions in the Douro

In order to fully understand the proclivities of a specific year's conditions, especially within the triumvirate of sub-regions of the Douro; it is essential to look back at the end of the prior year's critically important winter months. Realizing that variations in the weather patterns can be significant from the stretch of Baixo Corgo through the Cima Corgo and up to the farthest reaches of the Douro Superior close to the Spanish border, sweeping generalizations are difficult at best. Nonetheless, you will find an overview of the growing conditions for the region as a whole included here. My impressions are a blend of what I have gleaned from winemakers at trade events in 2013, a compendium of many vintage reports that I've digested and direct conversations with the members of the Port trade during three visits to Portugal in 2011.

The key factor heading into any year's grape growing season is the level of the water table in the Douro. If low, it is imperative that there is precipitation during the winter in order to *fill the canteen* in preparation for the summer heat allowing grape vines to have a reserve access to water in the schistose soil throughout the region. In 2011, precipitation from January through the end of August was 250 mm, yet 85% of the rainfall took place during the winter months, (which I believe includes the last month or so of 2010 right up to the end of the vintage year).



Not one of the harvest reports from the Port trade mentioned the sunny and hot weather in the Douro that I experienced in February 2011 when visiting some Quintas. Temperatures exceeded 70°F and hit 22 or 23 degrees during a visit to Quinta Vale d. Maria. That doesn't happen too often in the Douro!

March brought early bud burst, but April was far more problematic. Although dry and warm in April and May, (the latter of which experienced just a few mm of rain in localized thunderstorms) temperatures spiked well above average at more than 30° C. during three distinct mini heat waves. Infections of downy mildew

arrived late that month along with oidium at many quintas, and sulfates were used by some producers to limit secondary infections which, along with the major expansion of vegetation, resulted in a decrease in harvest yields.

Flowering took place a couple of weeks early, benefiting from winter rains and from May through July only 25 mm of rain fell. The month of June presented other challenges, with persistent drought and worse, extreme heat during the São João festival, (24th and 25th) at over 40° C. causing burnt clusters of grapes particularly

affecting thin skinned “early to be picked” varieties such as Tinta Barroca which raisined. Some producers saw their crops significantly damaged and thinned the affected varieties due to this condition. Noval wound up losing 30% of their Barroca.

The summer months brought lower than average temperatures and some wind, which contributed to a slower, more steady maturation that helped develop the fruit character and *Pintor*, (veraison is the onset of grape ripening and color change from green to red to purplish-black) arrived earlier than is typical, and Warre’s Cavadinha experience it on July 9th.

August was seasonably warm and dry for the most part, with cool nights aiding the acid level of the grapes, but the sugar ripeness was ahead of the phenolic ripeness overall. Additionally, the drought continued and the steady warm temperatures threatened to take a toll, until showers arrived on the 21st of the month. This refreshed the grapes and revived vines, which allowed maturation to resume normally.



Our group relaxing while visiting Quinta dos Malvedos during the 2011 Port Harvest Tour

As a bonus, more rain came on September 1st and 2nd but it would be the last precipitation for the next five weeks. The rain was followed by a period of sunny days and warm temperatures, but not the brutal heat experienced in some years. This allowed the physiological ripeness to catch up with the sugar levels, evening out tannins and providing for great color (and aromas).

Vindima, (harvest) arrived one to two weeks early across Douro's three sub-regions depending on location and the clear skies, warm days and cool nights helped the phenolic ripeness to finally catch up and come into synchronicity with the beautiful sugar levels. Patience was the key. The Fladgate Partnership mentioned that Quinta de Vargellas was the first of their properties to begin picking on the 10th of September and some of their quintas around Pinhão in the Cima Corgo began on the 14th, about 7-10 days earlier than normal at both Vargellas and Quinta da Roêda.

Dirk Niepoort chose to accelerate picking to avoid raisining, while at Noval they delayed picking for a week or so, enabling the grapes to have longer *hang time* and fully mature. Harvesting a bit later turned out to be the right decision for them as the weather conditions remained near-perfect. The Symingtons' Quinta dos Canais (Cockburn's) was their first property to begin harvesting on September 8th, while Quinta do Vesuvio and Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira in the upper Douro started on the 12th followed by Quinta dos Malvedos (Graham's) on the 15th and Quinta da Cavadinha (Warre's) on the 18th ... to name just a few of their key properties.

Ramos Pinto reported losses of up to 40% in varieties such as Tinta Barroca, Touriga Francesa and Mistura. Their 2011 harvest yields were 23% lower overall, compared to 2010, mostly due to the drought, but also the oidium and mildew during the spring. Other companies reported yields were down at their properties, averaging between 20-28% throughout the region.

This section may seem boring to some and important to others, so I'll summarize some of the comments made after the grapes were fermented and fortified with a broad brush stroke and then add some specific commentary to wrap it up.



So what is the take away of the 2011 growing season and harvest? Better vineyard and even "vine specific" management along with access to higher quality, albeit more expensive aguardente, (Port's grape neutral fortifying spirit) and the

utilization of a combo of robotics and traditional foot treading in lagares, continue to up the quality potential in recent years. In 2011 the low yields, good acidity and balancing tannins for those that were prudent and allowed for longer hang times, combined with extraordinarily dark extractions and high baumé levels achieved, will be the lasting legacy of this fine vintage.

Sogrape's Chief winemaker Luis Sottomayor, (Ferreira, Sandeman, Offley) stated that he can't recall any vintage in which Ports revealed "such enormous structure and robustness. 2011 has allowed us to create vintage wines with never-before-seen levels of colour, structure and complexity for which we anticipate enormous bottle aging potential, thanks to the combination of robust structure, fruit and excellent acidity." Luis also mentioned how well the Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca and Tinta Roriz did in all of the Douro's three sub-regions.

Dirk Niepoort is very bullish on 2011 Vintage Ports and provided this evaluation, *"It is worth noting that when the fermenting musts are fortified there is a temporary loss of colour which picks up straight away as the brandy blends with the musts, however in 2011 it was interesting to observe that young ports were immediately, extremely dark at the point of fortification and have remained so ever since."*

And at The Fladgate Partnership, Head Winemaker David Guimaraens summarizes, *"abundant spring rainfall created reserves to keep the vines well supplied with water throughout the hot, dry summer. This resulted in balanced ripening and wines that have elegance as well as depth and stamina."* He concluded, *"The 2011s stand out for the purity of the fruit and the quality of the tannins, which are silky and well integrated but provide plenty of structure."*

The Symingtons were proud to announce that for the first time since 1963, all of their Vintage Ports were made in lagares. Additionally it was the first time ever that all grapes used for their 2011 VPs came exclusively from their own vineyards. The late-ripening Touriga Franca was noted as a standout variety and Sousão as well, and they are embracing the latter grape and using it far more than ever before, even though it lacks popularity with some other winemakers in the Douro.



FTLOP's Mario Ferreira chats with Paul Symington at Malvedos at the conclusion of the harvest

Well that is a wrap, but at the very end of this article, I've included a thorough discussion of the 2011 Vintage Ports, directly from a wonderful cross section of key players from the Port trade and think you will find this extremely advantageous and worthy of your time.

Tasting Note Section

The Port trade provided me with samples. Some were cask samples and some were finished product, which included IVDP seals. These are noted in each specific tasting note. In my computer generated notes, I carefully wrote down the color and percentage of opacity of each wine, but am choosing not to include that info as it would likely bore the majority of readers. Suffice it to say, very few Ports from 2011 were not at least 75% opaque and the tasting notes below do mention color when the Ports do vary from that.

I hope you will enjoy reading the tasting notes here, as I've included 67 distinct vintage Ports:

2011 Alves de Sousa Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Domingos Alves de Sousa used grapes from two properties, the better known Quinta da Gaivosa in the lower section of the Douro (Baixo Corgo) and also their Quinta da Oliveirinha property which is located directly across the river from Sandeman's Quinta do Seixo. Extraordinarily extracted opacity right to the rim, with a mélange of gorgeous grenadine, fragrant rose petals and ethereal scents of incense are immediately intoxicating and propped up by mocha and vanilla bean. A unique, profound profile that stood out from all in its flight and one of the most incredible aromatics of the entire 2011 class. The palate is every bit as mind blowing. It's as viscous as young Vintage Port gets and because of the suave acidity, there is no sense of jamminess. Dense, rich and mercurial in the texture, the elegance shines as well as the massive layers of fruit. Pretty and pure purple grape goodness and black fruits in perfect harmony providing a hedonistic roll around in the mouth for minutes. The tannins show their clout but are cloaked in the stunning gobs of fruit here. This will age for a half century as it has the fruit and structure to go the distance. It was so mind blowing that I had to retry it again recently, but my blind flight that this was inserted in, paled by comparison. The best reason to evaluate blind. Domingos and Tiago Alves de Sousa knocked this one out of the ballpark! **97+ points**

1/14/14



2011 J.H. Andresen Vintage Port – (Finished product). If you're not familiar with this producer, the question remains: Why not? Founded in 1845, they have been family run ever since. Their Douro property is Quinta das Aranhas and they have a wonderful Port lodge in Gaia too. Andresen has been making excellent wood-aged Ports for well over a century and their ruby-style Ports are getting better with every declaration. The team of Carlos Flores dos Santos and his winemaker, Alvaro van Zeller, is formidable, knowledgeable and extremely talented. Their 2011 VP that I had in Porto was corked, so their US importer made sure to give me a second chance and I included it in a small *blind* flight at home, consumed over four days. This 2011 VP elicits an exotic and explosive nose of fresh cut flowers, mulberry, a hint of mint, tobacco and excellent purity of grape. Mouthfilling and full-bodied, round and unctuous, this VP had the requisite structural stuffing and deeply concentrated delectable fruit with bing cherry infused with chocolate flavors, which won me over although I believed this to be the Ferreira which was in the same flight. Imposing iron-clad tannins take no prisoners and may turn off tasters who are not used to this kind of powerful grip. As long as there is good acidity and

enough fruit to keep it all in balance, tannins don't frighten me at all, unless they're green or wood tannins. The 2011 Andresen will undoubtedly age for three decades and possibly five, as there's no question it possesses the fruit, the acidity and tannins to go the distance. This Port can go toe-to-toe with some far more well-known names in Port. It is a very fine achievement! **94+ points 1/14/14**

2011 Barros Vintage Port – (Finished product). From the starting gate, tightly coiled high-toned violet tanky and herbaceous notes at the outset; joined later by a flamboyant spicy scent of anise, pine resin, eucalyptus and dark cherry. Light in weight early on, it fleshed out nicely and ended up medium-bodied. An easy to approach crowd pleaser, maybe a little on the simple side, but filled with off-dry flavors of redcurrant and tart cranberry that morphed into more of a plum essence after a few days. The tannins are soft and fine grained and the finish cleansing and delivers purity of fruit and good length. A fine Barros VP to cellar for 20-25 years. **89+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Broadbent Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Bartholomew Broadbent in working with Dirk Niepoort, has slowly but surely seen the quality of his VPs improve since launching the inaugural 1994 bottling. This is the 6th Broadbent Vintage Port, all coming in generally declared years. The style morphed over the years as more grapes were added to the blend, resulting in significantly more depth and sophistication. The 2011 presents inviting floral elements and an impressive array of loganberry, fennel, liquid minerals, hints of tar and cedar scents. Boasting a savory personality and brimming with ripe black and blueberry fruit, sweet upfront and closing with a drier style. Full-bodied, displaying a finely tuned complex mid-palate, mouthwatering acidity and assertive tannins that take no prisoners. In the mouth, this is all silk, with a seriously sensuous texture and overall harmony, leading to a long lush and authoritative finish. It is a candidate for three decades of aging. Indubitably the best Broadbent VP since 2000. A mere 170 cases were

produced, all of which will be sold exclusively in the USA. **93+ points**

6/27/13

2011 Bulas Vintage Port – (Cask sample). The owner José Bulas Cruz is a fairly new Douro producer that makes a nice lineup of DOC still wines and has stocks of excellent tawnies (20 year old is blow away great!) and their first VP was 2009. The 2007 LBV won one of the top prizes at this year's Decanter Magazine's World Wine Awards. I introduced Isabel Vieira, the export manager and family member to our 2013 PHT group and they loved the Ports. The 2011 is the 2nd vintage for Bulas and offers up a bouquet of plum, anise, herbs and minerality. This is a heavy weight contender, unctuous and mouthfilling with huge blackstrap tannins that show no signs of astringency, but certainly command attention. Ripe, lush fig and black fruit flavors and although delicious initially, by day three, I couldn't wait to see who made this wine. The finish offers excellent persistence, another punch of tannins and smooth milk chocolate. With a long decant, this would be a fantastic drink now, but cellaring will continue to improve it for the next 30-40 years. The 2011 Bulas is the proverbial bull in the china shop! **94+ points 6/17/13**



2011 Burmester Vintage Port – (Finished product). Proffering a multifaceted profile of lavender and violets, with aromas of freshly peeled Granny Smith apple, raspberry, and spicy overtones of esteva, cinnamon and white pepper. Unique! This 2011 delivers a medium-bodied and generously fruited, graceful and structured Port. Lively fig and plum fruit lead the charge and are joined by gentle nuances of treacle and cinnamon. Although a bit four square in the mid-section, there's plenty of lively acidity and mild seemingly fully resolved tannins that keep this Burmester vivacious and very easy to approach. The opulence emerges in time to join the admirably delicious and lengthy finish. This 2011 will show well right from the starting gate and appeal to Port lovers early on and reach its peak circa 2028-2036.

89+ points 6/24/13

2011 Cálem Vintage Port – (Finished product). Tanky notes early on, possibly the Touriga Nacional influence in this case, along with rose petals, pine resin and a core of black raspberry. Full-bodied from the first sip, ultra-smooth and well-balanced with soft, intricate and fully integrated tannins. Sweet boysenberry and grenadine flavors, a bit of heat the first couple of days, and rich but simple in the mid-range. The finish is sweet, laden with milk chocolate and is slightly clipped. Calém's 2011 is very approachable right now. Consume anytime through 2034.

90+ points 6/24/13

2011 Capela da Quinta do Vesuvio Vintage Port – (Cask sample). From a blend of Touriga Nacional and Franca, Sousão and for the first time ever in a Symington Port: Alicante Bouschet. Launched with the 2007 vintage, this second harvest is a micro-vinification exuding the terroir of two small parcels that comprise the backbone of this youngster. A small parcel of Sousão grapes picked from the upper part of the property, as well as the low lying, low yielding and flat parcel down by the railroad tracks, known as Vale da Escola. Extremely dark extracted color, filled with enticing fragrant lavender, spicy notes of eucalyptus and herbal scents that marry well with soft, smooth and dense off-dry plum and strawberry

patch fruit flavors. An opulent mouthfeel and a core of imposing granular greenish tannins lead to a long and dry finish. This was considerably better than the very early sample I had at the trade tasting in CA, which was rather closed and still awkward, not ready for prime time. This is still a bit tightly wound and will likely improve, as I tasted this Port four days. Until I try this again in the future, I am not comfortable providing a drinking window recommendation. Only 200 cases produced. **94+ points 6/21/13**

2011 Churchill's Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Unlike 2007, Churchill's produced no Single Quinta Vintage Port in 2011, which freed up Quinta da Gricha's concentrated old vine fruit, for inclusion into the lagares here instead. Beguiling earthy scents of schistose minerality, tobacco, black fruits and a spicity character that blew off two days in. Medium-full weight, generous, smooth and supported by dusty drying tannins, providing an excellent spine and balance overall. The Churchill's 2011 is stylistically dry, with acid driven lip smacking tart redcurrant flavors and a scoach of mocha, all ending with a complex showy and long lasting finish. It is a voluptuous and immediately approachable Port right now, and wields solid cellaring potential of three decades. It should deliver at its prime from 2028-2035. 3,000 cases produced. **92+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Cockburn Vintage Port – (Cask sample). 80% from Canais and 20% from the Quinta do Vale Coelho property in the Douro Superior. A blend consisting of Touriga Nacional (55%), Touriga Franca (30%) and the balance from Symington's old vine field blend grapes. Floral notes of geraniums, lavender and a hint of esteva to liven up the aromatics, and hints of pomegranate. Full, rich and with a noticeably soft silky mouthfeel, blessed with restrained but omnipresent tannins, this is a joy to drink now. Marionberry and black cherry flavors are dry initially but the sweetness emerges over time, while crisp acidity carves a nice path to the elongated aftertaste. Arguably the best Cockburn's since the excellent 1991, if not 1963. Now under the Symingtons tutelage, future expectations are high and

their first Vintage Port effort with this renowned and traditional shipper, delivered on all cylinders. 3,000 cases produced. **94+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Croft Vintage Port – (Cask sample). 100% Quinta da Roêda fruit, the 130 hectares planted contain lots of old vine field blends. Just a slight bit of transparency to the otherwise dark violet colored Port. Intensely scented notes of lavender, boysenberry and mocha perfume. Chunky, chewy and fresh with loads of minerals, blackcurrant, tar and licorice flavors; possessing a lovely mouthfeel and it is fun to roll around in the mouth. Structurally, there's plenty of crisp acidity and cheek coating chalky tannins, which lead to a mile long finish. Drink now or as it reaches maturity in 2045 or so. A classy Croft VP and best since 2003! 5,000 cases produced. **93+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Dalva Vintage Port – (Finished product). Reticent nose on day one and the aguardente was poking out for the first two days and was really hot and seemingly disjointed, so I was quite surprised that it was all but fully blown off by day three, just a very minor trace left and not distracting whatsoever. Offering up elderberry, dark cherry, cocoa and a smoky tobacco and leather nuance which provided intrigue. Full, rich and concentrated with an expression of earthiness, forest floor (in a fresh sense) along with marionberry, cherry, mocha and cedar characteristics, in a sweet profile. This continued to gain weight and length each successive day of the tasting. The tannins were mild on the entry, but took hold when appearing after the swallow, big time grip on the medium-long finish. Overall, a very solid effort by the Dalva team in producing a well-balanced (once the spirit blew off) and their best Vintage Port I've ever had at this early stage. Not a long term ager but 18-25 years is an easy prediction for good drinking. **92+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Delaforce Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Delaforce was founded in 1868 and has survived several changes of ownership in the past nearly 150 years of its operation. In 2001, The Fladgate Partnership (TFP) purchased both Croft and Delaforce. Then in April 2008, TFP spun off Delaforce to Real Companhia Velha (RCV) and they own the brand today. However, in a shrewd move, Adrian Bridge, CEO of TFP, negotiated a long term supply contract to produce the Ports under the Delaforce name for RCV. The source of the grapes for the production of this Vintage Port comes from the Roncão and also Rio Torto (Twisted River) valleys from their own vineyards. Generous scents of plum, blueberry, raisins and mint work in unison. Medium-full bodied, smooth as butter and deftly balanced due to well-defined but ultra-mellow tannins, this 2011 is all ready for prime time. Primary ripe blueberry and distinctive flavors of fig, chocolate covered raisins and licorice create a delicious ensemble, moderately complex where it counts and brimming with poise and a clean lingering aftertaste that will keep people coming back for more. It's very enjoyable to drink now, tomorrow, or for the next 20 years. 500 cases produced. **89+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Douro Boys Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Produced in 250 magnums that were auctioned off last September, my sample was a 375 ml bottle. Final blending and bottling took place at Niepoort. I put this in a blind flight of two other 375s, so there would be no bias and evaluated them for three days, while working on this newsletter. Tight initially, by day two I finally was able to discern specific characteristics. A focused expression of black fruits, minerals, rose petal and mocha, intriguing and heady. Full in weight, but seemingly light and lithe on the palate with a voluptuous velvety texture. Big bramble berry fruit with a dark earthy undertone, fairly dry, but quite fun to sip on although I found the mid-palate a bit simple, at least at this point in time. The tannins were big from the get go and a couple of days in, showed even more grip and by day 3, they were quite aggressive and showed the ageability of this Port. The finish was long, delicious and dry with plenty of tannins that were almost too much, however they were not astringent. The Douro Boys blend concept, where each of the five participating producers

contributes some of their best Port from 2011, would be a great exercise in blending prowess. This fine young VP should age well for at least 30-40 years. **92+ points 1/14/14**

2011 Dow's Vintage Port – (Cask sample). 100% of the grapes came from the Symingtons own properties, four of them: Quinta do Bomfim of course, along with Quinta da Senhora da Ribeira, Quinta da Cerdeira (new to me!) and Quinta do Santinho (another I'd never heard of). The breakdown of varieties: Touriga Franca which excelled in 2011 (40%), Touriga Nacional (36%), Sousão (10%) and old vine field blends accounted for the remainder (14%). A stunningly complex nose intermixed with violets, fragrant fresh figs and fennel, currants and tobacco. Amazing aromatics that kept my nose in the glass long before the first sip. The 2011 Dow is a beguiling tale of two Ports: its mercurial nature and power vs. the mellifluous beauty and symmetry it possesses. In California early on, this was my favorite from the Symingtons' strong stable of players. But nearly two months later, during blind tasting sessions in Porto, this proved its greatness and stood out and above an extraordinarily bright field. Full-bodied and densely concentrated fruit, light and flowing across the palate, this is a Port for the ages with sweet plum and blackcurrant flavors that belie the notion that Dow's must be stylistically dry. It's gracefully adorned by warming spirit and chocolate. Moreover, the tensivity and textural pleasure here are simply profound. Lean and muscular with amazing overall balance and iron-clad tannins that will take this long past our lifetime, the "finish" ... never quite does. This can be enjoyed right now and while young, rewarding patience well into the second half of the century. It is clearly the greatest young Dow's Vintage Port to ever pass my lips! 5,000 cases produced. **98+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Duorum Vinha de Castelo Melhor Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Four years ago this month, *José Maria Soares Franco* departed Ferreira after nearly three decades, and partnered with *João Portugal Ramos*, (renowned oenologist in

Alentejo, Dão and other Portuguese wine regions) and created Duorum. Soares Franco was no stranger to the Douro, having crafted Barca Velha for 28 years and also responsible for Quinta da Leda, Callabriga and many other wines. They began producing several DOC still wines together, but their inaugural Vintage Port 2007 was a well-received commercial success, and they've never looked back. Circa 2006 they had the foresight to purchase property in the upper reaches of the Douro, (east of the Coa River) and *Vinha de Castelo Melhor* was theirs and that name has appeared on their labels since 2008. A real diamond in the rough with 160 ha of prime real estate, 25% of which is currently planted to vine. The Melhor grapes were not utilized until the 2011 vintage, although they also incorporate grapes from other sources. The 2011 blend is made up of 40% Touriga Franca, 40% Touriga Nacional and 20% Tinta Roriz. This precocious Port provides an expansive essence of Klamath plum, forest fresh herbs, cedar and spice. Full-bodied, silky and svelte across the tongue, loaded with glycerin unctuousness. Unveiling a sophisticated core of minerality, racy plum and stone fruit flavors with a spicy edge. Precise juicy acidity and chiseled assertive tannins show more aggressively as they close in on the dry, medium-long finish. A fine and understated Duorum that can handle up to three decades of cellaring, but should be best approached after 2018. **92+ points**

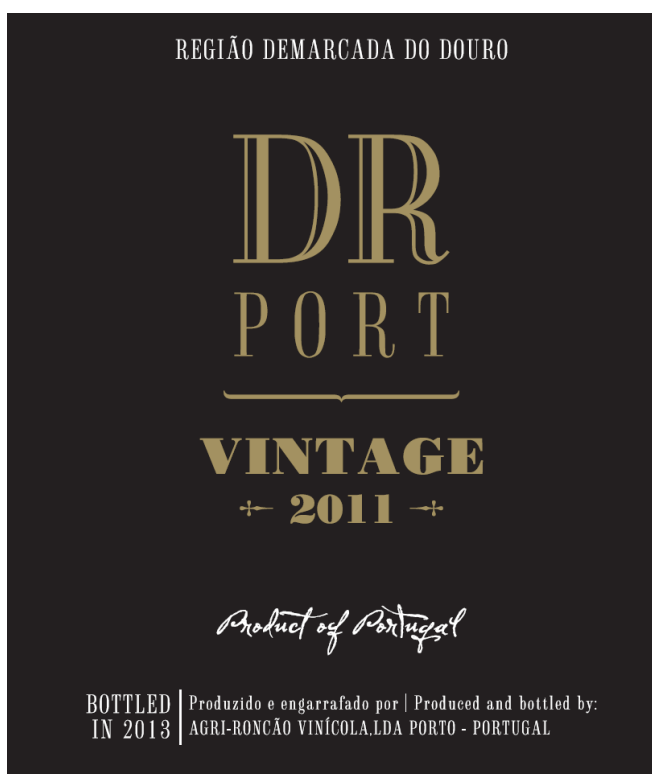
6/24/13

2011 DR Port Vintage Port – (Cask sample). In every generally declared vintage, I take pride in unearthing and introducing Port lovers to a producer's VP that none of the other Port pundits had on their radar. Such is the case with DR Port, part of the Agri-Roncão Vinicola, Lda., whose founder is **Domingos Ribeiro**, and it is his initials that are used on the label. Producers of Douro wine, Vinho Verde and an assortment of Port categories; their Douro operation is based in the Roncão Valley at *Quinta da Levandeira do Roncão*; with 45 hectares planted to vine. The company and first Vintage Port was launched in 2001. Some of the descriptors used here are out of my typical lexicon for Vintage Port, yet DR winemaker *Luís Rodrigues*, utilized Touriga Franca and Nacional, Tinta Roriz and Sousão grapes for the 2011 vintage, which has been labeled as Região Demarcada do Douro,

Distinctive aromas of blood orange and grapefruit were highlighted by heady scents of clove, white pepper and bittersweet chocolate. The palate is equally impressive, a serious heavyweight brimming with brash vibrant flavors of freshly crushed grapes and ripe raspberry fruit. It's adorned with restrained soft-grip tannins and a touch of heat which never seemed to vanish, even by day 3.

Otherwise, the concentration level was off the charts, the mouthfeel velvety yet viscous and the overall equilibrium was as striking as the finish was in its longevity. DR's 2011 Vintage Port is a stunning sleek head turner and had the moderately spirited character not been involved, my rating would have put this Port on a par with some renowned names in the trade. DR Porto, is a company to keep an eye on and to seek out in the marketplace if you can find any of the 1,500 bottles produced.

93+ points 6/24/13



2011 Ferreira Vintage Port – (Cask sample). The grapes for this Port come from the dynamic duo near Pinhão, Quinta do Caedo with its manicured vineyard with 21 hectares planted and also Quinta do Porto the workhorse of Ferreira that dates back to the late 1700's and a century later was purchased by Dona Antonia Adelaide Ferreira. The menu reads: 45% Touriga Franca, 40% Touriga Nacional, 10% Tinta Roriz and 5% Sousão. A dark and intriguing earthy fragrant quality of sous bois, pine needles, framboise and cocoa. By day three this fleshed out and integrated nicely. Crushed sweet blackberry, dark and spicy, laced with licorice and seamless velvety tannins. Good intensity and length, but the mid-palate is unyielding and a bit foursquare at this point. A fine lithe youngster that will drink well throughout its life, tasty now, but it should drink best between 2025 and 2035.

92+ points 1/14/14

2011 Fonseca Vintage Port – (Cask sample). In California, at TFP "launch event" this hinted at its greatness and after tasting it for three days blind, it won me over. A brooding nose of blackcurrants, herbs, cocoa, tar and mint. Full-bodied and massive concentration of briar patch black fruit, fresh and pure, silky across the tongue, while the tannins are not, actually they're muscular and grippy paired with zippy electrifying acidity. Reminiscent of 2000 Fonseca and the best vintage since; at this same stage. The exemplary tour de force persistent aftertaste is infused with chocolate. Drink 2025-2065. 6,000 cases produced. **96+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Graham's Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Graham's is known for their Quinta dos Malvedos backbone, but four other Symington-owned quintas' grapes made it into the final blend. Riveting from the first sniff with perfumed and lifted scents of violets, figs, licorice, esteva, eucalyptus and cloves that provide invigorating freshness. An ethereal and deeply complex aromatic arsenal. Immediately fun to sip, even with some spirit protruding early on that disappeared between days 2 and 3. It's a heavy weight, rich, soft and sensuous, a real pleasure across the palate with juicy acidity and smooth no-nonsense tannins that gain

power even after swallowing. Ripe, intense and hedonistic sweet fruit of blueberry pie and brambly grape purity caress the palate with their fleshy concentrated layers of flavor and long lingering aftertaste with milk chocolate accents. Drink at any stage of its life, but it will be incredible after 2040-2060. A gorgeous Graham's classic for the ages! 8,000 cases produced. **97+ points 6/24/13**

2011 Graham's Stone Terraces Vintage Port – (Cask sample). This is the debut effort of this esteemed release, which will be compared to the likes of Taylor's Vargellas Vinha Velha, albeit two distinctively different Ports, both uniquely positioned in the marketplace. From two stone terraced, low yielding plots at Malvedos planted in the 1800's: Port Arthur with its slightly more than one hectare, and Vinha dos Cardenhos with substantially less than one ha. Picking began in both parcels on the 21st of September and the grapes, more than 90% of which were Touriga Nacional, have been co-fermented. Offering an exotic nose with a mélange of intensely spiced and vibrant ripe red wild berries, kirsch, strawberry licorice and hints of granitic minerals. Full-bodied, with a liquefied silky mouthfeel and sublimely structured with soft and restrained chalky tannins. Slightly riper than the regular Graham's bottling and with a softer underbelly too, it features pure and spicy dark wild bramble berry nuances, along with fig and plum fruit flavors, followed by a minutes long and layered aftertaste. It's a remarkable first effort for this singular Port, notable for having been launched in what will prove to be a historic vintage. At least at this point in its youth, I prefer the regular bottling of Graham's, but it is still way too early to make any grand prognostications at this point. Drink or cellar over the course of the next half century. 250 cases were produced, each bottle individually numbered. **96+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Gran Cruz Vintage Port – (Finished product). This parent company is based in France, La Martiniquaise is a huge multi-national drinks conglomerate. They own C. da Silva which has Gran Cruz (Porto Cruz) in its portfolio as well as Dalva, the latter of which makes some extraordinary Tawny and Colheita Ports. The

current winemaker for all 3 brands is José Sousa Soares. The very first vintage from these brands was vinified in 1926 and because it was the only Port I've ever found from my father's birth year, I was fortunate to have six bottles and used to open these 1926 C. da Silva VPs with him, the last time was his 70th birthday. He always loved it and found it extraordinary that I had any wine that was drinkable that was as old as him. Just as an aside, the first time I ever met Cristiano van Zeller, Sandra Tavares and Miguel Roquette, (Vancouver in 2001) I brought a bottle of this exact Port to our dinner with Bartholomew Broadbent, and it made a lasting impression. Sorry for the nostalgic recounting. The 2011 delivers lifted and lively notes of lavender, black licorice, cinnamon stick, raspberry and black pepper; was austere at first and bloomed by the fourth tasting (evening/day 2). Juicy, soft and vinous, light in weight with flavors of plum and uber-sweet grenadine, short of cloying as the acidity was cleansing and vivid. The tannins were rather demure throughout; the texture velvety and graceful, while the finish was persistent with a fine milk chocolate nuance, it was simple. I had this again in October, decanted 4.5 hours, (not blind) and came away with the identical score. My overall impression is that the 2011 Gran Cruz would make for a fine "cellar defender" if the price was right. Drink early and through 2033. **86+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Kopke Vintage Port – (Finished product). The claim still remains a part of the company's lore that Cristiano Kopke, founded the very first Port company in Oporto in 1638, (disputed by Croft's claim that new historical data proves they were 1st -- established 1588). The company remained in the possession of the Kopke family until 1895 when the Bohane family took over. They sold to the Barros family in 1953 and they held onto the reigns through some tough years in the Port trade, eventually selling their interest to Sogevinus in May 2006. Barros had to sell Quinta Dona Matilde as part of the transaction but on December 27th of that same year, Manuel Angelo Barros re-purchased the Quinta from Sogevinus. Today, everyone is happy and the quality of Kopke Ports is better than ever. They had long been renowned for their extraordinary depth of excellent Colheitas, but in more recent years under Sogevinus' watch, Kopke has branched out and their Vintage Ports are

exciting too, as well as their Douro wines. They utilize Quinta São Luiz and Quinta do Arnozelo as the backbone for their Ports and DOC wines. In 2013, a special old Port bottling was launched to commemorate their 375th anniversary. Aptly, the 2011 Kopke Vintage Port was also declared during their celebratory year. The 2011 delivers a distinctive nose of plum and black cherry, minerals and licorice. While it sounds pretty straightforward, I took pause during my tasting to continue to nose this particular glass, a couple of days before I knew exactly which Port it was. Deeply extracted and massively concentrated with dense fleshy fruit and a sublimely soft and sensuous mouthfeel. Opulent and delicious, dark briar patch wild berries and ripe plum fruit dominate the palate, supported by well-endowed chalky tannins and bolstered by a multilayered mid-palate that promise greatness for the future. Long-term aging potential aside (3-4 decades) this is hands down the finest Kopke Vintage Port I've tasted. A pleasure to drink! **94+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Krohn's Vintage Port – (Finished product). This will be a collector's item, the lasting legacy of a renowned and beloved Port shipper, likely their last Vintage Port. A subtle overlay of fresh figs, fennel, tree bark, minerals and mocha create a nose that leaps from the glass. Medium-full, super smooth and gentle in the mouth, until the tannins come out to play and they're seriously ripe saliva extractors. Impressively stacked with huckleberry and plum flavors, dry in nature and quite seductive on the palate. The finish is long and laden with cocoa and grape essence. A well-made vintage offering, but admittedly, I found even greater stuffing and delineation in the mid-section of Krohn's single quinta Port. Nonetheless, this is a very fine VP and will drink well later in this decade when the tannins are tamer. The 2011 Krohn Vintage Port will cellar well for up to 4 decades. Apparently, it's now being sold in Europe at extremely reasonable prices and represents a fantastic buying opportunity! **93+ points 6/20/13**

2011 Krohn's Quinta do Retiro Novo Vintage Port – (Finished product). Retiro Novo is located in Sarzedinho, a very small village in the Rio Torto valley. It

had belonged to the Carneiro family until they sold Krohn to The Fladgate Partnership in June 2013. The 2011 Vintage Port is possibly the last Vintage Port to be produced with the Krohn name on it, making it somewhat of a collector's item. Aromatically profound with great purity, floral notes as well as blue and black fruit and accented by intense mocha. This Single Quinta VP is a weighty Port that is rich, smooth and possessing penetrating and grippy tannins. Bold briary blueberry and flavors of fig prevail with a backdrop of chocolate and an incredibly soft and succulent texture. The mid-palate is nuanced and bright, with sleek lines and a long and persistent aftertaste. Given the fine structure of this wine, it will certainly make for old bones and should drink beautifully at the midpoint of this century, possibly longer. **94+ points 6/20/13**

2011 Maynard's Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Founded in 1715, and connected through antecedents to the van Zeller family; this was one of the very early British Port Shippers in days of yore. Maynard's is a brand within Port company *Barão de Vilar* and it was re-established by the van Zeller family in 1996. The winemaker, *Álvaro van Zeller* is also the co-founder of the company with his brother *Fernando* (who is the CEO), and Alvaro is well-known for his oenological prowess with J.H. Andresen. The 2011 Maynard's delivers a smorgasbord of intriguing fragrances ranging from plum and blackberry jam to a streak of wet rocks and minerality, and some chocolate infused cherry liqueur. Lively and lovely. Over the course of six sessions I noted that this had really filled out and gained heft and was medium-full bodied by the end, filled with glycerin and richness across the tongue. Gorgeously integrated although four square in the mid-palate, otherwise, the sweet spiced flavors of huckleberry, cinnamon, black licorice and tar provided panache. The brambly juice was viscous and almost jammy had it not been for the succulent acidity and iron-fisted tannins which translated to the aggressively tannic medium length finish that crossed the line of astringency. I'm a sucker for tannins and am less likely to be bothered by them than just about anyone I know. However, these were really quite punishing, if not over-the-top, which detracted from the overall drinking pleasure. I was left wondering if the fruit could ever live up to the

challenge. Because of this dynamic, a drinking window was not possible for me to prognosticate. I must retry this several years down the road. **86+ points**
6/27/13

2011 Niepoort Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Nick Delaforce was directly involved in the Port production at the old Vale de Mendiz museum near Pinhão which in 2003 was converted to a vinification center. All grapes and 100% of the stems for this VP were foot trodden in the old circular granite lagares (typically, Douro lagares are either square or rectangular). The juice was then transported to Niepoort's Gaia Port lodge for aging in toneis before completion of the final assemblage. The 2011 smells like a walk in the forest after a thunderstorm, an earthy scent prevails, accompanied by vibrant floral fragrances, Bing cherry, and a savory streak of herbs and black pepper. Medium-full and sumptuous, the delineated flavors of kirsch and marionberry are supported by invigorating acidity and fine grained dry tannins that were really imposing early on. The mid-range is multifaceted, approachable and delicious. By day three the tannins had finally softened enough to make evaluation easier and the overall balance was impeccable. Although it's able to cellar for 5-6+ decades, this VP can be enjoyed young too with an extended decant. The finish was notable for its purity, vibrancy and extraordinary persistence. I can't wait to try this 2011 up against the 2007 Niepoort VP in a few years. Approximately 1,650 cases produced. **98+ points 6/24/13**

2011 Niepoort Bioma Vinha Velha Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Previous vintage bottlings of Bioma were launched in 2008 and 2009, this is the third version of this fairly new "single vineyard" bottling by Niepoort, but it's first from a generally declared vintage. "Bioma" comes from the Vinha da Pisca vineyard that has always made up a significant part of Niepoort's Vintage Ports, and is now organically farmed, with the majority of field blend old vines exceeding 80 years of age. It was bottled under the vineyard name in 2007 and in a return to traditional methods of yesteryear, Bioma won't be bottled until May or June 2014, the third

year after harvest to provide greater character and elegance. Just days after completing this tasting, we visited Quinta de Nápoles, and Dirk pulled a decanter full of this directly from cask. We tried it a few hours later and it was so spicy and elegant. This note is from my blind tasting in Porto. Dark and brooding with a spicy essence enveloping my nose, firmly kept planted in glass. Blackcurrant, underbrush, rose petals and strawberry red licorice unfurl as this took until the second day to really open up and shed its reticence. Medium weight early on, this bulked up slightly over the subsequent two days and became more broad shouldered, yet retained its poise and seamless unctuous palate presence and freshness. Bioma's extraordinary symmetry is due to the intense cut of the acidity which defines precision in this Port combined with muscular and polished tannins. Noticeably less sweet than the regular Niepoort bottling, the dangerously delicious black fruits provide a richly concentrated, opulent sip with a multi-layered middle and mineral laden finish. This is still tightly wound and the intensity will likely be enhanced as this remains in pipe and eventually has a few years of bottle age. For now, this is a fine showing of a Port that will likely improve dramatically over the next few years, but has all the stuffing to make for old bones six decades hence, possibly more. **94**
+ points 6/27/13



2011 Offley Boa Vista Vintage Port – (Finished product). A blend of 45% Touriga Franca, 45% Touriga Nacional and 10% T. Roriz. Black ink. Ethereal potpourri, spicy black fruits and black licorice. Heavyweight contender and dense, chewy chiseled tannins, the fruit literally overwhelms the palate if not for the grippy tannins which delivered a great 1-2 punch. A great sipper now, but this had four+ decades of fine drinking. Sublime finish with a burst of tannins, the length lasts until tomorrow. A really impressive powerhouse Port. I may be conservative here. The potential for this to get even better is significant. Admittedly, the reveal shocked me, as this is by far the best young Offley Vintage Port that I've tasted. **95+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Pintas Vintage Port – (Cask sample). This Pintas provides a provocative and evocative earthy essence of fresh forest floor, currant and cassis, black plum, tar and aniseed. The palate presence begins with medium-bodied, fleshy and unctuous mouthfeel, more density than actual weight. It's seemingly "complete" in comparison to past cask samples of Pintas VPs. The balance here earns extra bonus points as the fruit, precision of the acidity and fine grained restrained tannins are the cat's meow. Flavor wise, the blend of sweet red raspberry and ripe marionberry are juicy and seem drier towards the swallow, with herbal hints adding depth at the core and medium-long berry infused finish. The tannins actually became progressively riper during the three day eval. A very delicious Port, but oddly, my best impression was day one of three, which was taken into account when rating this Port. Built for mid-term aging of 25 years. **92+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Poças Vintage Port – (Cask sample). By day two, it was obvious that the 1st bottle was flawed, (offensive nose/flavors) and I was pleased to have a backup bottle. The 2nd bottle remained sheathed and carried over to the next flight.

Proffering riveting fragrances of lavender, grenadine, cedar, tar, and tobacco. Full-bodied and dense from the start, it emerged as a real heavyweight a couple of days later, with a vinous smooth and stylish texture. Refreshing purity of purple fruit and plum flavors which started off dry and kept getting even drier, with a finely tuned core of acidity and imposing ripe tannins that ended with a medium-long finish. Poças has long been known for their wood-aged Ports, but their vintage efforts have continued to improve. **89+ points 6/22/13**

2011 Porto Quevedo Vintage Port – (Finished product). Porto Quevedo is a small and family run operation, fronted by the sibling team of Oscar and Claudia Quevedo; he's the export and marketing director and she's the wine/Port maker. The 2011 Quevedo represents their 5th Vintage Port overall; the first was in 2005 followed by 2007, 2008 and 2010, respectively. The 2011 attests to the fact that Claudia has really come into her own and gained an even deeper sense of their vineyard terroir. Fresh and vibrant whiff of earthy strawberry patch, fennel, pine needles and mocha. A decadent young Port that hits above its weight, and given the density and concentration of this beguiling youngster, that is saying a heck of a lot. Possessing a well-sculpted fruit driven frame of boysenberry and black cherry flavors, sheer elegance and intensity combined with well-balanced structural building blocks. The tannins are soft, suave and fine-grained, yet provide enough oomph to allow this 2011 to remain in the cellar for decades. Excellent persistence and fruit filled finesse prevail on the aftertaste with a dollop of warming spirit. This will drink well at all stages of its lifespan and best from 2028-2040. A total of 320 cases were produced; here is the breakdown of the 2011 Quevedo VP bottling:

- **529 of 375ml bottles**
- **3,016 of 750ml bottles**
- **48 of 1.5L bottles**
- **60 of 6L bottles**

Porto Quevedo has reached a new level of excellence with this brilliant young 2011 Vintage Port! **95+ points 6/24/13**

2011 Presidential Vintage Port – (Finished product). Part of the La Martiniquaise beverage empire based in France, Presidential Port was originally created as the brand for the US marketplace, but in more recent years it has also been sold in European markets as well. This young Presidential proudly presents strawberry, marionberry, mint and oodles of minerals on the nose. Medium-full bodied, round, soft and generously fruited with currant and cassis flavors that provide sweetness on the attack and later, leave a much drier impression. This 2011 exhibits a fine spine of acidity and dusty light tannins and a bit of heat too, even on day three, with a medium length finish. The balance is perfect for this drink-me-now VP, but the mid-section is linear if not AWOL. An early ager, the Presidential will continue to improve over the next 15 years and should be consumed within a decade after that.

87+ points 6/27/13

2011 Quarles Harris Vintage Port – (Finished product). Tasted blind over the course of three days, after a local friend found these at a Trader Joe's for \$40. Initially very tightly wound, spicy and loaded with spirit on the nose. By the end of the three days there was improvement and along with some of the high toned notes that remained, there were spicy scents of lavender, mint, mocha and grenadine. Medium in weight, the acidity was in synch and the tannins were mild if not restrained. Ripe and sweet stylistically, the QH is balanced and concentrated with a nice soft approach. Boysenberry and plum fruits prevail, but also a minty character and some heat that never quite fully integrated as I'd hoped. It finishes long and warm with a touch of mocha at the very end. Will drink well for 15-22 years from here. **90+ points 1/14/14**

2011 Quinta das Carvalhas Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Owned by Real Companhia Velha since the days of the Marquês de Pombal and just a few years after his nationalization of the Port trade and demarcation of the Douro with feitoria. For those that have visited the second largest property in the entire Douro region, (Ventozelo is #1) the roundhouse at the very top of the promontory has one of the

most privileged views in all of northern Portugal. Quinta das Carvalhas initially belonged to the Silva Reis family (1957) and today RCV and therefore Carvalhas is owned by the family, as Manuel da Silva Reis bought the company in 1975, and they're also the owners of the Royal Oporto brand of Ports. The fine oenologist Jorge Moreira, had previously worked for RCV and left; then returned seven years hence, in 2010, two years after American winemaker Jerry Luper departed the post. Carvalhas as a Single Quinta Vintage Port was launched in 1989, typically produced in non-generally declared years in which RCV VP is bottled, so 2011 is a bit of a departure. Along with the red and white Douro wines produced from Carvalhas fruit, the Vintage Port also comes from the parcels with very old vines and there are approximately 50 grape varieties grown in the vineyards of this esteemed estate. Now onto the 2011 story. The Carvalhas exhibited an enticing nose of black and purple fruits, minerals, along with an herbal and earthy essence and sharp aguardente that was quite hot the first day but blew off by day 3. Copious quantities of vibrant lingonberry and tart plum fruit, bolstered by spicy anise and black pepper. Medium weight, dry stylistically, fairly straight forward from the middle to the finish with a sexy smooth texture, light acidity and refined tannins. Medium length wild berry filled finish that shows some heat at the end. The Quinta das Carvalhas 2011 still needs a few years to flesh out and fully integrate before it is ready for prime time. Mid-term aging potential of 18-24 years. 500 cases produced.

87+ points 6/27/13

2011 Quinta do Crasto Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Austere day 1, some coaxing the following morning brought out the heady bouquet of carnations, an earthy note of dried leaves, anise and dried red berries. Medium-bodied, lithe and fluid, sensuously textured but somewhat spiry the first two days. Good acidity and refined, resolved tannins. Overall, this showed more characteristics of an LBV than a Vintage Port due to its four square nature. Spicy dry flavors of plum and tart cranberry fruit with a lingering aftertaste that shows some spirit at the end. Drink early on with an extended decant or consume Crasto's 2011 as it reaches prime time circa 2030. **91+ points 6/24/13**

2011 Quinta Dona Matilde Vintage Port – (Cask sample). The Barros family had been the owner of this property for eighty years, until they sold it to Sogevinus the Port company formed by a Spanish banking firm in May 2006. Four days before New Years of the same year, Manuel Angelo Barros bought it back from Sogevinus, even though they still own the name Barros and produce those Ports, just the quinta itself reverted to family ownership. Today, some excellent Douro wines and an array of fine Ports is produced on this property with a total of 93 hectares with 28 under vine. The castas (grapes) used to produce this 2011 are Touriga Nacional and Franca, Tinta Amarela and Barroca, plus Rufete. Offering an intricate bouquet of rock rose, briar patch wild blueberries, tobacco, fresh herbs and Raisinets. Full throttle concentrated black cherry and ripe boysenberry, milk chocolate, fennel and black pepper round out the complex mélange of flavors, with a smooth, mouth coating rich and velvety presence. Delicious and well-balanced, the tannins are ripe, refined and chalky. The finish is smooth, delicious and of medium length. This is a very accessible 2011 right now and will remain as such for years to come. Drink from 2015-2042. A very well made Port by the Barros family! **91+ points**
6/27/13

2011 Quinta da Eira Velha Vintage Port – (Cask sample). This historic property with 50 hectares of A-rated vineyard land has roots dating to 1513, and its ownership has passed through many hands over the centuries. Bottlings of this Single Quinta's Vintage Ports (SQVP) date back to at least 1890. Subsequently, Eira Velha has been a Single Quinta for renowned Port companies such as Cockburn's, Martinez Gassiott, and Hunt Roope, and bottled as SQVP for each. The first SQVP made in modern times was for Cockburn's in 1978. The famous Newman Port family owned this property since the mid-20th century and their ties extend back to it nearly 200 years.

The history is a long story and you can look up my article on the Newman family's sale of Quinta da Eira Velha to The Fladgate Partnership in October 2007 for 3.25

million euros. Now on to the 2011 Vintage Port wine at hand. Tanky at first, this needed plenty of air time to begin showing its most appealing aromas of purple fruits, menthol, herbs and cocoa. Medium-full weight, offering a rich, viscous and velvety mouthfeel, all backed by tart lemony acid in synch with mouth coating grippy tannins. This Eira Velha delivers a pleasant fusion of tart redcurrant fruit and sweet flavors of blackberry and grenadine with a scoach of cedar and herbal overtones. The mid-palate is rather simple, but very smooth and leads to a medium-long dry aftertaste. For current consumption this Port would require an extended decant, as it showed much better on day 3. The cellar potential is solid for the mid-term; 18-25 years. **87+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Quinta do Noval Vintage Port – (Finished product). Extremely extracted and offering notes of black cherry, Asian spice, violet and rose petal aromas. Showcasing an off-dry and densely concentrated middle-heavyweight, stunning intricately layered mid-range and mouth puckering tannins that are dry and quite firm, but softened a few days in. This 2011 exhibits seamlessly smooth and intense blackberry and ripe fig fruit flavors, an uber-soft sensuous mouthfeel, liqueur like richness and a peppery finish that lingers on for minutes. An extended decant is required to drink this anytime soon, while the aging potential is a minimum of a half century. The 2011 Noval represents another in a line of recent great Vintage Ports by this producer; props to António Agrellos. **2,200 cases produced.**
96+ points 7/7/13



2011 Quinta do Noval Nacional Vintage Port – (Finished product). The first Nacional since the beautiful 2003. An expansive and evocative nose of figs, black cherry, tapenade, espresso and a light suggestion of esteva and baking spice. I could have kept my nose in the glass for the entire three days. It's a full-bodied VP, but lithe and sacrifices sheer power for elegance. An intensely focused Nacional with great structural components, albeit restrained tannins seemingly subverted to the fruit now, and in possession of an electrically charged spine of acidity. When I first had this "sighted" at a trade tasting, I preferred the regular Noval bottling as it was a more "complete" wine, then. The mellifluous nature of this Nacional proves that sheer power is not the *raison d'être* and at times the more graceful Port has more to offer. The lingering opulent finish may just be its greatest feature. It drinks beautifully at this early stage and should be a crowd pleaser throughout its lifetime. Drink now or through 2060. A modern day classic! 220 cases were bottled for sale along with 50 magnums. **97+ points 6/20/13**

2011 Quinta do Passadouro Vintage Port – (Cask sample). I was not a fan of this Port the first or second day of tasting. Very tanky and high toned early on and it devolved from there. By day 3, it was nearly undrinkable and I chalked it up to a bad bottle. I had a 2nd bottle which an assistant included in my next flight. The nose exhibited similar characteristics on day one, but improved dramatically and I kept this all the way through a fourth day to be sure. Bright blackcurrant, kalamata, cedar and tar notes along with an herbaceous overtone, but none of the tanky volatility that was in the first bottle. Lovely ripe plum and kirsch flavors, medium-full weight, smooth and well-balanced with refined drying tannins, smooth elegant texture and a medium-long aftertaste. Very pleased there was a 2nd bottle!

90+ points 6/21/13

2011 Quinta do Portal Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Pedro Mansilha Branco runs the day to day operations of this significant quinta property in Sabrosa, in partnership with his brother and father, a close-knit family affair. Paulo Coutinho has been making Port and Douro wines there since the very beginning. Portal's vineyards have been around for centuries and provided many well-known shippers in Gaia with their produce. Having spent time with this Port both sighted and during blind trials, I found it to be a solid young Port, but likely not as ready for prime time as previous releases from other renowned vintages. Displaying an aromatic array of stone fruit, red berries, spicy black licorice, as well as kalamata and gingerbread notes and a touch of steaminess. The palate presents excellent purity of grape, as well as grenadine, black licorice and a nice backdrop of herbs. A bit foursquare and missing some depth in the mid-section, nonetheless it has great symmetry and a soft seductive stylized palate presence. Brimming with ripe, chalky and chiseled tannins that lead to an intense, long and delicious sweet berry infused finish coated with milk chocolate. This 2011 Portal VP will need a few years to fully integrate, but will start to deliver on its promise, beginning at the end of this decade and will drink best from 2024-2040. **92+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Quinta da Romaneira Vintage Port – (Finished product). Situated below the pristine back bowls of the Roncão Valley with many old socalcos terraced vineyards and positioned with an expansive stretch of riverfront property, Romaneira is an up and coming name in both Port and Douro wine production. They've long owned a fine reputation for crafting top notch Tawny Ports, but they're taking strides to improve their focus on Vintage Ports nowadays. It should be noted that António Agrellos, oenologist at Quinta do Noval is also responsible for the winemaking duties at Romaneira. Presenting distinctive aromas intermixed with bright blackberry, grenadine, graham cracker crust and earthy notes of sous bois, kalamata and dried rose petals. A captivating and complex silhouette! The palate offers medium-full body weight, a soft presence with velvety sensuous waves of fruit, gentle on the palate and a precise spine of acidity and refined tannins subverted to the copious quantities of fruit here. Delivering a mix of sweet huckleberries and tart cranberry flavors, a touch of spirit that is warm and inviting but not a distraction, and laced with silky milk chocolate that carries over to the persistent and complex finish. The 2011 Romaneira will drink beautifully young and has staying power too. It should approach its peak drinking window by 2028, providing great pleasure at least through 2040. 7,000 cases were produced.

93+ points 7/7/13



2011 Quinta de Roriz Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Since 2009, Roriz has been owned by the joint venture between Bruno Prats and Symington Family Estates. Seductive scents of fresh carnations, plum and black currant fruit, tar and a touch of spirit which was resolved by day 3. Soft, spicy and juicy in the mouth, vinous and loaded with glycerin. A medium weight, seamless and approachable Port with bright plum and blueberry flavors, four square in the mid-section and off-dry stylistically. It ends with a smooth and succulent aftertaste of medium length with a touch of cocoa. Drink the Roriz early on or in prime time 2024-2036. 350 cases produced.
90+ points 6/20/13

2011 Quinta de la Rosa Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Jorge Moreira has been making wine at Quinta de la Rosa since the 2002 vintage. The Bergqvist family has owned this esteemed quinta, beautifully situated in close proximity to the mouth of the Pinhão River and just atop the railroad tracks above the Douro, since 1906. For over a century before that, the same family sold Port under the brand name Feuerheerd. Sophia Bergqvist is a force to be reckoned with and ensures the

quality of Port and DOC wines continue to improve in quality and in reaching new markets. Quinta de la Rosa began Port production under its own label circa twenty five years ago. A suave and sensuous silhouette showing sophisticated aromas of earthy sous bois, black olives, tar, a lifted lavender note and fragrant fresh figs. Medium-bodied, yet densely concentrated ripe blueberry, cherry, licorice and tar flavors are unctuous, complex and smooth as silk until encountering the grippy and puckering tannins that lead to the super long finish. Although immediately approachable this 2011 Vintage Port will provide at least 3 decades of fine aging. It's by far the finest Vintage Port ever released from Quinta de la Rosa in modern times! **94+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Quinta Seara d'Ordens Vintage Port – (Cask sample). There was an odd chemical nose, some spirituous notes combined with VA, black cherries and mocha. Not very pleasant, but there was no back up bottle. By day three the aromatics had cleaned up a little bit, but still were a bit off. The palate was only slightly better. Medium-full weighted, voluptuous and soft, outside of the disconnect between aromatic and flavor profiles, I was beginning to understand this Port a bit more. Black cherry, kirsch and a chemical note that I could not place. Smooth as a new silk scarf and presenting big grippy tannins and mouthwatering acidity that provide the building blocks for solid aging. The medium-long finish was mostly clean. Without a backup bottle as a reference, I have no way to know if this was just one flawed bottle or endemic of this Vintage Port overall. I believe it'll age well for approximately 20-30 years. It's the weakest link in 2011.

83+ points 6/17/13

2011 Quinta do Sogrado Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Quinta do Sogrado has produced three Vintage Ports in the past, 1990, 1994 and 1997 ... before the Quinta was sold by the Calém family to Sogevinus and these were purely Single Quinta VPs of Calém's. Nowadays, the Quinta do Sogrado is owned by José Maria Calém, belonging to the 5th generation of Calém in the Port business (and making

fine DOC wines too!). The 2011 is the first Vintage Port released under José using this new label. This Port is a blend of 39% Touriga Nacional, 31% Touriga Franca, 19% Tinta Cão and 11% Sousão. Expansive scented spicy bouquet of just crushed grapes, violet, anise and milk chocolate ... is scintillating. Medium-full bodied, this continued to improve incrementally day-by-day and there was a velvety elegance and seductive style to the texture. A significant strength was the overall balance; presenting strikingly tense acidity combined with aggressive tannins that stopped just short of being astringent. These components meshed well with the blast of sweet natured black and purple wild berry flavors and carried over on the crazy long and persistent aftertaste. The 2011 Sogrado should continue to improve and drink well through 2037. A nice surprise, as I had written down a guess that this was the Graham's Vintage Port. 225 cases produced. **93+ points 6/20/13**



2011 Quinta de Valle Longo Vintage Port – (Finished Bottle). This is another bottling by the owners of Vallegre. This SQVP began producing their own Vintage Port back in 2003 and it is the 4th bottling that I am aware of (2003/05/07). It is a property visible from Quinta do Tedo at the confluence of the Tedo and Douro rivers and only has three grapes in segregated parcels, Touriga Franca and Nacional as well as Tinta Roriz; in all just 10 hectares. A fresh bouquet of black raspberry,

rose petal, red licorice and an herbal accent. Full-bodied, sumptuous and rich, with good crisp acidity and mild tannins. Fine symmetry overall and flavors of plum and black cherry with hints of tar and kalamata. Medium length to the finish and very easy to sip on now. Drink it early on or at its projected peak between 2025 and 2036. **87+ points 6/20/13**

2011 Quinta do Tedo Sevedra Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Quinta do Tedo is a very beautiful property with 14 hectares planted, which sits above the confluence of the Tedo and Douro Rivers. Owned by Vincent and Key Steffey Bouchard since 1992. Over the past dozen years, it has been fun to watch improvements in Tedo's Port wine, launch of their DOC Douro wine program with credit going to Jorge Alves, one of the Douro's unsung, humble and talented oenologists. Tedo produces a wide range of Ports from both wood and bottle-aged categories. The 2011 Sevedra was still in a very tight margin when I had the opportunity to taste it blind. The nose had some funky medicinal and camphor characteristics that took a couple of days to blow off and fortunately they did, although it left me questioning if this was a "one off" situation. Notes of earthy underbrush and dark scents of cassis and elderberry and a hint of baking spice eventually emerged. Deeply concentrated and viscous, super smooth texturally, acidic vivacity and hard core, imposing dusty tannins. The Sevedra VP presents racy and intense brambly dark currant and boysenberry flavors, which were pure and stylish. The concentration level of fruit in both of Tedo's Vintage Ports stood out in their respective flights. Missing here, was some mid-palate depth that would've taken this to another level. Maybe that will develop with time in the bottle? Best consumed between 18-25 years of age. **91+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Quinta do Tedo Vintage Port – (Cask sample). This Tedo offers an exotic display of fresh cut flowers, red fruits, espresso/mocha, spicy black licorice and a scented mix of herbs. What a decadent fragrance! The palate fleshed out nicely and improved day-by-day. A lively mélange of sweet boysenberry, pure grape essence and red licorice flavors, with precise balance and an extremely long finish.

By the end of the third day, it was full-bodied, round, rich and velvety, with ripe polished tannins that gained power after swallowing. Jorge Alves should be proud of this deftly made 2011, as it is the best Vintage Port I have tasted from this producer. Hold for a few years then drink from 2018-2038.

94+ points 6/17/13

2011 Quinta do Vale Dona Maria Vintage Port – (Cask sample). It is one of the few 2011 Ports that are not mostly opaque, medium dark maroon with partial opacity. Engrossing fragrance of smoky tar, briary blackberry, a stalky green note and fresh herbs. Medium weight, there's a fine sense of freshness to this wine with bright huckleberry flavor and an earthy mint backdrop that keeps it simple. Velvety soft with a smooth underbelly, generous acidity and integrated silky caressing tannins that make the Vale d. Maria so accessible and fun to drink now. This Vintage Port will certainly age for two to three decades, but there's no need to wait.

90 points 6/24/113

2011 Quinta do Vale Meão Vintage Port – (Finished product). Xito Olazabal has been producing fine Vintage Ports for about a dozen years from his family's property and in 2011 he blended 60% Touriga Franca which was a superstar across the Douro that year, along with 20% Touriga Nacional and 5% each of Barroca, Roriz, Sousão and old vine field blends. Earthy notes reminiscent of a walk in a damp forest, brambly cassis, and a wild herbal, orange and lifted floral essence which was certainly unique. The palate screamed blackcurrant and black plums, fleshy, acidic with modest tannins and medium-long aftertaste. Clean and dark, more elegant than 2007 and lacks the same verve and power of that awe-inspiring powerhouse. This Meão was not in that same league, but was still a mighty solid Port overall. A mid-term ager, drink through 2035. **91+ points 11/20/13**

2011 Quinta do Vallado Adelaide Vintage Port – (Cask sample). 60% old vine field blends, 40% Touriga Nacional, all tread in lagares. 2009 was their first VP. Only 30% of the grapes are de-stemmed for tannin management. One of the few Ports in this vintage which is not fully opaque. Bright wild berry notes and violets along with earthy esteva perfumed panache. Medium-full weighted Port with restrained tannins that become more powerful after the swallow adorned with lively acidity. Plum and brambly berry flavors and a fine rich and smooth appeal this improved significantly over the course of three day. I really enjoyed this and a great 2nd vintage by Vallado, far better known for their Douro wine production. Is this 2nd vintage bottling the next chapter in Vallado's story? Francisco Ferreira & Xito Olazabal's hard work has paid off! **92+ points 6/17/13**

2011 Quinta do Vesuvio Vintage Port – (Cask sample). On the South bank of the river in the Douro Superior, this stalwart Port producer has been extremely consistent, (over the past two decades) with its annual releases of Single Quinta VP, a perennial favorite. In 2011, the cuvée consisted of 45% Touriga Franca, 40% Touriga Nacional, 10% Tinta Barroca and 5% Tinta Amarela. Ripe and intense bouquet of raspberry, blueberry, fresh herbs and loaded with minerality. Blueberry and prune flavors, present a duality of ripeness and raisinous that was extremely generous and smooth. While the acidity is quite pronounced, the tannins are not and remained quite mild and subverted to the fruit. Delicious and with a cocoa studded finish of great length. More elegant than powerful, surprising from this quinta, I found it delineated and able to express its sense of place. Mid-term aging prospect but will have no problem reaching its 30th birthday with ease. 1,250 cases produced. **93+ points 6/20/13**

2011 Ramos-Pinto Vintage Port – (Finished product). The grapes used in this 2011 VP are evenly split 50/50% coming from Quinta de Ervamoira in the Douro Superior and Quinta do Bom Retiro in the Rio Torto Valley. Exhibiting refined spicy scents of violets, cinnamon, cherry and cedar. Medium-full bodied, sensuously

smooth and adorned by citrus streaked acidity along with chalky and assertive tannins that showed greater grip with each passing day. Earthy to its core, with a multi-layered middle and freshness to the ripe character of concentrated sweet purple and stone fruits, marionberry and nuanced flavors of fennel and cinnamon that lead to a decadent finish of great length and complexity. Hold for a few years while this settles in as it will be best from 2022-2045. Ramos Pinto delivers a truly fine Port in 2011! **93+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Rozès Vintage Port – (Finished product). Quite “tanky” initially and not boding well. By day 3 of 4 this 2011 had morphed and the aromas became much more enjoyable with ripe plum and boysenberry fruit, black pepper, creosote and bittersweet chocolate. By day 4 there was no sign of the tanky scent whatsoever. Well defined saturation of marionberry and red raspberry flavors backed by a hint of cocoa. Medium-full weight, smooth, soft and juicy with citrus laced acid and bold drying tannins that capture the attention and linger through the medium length aftertaste. This improved in dramatic fashion from days one to three and showed best on days three and four. Approachable now, drink through 2032.

90+ points 6/21/13

2011 Rozès Quinta do Pego Vintage Port – (Finished product). An earthy silhouette of cassis, tobacco, herbs and dried flowers with a gentle spiciness a couple of days in. Medium-full, seemingly dense and chewy, loaded with citrusy acidity, mild mannered tannins and lots of spirit; the latter of which kept me evaluating this Port for a 4th day. The hot spiry nature calmed down slightly by the third day and by the end of the fourth, it was just warm and although a slight distraction, it was no longer overwhelming. Filled with fresh fig flavors and ripe brambly blackcurrant tending towards the sweet side of the spectrum, the heat translated to the palate as well and early on it was actually lip numbing. There was a bitter stalky aftertaste which was really out of synch. Only on days 3 and 4, did I begin to find the Pego pleasant to sip, as similar to the nose, the majority of the

heat integrated, but there was still the stinky green note which never resolved. That flaw aside, the rest of the qualities here were very good, including a very long finish and good aging potential for 18-25 years. **84+ points 6/25/13**

2011 Rozès Quinta do Grifo Vintage Port – (Finished product). Only the second bottling of Vintage Port from this shipper's single quinta, the first was in 2003. Fine fresh cut floral fragrance, framboise, minty, dark cherry and minerality. Medium weight, the texture was coarse initially, but a few days in it was rich and smooth with mild mannered tannins that show up late. Lush brambly blueberry and boysenberry flavors that are pure, off-dry and round in the mouth. Medium length finish with hint of cocoa. A solid Vintage Port with middling aging potential of 18-25 years. A tasty and approachable 2nd vintage effort by this small single quinta. **91+ points 6/17/13**



2011 Sandeman Vau Vintage Port – (Cask sample). I believe that “Vau Vintage” has not been commercially released since 2003. It comes from both of Sandeman’s Vau and Seixo property’s grapes. Compelling aromas of lavender, potpourri, plum, dark wild berries and loads of minerals. Very fresh and bordering on ethereal. Medium-bodied, chewy, soft and prickly with a touch of spirit and fine grained tannins that deliver iron fisted grip. Concentrated flavors of fig, fennel and cassis accented by kalamata and an herbal nuance. The lingering finish really rocks with a massive blast of wild berries and touch of spirit. The Vau Vintage has always been marketed as Sandeman’s “early maturing and easy-to-drink young” Vintage Port. I’ve always found them to be very well structured and the 2011 version is no different. Drink 2020 – 2042. **88+ points 11/20/13**

2011 Sandeman Vintage Port – (Finished product). This is one of a handful of the most extracted Ports of the entire vintage, and 2011 brought more of the deepest and most inky opaque hued cask samples of any young vintage I’ve ever witnessed. I’ll reserve final judgment for a few years, but at least at this very early stage, the 2007 Sandeman was even greater. But Luis Sottomayor has done a phenomenal job once again and has brought back Sandeman’s reputation full circle from 1994 onwards, after a couple of rough decades. A string of great Vintage Ports in generally declared years since that time has significantly raised the bar and Sandeman is back as a force to be reckoned with. The 2011 is black, not only the color but the aromas and flavors too. The blend is 40% each Touriga Franca and Nacional, 10% Roriz and 5% each Tinta Cão and Sousão from Sandeman’s two key Quinta’s: Seixo and Vau. An expansive nose of black plums, black licorice and tar are decadent and powerful. Structurally, the succulent acidity and iron-fisted tannins provide plenty of potential for future cellaring. But it is the beautifully seamless texture, depth of concentrated sweet plum and cherry that Port fans are going to love most. Not the most approachable now, I’d hold off and let this soften up a bit or give it a long decant, but the upside here is excellent and it will drink well at least through 2050. **94+ points 6/20/13**

2011 Skeffington Vintage Port – (Cask sample). Produced by The Fladgate Partnership, it's not tied to any specific quinta property and is rarely seen on this side of the pond. Tightly coiled in the early going, but by the evening of the 2nd day, the perfume began to emerge, and it smelled great. Offering spicy fragrances of brambly blackcurrants and kirsch, along with earthy undertones of eucalyptus, black tea, tobacco and black licorice. Impressive! Medium weight, silky smooth and generous mouthfeel, adorned by vibrant acidity and aggressive tannins. The Skeffington showcases black cherry and strawberry flavors up front with minerals and a stalky-stemmy green characteristic. The aftertaste is juicy, layered and lingering with a lush sweet prune nuance, some spirit protruding and the green note. A tasty and approachable mid-term ager that offers great value for money. Drink now to 2032. **87+ points 6/24/13**

2011 Smith Woodhouse Vintage Port – (Cask sample). The grapes for this bottling are from Quinta da Madalena, a property situated in the Rio Torto; all of its five hectares are "A" rated. Madalena consists of 56% old vine field blends, extremely low yielding in 2011, and the balance are block planted to Touriga Franca which excelled in this vintage. Boasting an intoxicating nose of lavender, boysenberry, red licorice and baking spice notes. This Port's alluring personality reveals blueberry pie and kirsch flavors accessorized by licorice, schistous minerality and gently protruding spirit. In the mouth it is medium-bodied, and softened up over three days. Round and restrained tannins attenuated by aeration, make this easy to approach, but the dense layers of fruit currently cloak the underlying tannins and they'll likely require several years to exhibit their true nature. The accessibility factor and ease in drinking today, is a significant strength of this distinctive Smith Woodhouse VP, which has the bones to age well over the next thirty five years or so. 1,000 cases were produced. **92+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Taylor's Vintage Port – (Cask sample). A new house style emerges with this bold young Taylor's -- or is it just the nature of 2011? *Impenetrable* or

powerful or *brooding* used to be apt descriptors for fledgling infant Ports from this venerable shipper. The striking difference with the 2011 Taylor is that it seemingly shreds all of the old paradigms. Today, it is no longer as accepted for a young Port to have a spirity streak that follows the finish and takes years to resolve as the Port matures and reaches its peak of drinkability. The key players have not changed Taylor's house style, so instead it stands to reason that what has really changed are the improvements in the vineyards as well as dynamics such as utilizing better made aguardente ... but more so, we have the "perfect Port storm" with this 2011 vintage. And that is a good thing! A knockout of a nose with expansive scents of lavender, blackcurrant, black cherry and anise. Vibrant boysenberry and loganberry flavors, big-boned yet lithe, rich and seamlessly smooth. The 2011 Taylor is immediately approachable, atypical for this shipper in big years. I like this departure in style, but still love Taylor's powerful and more grippy earlier vintages. The tannins are restrained at the moment, but underlying the layers of bright blue and black fruit here, there remains a firmness that will reveal itself in years to come. Pop a cork soon to understand what 2011 Taylor is all about in its youth and then put the rest away in the cellar where this will continue to improve for forty years and likely drink beautifully at twice that age. If Vintage Port could simply be described in movie terms, the 2011 Taylor's Vintage Port would certainly be the "*Dark Knight*." **11,000 cases produced. 97+ points 7/7/13**

2011 Taylor's Quinta de Vargellas Vinha Velha Vintage Port – (Cask sample). A cunning display of explosive aromas consisting of carnation blossoms, plum, cherry liqueur, granitic minerality and a peppery nuance. Medium-full and expansive, the seamless buoyancy and lithe nature of this old vine beauty caught my attention in CA and in Porto during blind evaluations. Sheer elegance and purple velvet. Ultimately approachable, whereas I expected massive, that's not the case here; a lightness of being that is hard to describe. The Vargellas is so hedonistic at this moment, so fresh and fruit filled, yet balanced with precise focused acidity and suave caressing tannins. Intensely fruited with flavors of blueberry and ripe plum, above all else the freshness stands, out and as for a finish, there's no end in sight,

albeit a touch warm. The Vargellas may come across as a lion in sheep's clothing, there's no question as to its harmony and ability to age for a half century. But open a bottle tomorrow to understand the refined beauty of this youngster now and its sense of place. The 2011 Vargellas Vinha Velha is an instant classic! **310 cases produced. 98+ points 7/7/13**



2011 Vista Alegre Vintage Port – (Finished Bottle). The Cunha Barros family purchased the Quinta da Vista Alegre in 1973. The current shareholders changed the name of the company to Vallegre and their very first Vista Alegre Vintage Port was 1994. Seventeen years later we now have the 2011, dark in its complexion, this young VP displays notes of strawberry and cranberry along with aniseed and hints of cocoa powder. Medium-full weight, dense and fleshy but ultimately liquid velvet in the mouth, with lip smacking zesty acidity and assertive ripe tannins to provide excellent structure and focus to this young Port. A well-defined silhouette

including just-crushed grape purity and blueberry flavors with a scoach of chocolate and fennel, and extremely long finish, with just a tad too much spirty poking out. Will that resolve with some bottle age? Across the board the 2011 Vista Alegre has all of the requisite accoutrements for potential cellaring and I believe it will drink very well 30-40 years down the road, if not more. **92+ points 6/27/13**

2011 Vieira de Sousa Vintage Port – (Cask sample). This is just the 2nd Vintage Port produced by the fine young winemaker, Luisa Borges. Her blend includes Tinta Roriz, Amarela, Cão and Barroca, as well as Touriga Franca and some old vine field blends. Beyond my three days evaluating this bottling blind, I've had the Vieira de Sousa 2011 Port on three other occasions, with very consistent notes overall. The most recent was in early October, (at the source) and with a three hour decant, the VP still showed very similar characteristics to my previous experiences. Lifted fragrances of lavender, dark wild berries, cedar, herbs and kalamata. Uber-ripe and concentrated blackberry and sweet grape flavors which retained balance and finesse, due to the judicious dose of lively acidity and a firm chassis of tannins that mellowed by day 3. Medium-bodied, soft and rather nicely contoured vinous and voluptuous mouthfeel, and a savory medium length finish that reverberates the distinctive freshness of the fruit. Drink early and/or over the next quarter century. Another fine achievement by Ms. Borges! **92+ points 6/24/13**

2011 Warre's Vintage Port – (Cask Sample). 53% of the grapes that made up the final blend were from Quinta da Cavadinha, while its co-star Quinta do Retiro Antigo presented its low-yielding deeply concentrated grapes from the Rio Torto Valley. In a supporting role, Quinta da Telhada delivered its excellent Touriga Nacional fruit from the warmer climes of the Douro Superior. The 2011 Warre's is driven by flamboyant fragrant notes of black cherry, eucalyptus, black tea and loads of minerality. Its luxurious and refined consistency, rich and bold flavors of tart pomegranate and cassis, accompanied by sublime sweet figs and spicy licorice. They are bolstered by ample acidity and restrained tannins ending with a seamless

and persistent berry dry aftertaste. It can be consumed tomorrow or will certainly please the crowds in forty years. The 2011 vintage, neatly showcases the Warre's elegant style in spades! 3,000 cases produced. **94+ points 6/24/13**



Roy's Final Assessment of the 2011 Vintage Ports

The 2011 crop of Ports is exemplified by massively fruited, mellifluous and symmetrically structured Ports from a warm and challenging vintage that ended up superbly. Comparisons to other benchmark vintages were used early and often as fodder to fortify 2011's prognosis. To the contrary, I believe several decades hence, the next generation will be comparing their nubile vintages to this one in order to cement the reputations of their young Ports. 2011 will be their benchmark and for a very good reason.

At the time of this writing, there were 50 companies that declared a total of 88 Vintage Ports from 2011, of which I provided notes on 67. Sogrape, the Symington Family Estates, Sogevinus, The Fladgate Partnership and others represent multiple Port "brands" in the context of a single company. So that is why there are so many more bottlings than companies accounted for. For example, C. da Silva of Niepoort, as well as some of the Single Quinta producers such as Quinta do Noval or Tedo; have produced more than one Vintage Port in this generally declared year.

In 2011, there were a total of 85,000 pipes approved by the "*comunicado de vindima*" of the IVDP. But later, the declaration accounted for 84,459 pipes of "*generous must*" and after the addition of aguardente in fortifying the Ports there was a total of 107,354 pipes of 2011 Vintage Port wine.

According to the IVDP's Bento Amaral, "As I've told you previously, some producers send more than one sample and then they decide to only commercialize one bottling. On the other hand, you can have a sample of Port with more than one brand." In answering an even more important question, Bento continued, "There are 76 producers (who bottle wine) in the Douro and 38 shippers of Port wine (for a total of 114). Roughly, you can assume that the shippers are based in Gaia and the producers are in the Douro."

Thanks Bento, that information is not easy to come by. I was certainly wondering how that number had changed since I last checked when the 2007 vintage was generally declared. At that time there were 116 combined shippers and producers, a net decrease of two during the past four and a half years. Consolidation happens, but so do innovative new startups.

In my quest to be thorough, I have compiled 529 distinct tasting notes on 2011 VPs between May and mid-January, 502 of which were captured tasting blind. At this point, I have evaluated a reasonably good cross section to understand the overall quality of this vintage. Yet it is the opinion of just one man and I realize my thoughts may diverge greatly from others who have put forth their written works on this particular vintage.

To summarize, 2011 is truly one of those exceptionally rare vintages where everything seemed to fall into place by harvest time to create something extraordinary.

Time will tell, but so far, there is no doubt that 2011 is the real deal. I did not go back and do a statistical analysis from my prior year's vintage reports. However, across the board, I believe my ratings were slightly higher for this vintage than any I've reviewed. And possibly more telling, there were far more excellent Ports in 2011. The only thing that remains to be proven is exactly where 2011 will fit within historical parameters of the all-time great vintages. For that we'll need to have a look back in 20 or more years. Only then can comparisons to past greats be accurate.



Buying Advice and Drinking Windows

Let's get the pricing issue out of the way upfront here. My very first tasting of 2011 VPs took place when the Symingtons came to America back in May 2013. Rupert Symington stated that their company's 2011 Vintage Ports were sent to their importers at the exact same price as their 2003 Vintage Ports. Others have cited very minor price increases.

Given the increase of production costs and even the increase in aguardente alone, not to mention labor costs, this is commendable. After all, there are few if any wine regions in the world where the cost of producing wine is more expensive than the Douro. It should also be noted that in total, SFE's 2011 Vintage Port case quantities dropped from the last generally declared vintage (2007) by 28%.

From where I sit, the increases in price seem to take place once the Ports arrive. For example there were considerable price differences between what was being offered to the trade, pre-release and post shipment to the USA. But only you the consumer can decide if current prices are worthy of your investment.

The same three arguments crop up on our Forum every time a new general declaration comes around. "I can buy a bottle of thirty year old _____ 1983 Vintage Port for the same price." Or another truism, "I am forty five years old now and by the time this vintage is ready to drink, I'll be an old man." And lastly, "I can wait twenty years, not tie up my money for all that time and buy these Ports then, and likely the increase will be rather minor."

These are logical talking points that go through the mind of the Port consumer and are discussed in earnest. All are accurate and part of the dilemma that Vintage Port faces as a collectible wine. Unlike Bordeaux and Burgundy ... to choose the two most likely examples ... Vintage Port no longer has the *appreciation* (in terms of dollar value) in today's marketplace that it enjoyed years ago and certainly not at the auction block, except for scarce and/or older bottles or OWCs.

From my humble viewpoint, if you're feeling too old to purchase young Vintage Port then don't. And by all means, if you prefer to purchase older vintages of Port because you want to drink them now, and the prices are similar, then absolutely go for it. The value of money point of view is in the eye of the beholder, but if you would rather wait until 2035 to purchase the 2011 Vintage Ports on the secondary market, I say, "Good luck to you!" They may still be able to be found, but there is no assurance that will be the case given the small quantities produced.

Leave these extraordinary 2011 VP's for the hundreds of thousands of us that do want to buy and drink them, especially in a fantastic vintage like 2011 where both the Beneficio and harvest yields were so low, as is reflected by the case quantities produced. I am done *arguing* with those that don't see the intrinsic value of owning great young Vintage Ports from their earliest days.

What is slightly different about 2011, (generalizing here) is that similar to 1994 VPs at this same early stage; the massive waves of fruit in many of these youngsters

will allow them to be enjoyed earlier than some of the other recent vintages. While some have hard grippy tannins ... the majority do not ... and they are just more accessible and enjoyable along the way. Improved understanding of tannin management, plus ongoing improvements in the quality of aguardente is certainly helping this cause. So while it is always a great treat to drink Vintage Ports when they reach maturity, unlike twenty or more years ago, you no longer have to. Enjoy them very young, or as teenagers, or in their twenties and thirties! If you are young enough, buy an extra bottle to try now and then put the balance in the cellar and forget about them for a few decades until they are more mature.

This will sound somewhat repetitive from previous vintage reports, but at least I remain consistent. From where I sit and in my mid-fifties I've put my money where my cursor is; in purchasing Vintage Port when they are infants and lying them down in the cellar until selected for consumption, will always be my preference. That is true with 2011 VPs as well and I have personally purchased several mixed cases that include a variety of producers. Having the control over how they are handled from here on, is something that is extremely important to me. If I never get to drink them, my daughter will. So be it. Provenance = peace of mind. Period!

All too often I attend excellent Vintage Port tasting events, where bottles have been purchased just-in-time for the event, or were purchased years earlier, but from grey market sources with unknown provenance and the results are rarely even. And I am being very kind in that remark. What's worse than turning up with your supposedly great bottle of VP for a tasting of thirty or sixty year old Ports and having your bottle turn out to be an epic fail? Corked is something none of us can prevent, or natural bottle variation. It happens. But the type of angst described above or just the disappointment one feels? I respect the argument to the contrary, but I still believe the smart money is spent early, when possible, controlling the destiny of one's own bottles.

Ultimately, consumers must decide whether or not a vintage is worthy of their investment. I hope that the tasting notes above have shown that, yes, 2011 is a unique vintage in a long list of generally declared vintages. Unquestionably from where I sit, it is hands down better than 2007, which was also quite good. Four

years older now, I've already purchased more 2011s than any vintage since 2000. More importantly, from the breadth of tasting the youngsters from this vintage, I can honestly say that the across-the-board quality was higher than any I've ever evaluated in the past, at this very same stage.


Roy's Top 10 List of the 2011 Vintage Ports

With 2011 Vintage Ports, I scored ten of sixty seven Vintage Ports with a baseline score at 96 points or above. Not all of them are the "usual suspects." That being said, there were more excellent Ports between 93-95 points than in any previous vintage I've rated. The list below represents my 10 Top Vintage Ports of the vintage in order of preference.

ROY'S TOP 10 LIST OF 2011 VINTAGE PORTS		
1st	Dow's	98+
2nd	Quinta de Vargellas Vinha Velha	98+
3rd	Niepoort	98+
4th	Quinta do Noval Nacional	97+
5th	Taylor's	97+
6th	Graham's	97+
7th	Alves de Sousa	97+
8th	Fonseca	96+
9th	Quinta do Noval	96+
10th	Graham's Stone Terraces	96+



W & J
GRAHAM'S
ESTABLISHED 1820
PORT



Graham's 2011
Stone Terraces
VTG Port

DATE TAKEN FROM THE CELLAR:
14/06/2013

1692

TAYLOR'S
VINTAGE PORT

BOTTLED BY QUINTA AND VINEYARD BOTTLERS-VINHOS S.A.
VILA NOVA DE GAIA, PORTUGAL • PRODUCT OF PORTUGAL

BOTTLED IN 2013

2011

QUINTA DO NOVAL
2011
VINTAGE

PORT

BOTTLED AND SHIPPED BY
QUINTA DO **NOVAL** - VINHOS S.A.
PINHÃO
Produce of Portugal
BOTTLED IN 2013

19% vol

75 cl