

2008 Quinta Do Mouro Tinto

The 2008 Tinto, the flagship Estate red, is revisited this issue. It is a blend of 45% Aragonez, 30% Alicante Bouschet, 15% Touriga Nacional and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged for 14 months in a mixture of French and Portuguese oak (only 50% new). Earthy and beefy, it is quite complex in the flavor medley, but its hallmark is its lively elegance. It isn't the most concentrated Mouro, but the 2008s have an enchanting elegance to them that is hard to resist. This has come along well and can be drunk now – but it is not at peak and it is still improving. After about 3 hours, though, there was a certain, high-toned nuance to it that I haven't seen before – and that some may like more than others. There were 25,000 bottles produced. Drink now-2024.

This impressive Southern winery has been making a lot of top labels that are easy to adore, but the important sign of quality this issue is how well the bargain-priced wines show. There is a lot of good drinking here for modest money at the lower end of the scale. They won't last as long or develop as well, but in the short run you may like them about as much.

Importer: Langdon Shiverick, Los Angeles, CA; tel. (213) 483-5900 or East Coast (646) 414-6298

- Mark Squires (February, 2014)

2011 Luis Louro Reserva Alento Adega Do Monte Branco

The 2011 Reserva Alento Adega do Monte Branco is a blend of 40% each of Aragonez and Alicante Bouschet, with 10% each of Touriga Nacional and Syrah, tank-fermented and then aged for one year in new French oak. This is quite lovely, probably the best wine I've yet seen from Luis Louro at his Alento operation (the son of Miguel Louro, he also works in his family's well-known winery, Quinta do Mouro). I hope I'm not underrating it - when the oak settles down, it may yet be entitled to an uptick. Beautifully constructed, lifted and flavorful, it is wine that has reasonable depth, lots of personality, good structure and a fresh feel to it. It mostly handles the oak, too, and that should only get better. It should be approachable now, but it can develop more harmony and complexity (the latter of which it particularly needs) with a year or two in the cellar. Drink now-2021.

This is not yet imported, although the winery has other wines brought in by Langdon-Shiverick.

- Mark Squires (February, 2014)

2009 Quinta Do Mouro Tinto Gold Label

The 2009 Tinto Gold Label is essentially an upper level, small production version of the Estate wine (not that the regular Estate Tinto has a particularly large production, either). There are typically some differences in blend and oak treatment. This is a blend of 45% Alicante Bouschet, 30% Aragonez, 15% Touriga Nacional and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, tank-fermented and then aged 18-24 months in new French oak. It comes in at 14.5% alcohol. The surprise is not that I liked this a lot, but that it became so approachable and elegant with an hour of air, while still managing to be persistent and lovely hours later. In this big vintage, graceful and elegant weren't always words that applied, but Mouro manages it here by producing a bright and lifted wine. The oak, however, is too prominent just now. It really needs some more time in the cellar to absorb it (which it should). The pleasure of drinking Mouro is – that you can! They aren't just wines to admire in tastings. They are balanced and well constructed. They go well with food. This rather restrained and understated 2009 is another example. It was much better on Day 2, still seeming full on the palate, while precisely defined and focused. There were just 3,500 bottles produced. Drink...

- Mark Squires (February, 2014)

2010 Quinta Do Mouro Vinha Do Mouro

The 2010 Vinha do Mouro is a blend of 45% Trincadeira, 30% Aragonez, 15% Alicante Bouschet and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, tank fermented and aged. This is quite a lovely bargain in the lineup, and it will particularly appeal to oak-phobes. It is not the biggest or most concentrated – that is not what it is about – but it is beautifully constructed, elegant and persistent on the flavorful finish as the fruit dances over the palate. It does thin a bit with aeration, but it is still a very nice QPR point in the lineup. It doesn't lack for much in the short to mid-term. If you like the fresh style and encounter while it is at peak, you will have no problem loving it, probably more than the score might at first suggest. There were 60,000 bottles produced. Drink now-2020.

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