



Vinhos Barbeito – 2001 Malvasia Cask 727 d+e

Do the respective Madeira wine producers have their specialities? Depends on who you ask of course but I must confess I have my preferences when it comes to certain grapes. For example I have a weak spot for Sercial when it comes from Blandy's. The same goes for Malvasia when the label says Vinhos Barbeito.



Ricardo Diogo's absolutely brilliant 2000 Malvasia Cask 40a and 2000 Malvasia Cask 44a, has given me much pleasure and enjoyment the last years. Why? Simple, because Ricardo manages to allow the Malvasia to keep its grape character and at the very same time taste refreshing and never cloyingly sweet. Both wines share

similarities and has a herbal common denominator which adds depth. I'm not as excited over Malvasia wines emphasizing the floral characters both on the bouquet and palate as they seem to lose some freshness.

2001 Malvasia Cask 727 d+e. It's actually one of the wines I mostly looked forward to tasting at my last visit to Vinhos Barbeito. Could it reach the same levels as the 2000's? One thing's for sure; it's different! In a positive way of course because this is what few realize about Madeira – vintage variation does exist and do show in the wines, especially the colheitas which doesn't spend as long time in cask as the vintage versions.

The 2001 has spent 10 years in cask, being bottled in September 2011. What fascinates me is the almost tropical feel on the nose paired with the herbal character which seems to be a trademark of Ricardo's Malvasias. A slight unripe pineapple feel, jasmine and a dusty road scent. White peaches and honey. Then on the palate the freshness and more restrained Malvasia style I just love. The acidity is higher in the 2001 and the purity of the fruit just stunning. It finishes with a taste of orange peel, herbs and fresh figs.

A perfect pairing with the semi-strong and more creamy blue cheeses. Less than 1,000 half litre bottles produced so don't expect to find it on the shelves of your local supplier. Artisan wines like the 727 d+e are worth your efforts though and if you're in the U.S. the wine can be found at The Rare Wine Co.