



Madeira**wine**

Madeira Wine Ambassador

In October 2015, 14 highly motivated Madeira wine lovers and professionals made a journey, visiting most of the winemakers of Madeira, combined with three days of I Rubina Vieira, including a final exam. Here's an impression.

Day 1

Reception by the IVBAM, the organization for control and promotion of Madeira Wine. Rubina Vieira is a great teacher. Her motto during these days of learning: "it's easy!"



Rubina has developed a color scale, made of Madeira's.

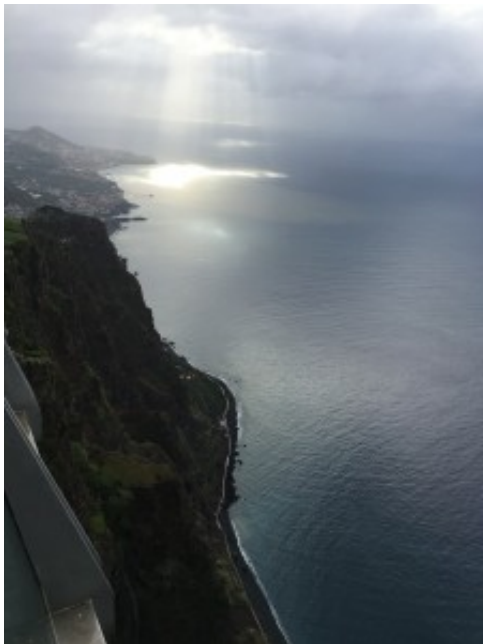


Quote of the day of Rubina, about the Terrantez grape: “If it were a man, it would be a gentleman”

Afterwards dinner in restaurant Gaia Nova, Funchal.

Day 2

Firstly we enjoy Madeira: the beautiful Cabo Girão, a cliff of 580 m high.



Visiting Henriques & Henriques with a presentation by Humberto Jardim, the “winemaker-philosopher”

The wines are maturing in a very warm place: behind a window on the south!



Humberto is not only a fantastic story-teller, he stimulates our understanding of madeira wines with questions such as: "if you put 100 grams of water and 100 grams of alcohol together, what happens to the volume?"

We tasted 12 beautiful Madeira's, amongst them a sercial 1894. What a good start of the day!

Lunch at restaurant Olagar

Lesson on the IVBAM: e.g. harvest wines versus blends.

Dinner at Taberna Madeira, with a nice tasting of still madeira wines.

Day three

Lesson on IVBAM

At Barbeito we have an overwhelming tasting presented by winemaker Ricardo Diogo, supported

by Leandro Gouveia. Barbeito Madeira makes 49 different programs, sometimes of only 550 liters.

There is no extensive presentation, for the wines must tell the story. And boy, they do! We tasted 25 Madeira's. At first a serie of young wines, including red Bastardo. Then a row of seven Tinta Negra, which prove that you can make a wonderful quality wine with this grape, that mature in a wonderful way. Finally, we end up with a sensational Malvasia 1875.





Afterwards dinner at restaurant Chalet Vicente.

This is a classic restaurant, we were served lovely traditional Madeira kitchen.

We had our own dining room, very comfortable.

This diner is a gift to us from IVBAM!

Day 4

Visit Blandy's, a tour of Rita Azevedo and a thorough presentation of the most famous wine maker from the island: Francisco Albuquerque. What an honor to meet him and a pleasure to listen.

His quote of the day: "We drink only when, we work"

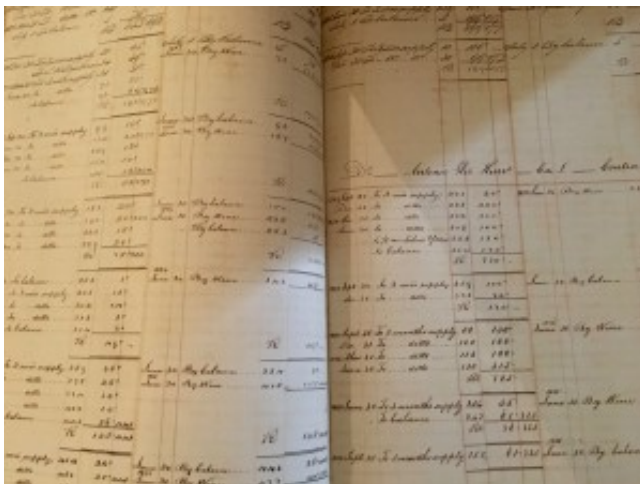
Francisco made it clear to us that the high acidity in Madeira wines are mainly due to the composition of the soil. He also explained the idea behind the successful entry-Madeira "Alvada" made of Bual and Malmsey: it must as much as possible resemble a common wine in order to make it acceptable for a large group of consumers, so the young wines are aged in wood, which is totally unusual for Madeira!

Francisco divided the Madeira wine aroma's into these groups: dried fruit, candy, wood, burned, brandy (ethanol), oxidation.





A ledger of purchases and sales of Madeira wine from the 19th century.



Visit to Borges, a real family business. A presentation of Isabel Borges and her winemaker.



When at Borges we got to taste some very expressive really powerful wines, including 10 years old Sercial, 20 years old verdelho and 30 years old Malvasia. Lots of bottles were bought here!

A Vista Dantonio, arguably the best restaurant of Madeira: delicious food from the plancha oven, perfectly prepared meat. There is a complete walk-in wine cabinet with lots of wine from the Douro, all ripened and ready to drink. Antonio spontaneously organized a blind tasting of Madeira's.



Day 5

Exam at the IVBAM!

The exam WSET level 3 – style consisted of 30 closed questions, 5 essay questions and a mock exam.

It certainly wasn't easy, with questions about viticulture, wine making, history of Madeira wine and many other items. All students have passed with figures of 7.2 to 9.1! The diploma "Madeira Wine Ambassador" was handed over by the IVBAM.

Rubina Viera also achieved a diploma from the MWA: "Natural Born Teacher"

Rubina Viera, Barbara Spinola and the rest of the team gave us a fantastic experience.



Visit to Justino's, a very efficient well-managed company that produces 49% of Madeira. Here lies to mature eight million liters of Madeira wine!



We received a warm welcome and presentation of director Julio Fernandes and winemaker Juan Teixeira.

Justino's largest export markets are France, Germany, America and Japan.

Here we learned that Europeans prefer the dry styles Madeira, while the rest of the world drinks the sweet styles.

Justino's has developed a new grape: the amsburger, made of several Riesling clones.

We tasted a Torrontez 1978, a fantastic wine, which unfortunately is not yet on the market.

Quote of the day from Juan Teixeira about this wine from 1978: "I prefer to wait a little bit"

That sounds really like Madeira!

The last dinner was on the rooftop of Hotel the Vine dinner, winner of "Best Design Hotel in Europe"

Day 6

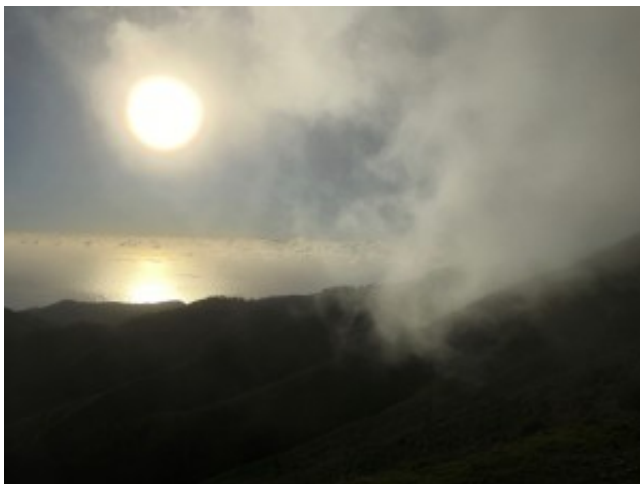
A nice trip through the rugged north of Madeira.

Guided tour of the caves of São Vicente.

Looking quietly over the Atlantic ocean at Porto Moniz.



A tour In the clouds of the interior.





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