

WINTER | SPRING 2022

rachael ray

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+
why we ♥
Portuguese
wines

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BHG SPECIALS



FROM THE WINE
CELLAR OF
RITA JAMMET

new-old portugal

What's more exciting than discovering the wonderful offerings of an old-world wine region? Watching that region modernize its winemaking before your eyes. BY RITA JAMMET ♦ PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER TESTANI



"Food-friendliness, indigenous grapes, and value are the secret weapons of Portuguese wines," says sommelier Alexandre Calvi.

With its ancient winemaking *bona fides* and a recent innovative boom, Portugal is making some great things happen—just ask Bruno Almeida, a New York-based sommelier and expert in the country's wines. "You'll find different perspectives, a vibrant new generation of winemakers, and a country expressing tons of diversity," he says. That diversity is extreme and manifests on all fronts: climate, soil properties, and indigenous grape varieties.

Some of them go into Portugal's famous fortified wines, which thrive in the northeast of the country in the Douro, the world's

first legally protected wine region. Port—a red wine with brandy added during fermentation—has been made there for centuries. Another is Madeira, from the volcanic archipelago of the same name, which uses a similar process with white grapes.

What gets less attention stateside is the *new* Portuguese wine world, in which the country's indigenous grapes—there are nearly 250 of them!—are being used in unique, high-quality table wines that span the entire spectrum of flavor. Start with Vinho Verde, produced in the region of Minho, in the

far northwest of Portugal. Crisp whites and rosés are made either by blending Alvarinho, Loureiro, and other indigenous grapes, or by using just one. Out of the Alentejo region in the southeast come beautiful full-bodied reds like Tinto Alentejo, various blends of Aragonês (a.k.a. Tempranillo) and other local grapes that show generous fruit but mild tannins—yum! Then there's the dynamic and very varied stuff coming out of the Lisboa region, on the coast (where the capital, Lisbon, is located). Sandy soil offers protection against phylloxera (a pest that has taken down whole

MY PORTUGUESE PICKS

1

Aviva Vinho Verde Rosé 2019

With slight fizz and low ABV, the wine has a palate dominated by notes of citrus, florals, and salty strawberries. \$13; vervewine.com

2

Anselmo Mendes Passaros Loureiro Vinho Verde 2019

Lemon-green in color, with aromas of citrus and tropical fruits, the wine is light and crisp with refreshing acidity. \$13; oakandbarrelnyc.com

3

Alvaro Castro DAC Tinto 2018

Dark ruby in color, this Dão blend smells of crushed herbs with hints of black pepper and tastes like concentrated smoky black fruit, traces of earth, and silky tannins. \$20; wine.com

4

Dalva 2013 LBV - Late Bottled Vintage Port

Exuberantly fruity, full-bodied, spicy, and fresh, with a persistent aftertaste. Perfect for drinking on its own or with strong cheeses or dark chocolate. \$20; taylorswineshop.com

5

Blandy's 5-Year-Old Verdelho Madeira

Crisp, with vibrant spicy notes and dried peach, beeswax, and creamy butterscotch on the finish. \$27; wine.com



FROM THE BAR OF
JOHN CUSIMANO

COME FLY WITH ME

MAKES 2 COCKTAILS
ACTIVE: 5 MIN | TOTAL: 5 MIN

- 3 oz. gin • 1½ oz. maraschino liqueur
- 1 oz. fresh lemon juice
- 4 oz. Champagne • 2 cocktail cherries, for garnish

Fill 2 coupe glasses with ice. Fill a cocktail shaker with ice, then pour in the gin, maraschino liqueur, and lemon juice. Shake until well chilled, about 30 seconds. Discard the ice from the coupes, then fill both with the strained mixture from the shaker. Top drinks with Champagne and garnish with cherries.



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THIS IS A TWIST ON THE CLASSIC (AND QUITE SEXY) AVIATION COCKTAIL. TOPPING IT WITH CHAMPAGNE MAKES THE DRINK EVEN MORE ROMANTIC.

—JOHN

wine regions), leaving some of the oldest, most resilient vines in the world producing grapes for crisp whites and full-bodied reds.

In the centrally located Dão region, favored by collectors, the wines are light in style and age well thanks to their tannins and acidity, a result of the high altitude. The southern islands—the Azores and Madeira—are influenced by the sea: Cooling breezes and warmer climates result in ripe, healthy fruit, while volcanic soil imparts a smoky, earthy character.

When you're ready to tour Portugal, the bottles above are a delicious place to start.