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Visit from the Wine World's Greatest Island: Madeira's Top Five Producer/Exporters

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tags: [Barbeito](#), [Bastardo](#), [Blandy](#), [Broadbent Selections](#), [Bual](#), [Cossart Gordon](#), [D'Oliveiras](#), [Francisco Albuquerque](#), [Henriques & Henriques](#), [Justino's](#), [Madeira Wine Co.](#), [Malmsey](#), [Malvazia](#), [Mannie Berk](#), [Pereira D'Oliveira](#), [Rare Wine Co.](#), [Ricardo Freitas](#), [Sercial](#), [Terrantez](#), [Verdelho](#)

by Richard Jennings



eira Wine Co.'s winemaker Francisco Albuquerque, Madeira Wine Institute President Paula ico, and Henriques & Henriques CEO Humberto Jardim

[FROM MADEIRA TO USA: MADEIRA'S FIVE MAJOR PRODUCER/EXPORTERS SENT A TRADE TASTING - Hotel Monaco, San Francisco, California \(10/11/2011\)](#)

I'm tremendously fond of the complex, high acid, history-steeped, "sunshine-in-a-bottle" wines of Madeira. Some of the greatest wines I've had the privilege to taste have been vintage Madeiras from the 1800s and early 1900s. I've written about them a number of times here, including pieces on my trip to the island last year with *For the Love of Port*'s Roy Hersh. I was therefore delighted to attend this unusual, all-day trade tasting featuring all five of the major surviving producers of fortified Madeira wines. The day started with a morning seminar led by Madeira Wine Co.'s Francisco Albuquerque, and included a new video created by the Madeira Wine Institute. We then enjoyed a very tasty Portuguese-inspired lunch accompanied by more Madeiras, followed by a grand tasting of several wines from each of these major producers. During the course of the day, I tasted 41 Madeiras from five of the island's major producer/exporters. The oldest was the stunning and powerful 1912 D'Oliveiras [Verdelho](#). Fifteen of the wines were vintage Madeiras—wines that must spend at least 20 years in cask, and that often spend decades more than that in old neutral oak barrels before being bottled for release. We also tasted many blended Madeiras, from Rainwater to five, 10 and 15 year old bottlings, and special proprietary blends. The day's tastings verified my opinions of some of these producers, whose wines I've sampled many times before, and gave me some new insights into what's happening in the tiny but incredibly special world of fortified wine production on the volcanic island that lies much closer to the coast of North Africa than it does to Portugal and Europe.

Although at one time, in the early 1800s, there were dozens of British, Portuguese and American merchants in the business of exporting these great fortified wines, now, after decades of decline of the Madeira trade and consolidation, there are only eight still registered on the island as wine exporters, and really only five producers/exporters of significant size. Those are Vinhos [Barbeito](#), [Henriques & Henriques](#), [Justino's](#) Madeira Wines, the Madeira Wine Company, and [Pereira D'Oliveira](#). (The other three still registered as exporters that did not participate in this event are

The availability of old stocks, winemaking styles and quality levels vary tremendously amongst this quintet of survivors, but it's a very small island, so they try to work together to promote their island's precious gifts whenever they can. Hence a remarkable event like this, with representatives from all five producers on hand throughout the day, working together on an explanatory seminar and pouring their wares alongside each other in the grand tasting that ended the day. I should note, as described in some of my posts on last year's trip to Madeira, that there are still some very small independent producers on the island making spectacular vintage Madeiras, typically just for family, friends and neighbors, often from their own small plots of vines. One can only taste, and perhaps buy, those wines on the island, though. For wine exported off the island, one must look to the major producers represented here. Before my tasting notes and comments on the particular wines presented at this tasting, here is some background on each of the five producer/exporters represented at this event.



Pereira D'Oliveira

My favorite of the island's remaining producers, the one with the greatest stocks of fabulous old wines still in cask—that are just bottled in lots as needed, full of the added complexity and richness one gets from many decades of cask aging and slow evaporation—is [Pereira D'Oliveira](#). Their wines are sold under the trade name D'Oliveiras. These are the ultimate vintage Madeiras still being produced, and they're available in the U.S. at prices virtually the same as at the winery in Funchal itself, from the Rare Wine Co. RWC's [Mannie Berk](#), who just published a long-anticipated updated edition of Noel Cossart's classic and formerly out-of-print tome on Madeira wines, was on hand representing [Pereira D'Oliveira](#). I had the good fortune last year of spending a morning at [Pereira D'Oliveira](#) with Roy Hersh, sampling through most of their available vintage Madeiras with co-owner, winemaker Luis D'Oliveira. It was one of the single greatest vinous experiences of my life. You can find my post on that tasting [here](#). These are the real deal—truly outstanding vintage Madeiras—with the greatest complexity and most striking, vibrant acidity of any Madeiras still being produced.

wine that [Pereira D'Oliveira](#) enjoys (especially after losing much of what they did have in the costly and deadly flood of February 2010), is Vinhos [Barbeito](#), led by the man I consider Madeira's greatest living winemaker, Ricardo de Freitas. Ricardo is the grandson of [Barbeito's](#) founder, Mario [Barbeito](#), who launched his business relatively late compared to the other surviving producers—in 1946. Vinhos [Barbeito](#) obtained a large infusion of capital by selling half of the company shares in 1991 to a major Japanese wine distributor, Kinoshita Shoji, that takes the bulk of export production for distribution in Japan. This enabled the construction of a state-of-the-art production facility in Camara de Lobos that was completed in 2008. The [Barbeito](#) wines are also distributed in the U.S. by the Rare Wine Co., which partners with [Barbeito](#) to produce a lineup of affordable Madeiras that Ricardo creates by blending old stocks and younger wines in the style of traditional, vintage Madeiras. These are sold under the name Rare Wine Co. Madeira Historic Series. Ricardo was on hand for this day, and I also had the great pleasure of dining with him that evening at the RWC Old [Rioja](#) dinner that Mannie hosted at Contigo. Here's my [prior report](#) on Ricardo and his grandfather on the occasion of a dinner held on the 25th anniversary of his grandfather's death. And here's my [post](#) on a highly educational tasting at Vinhos [Barbeito](#) that Ricardo designed for Roy's group last year.

Justino's

Next in terms of quality from the wines we tasted at this event is Justino's Madeira Wines, S.A., formerly Vinhos Justinho Henriques Filhos, which uses the trade name Justino's. This producer was established in 1870, but was mainly a family enterprise until 1991 when Sigfredo da Costa Campos bought the company and its large stocks of older wines. In 1993, Campos sold a major est in the company to leading French wine and spirit distributor La Martiniquaise. France has been a big market for non-vintage, inexpensive Madeiras, especially for cooking. The new owners proceeded to build a new, modern winery. Prior to his death in 2008, Campos claimed that no's was producing and exporting about half the wine on the island. The winemaker is Juan eira. Their agent is Bartholomew Broadbent's Broadbent Selections, with whom they partner to produce a line of young Madeiras under the Broadbent label. Their U.S. importer is HGC Imports Inc. Broadbent's Rebecca "Boo" Mahmoud—whom I got to know a little better this past summer when she hung out with Bartholomew and me for the taping of IntoWineTV's panel discussion segments that Bartholomew and I participated in—poured samples for Justino's.

Madeira Wine Co.

Many of the great old names of the Madeira trade have over the past century been amalgamated under the umbrella of the Madeira Wine Company, which was first established in 1913 as Madeira Wine Association Limitada. The name was changed to Madeira Wine Company Limitada in 1981. It is currently owned and managed by the [Blandy](#) family, which has been in the Madeira trade for seven generations. [Blandy's](#) and Leacock joined with a Portuguese firm, Abudarham, in 1925, and John Ernest [Blandy](#) became the company's first chairman. [Cossart Gordon & Co. Ltd.](#), which had first been established on the island in 1746, joined the company in 1953. In 1984, when [Noel Cossart's](#) *Madeira, The Island Vineyard* was published, Cossart estimated that MWC shipped about half of the island's exports. The great old brand names, representing some outstanding producers of [vintage Madeira](#) from the 1800s that are still used by MWC, include [Blandy's](#), [Cossart Gordon](#), Leacock's and Miles. There's no connection, however, between those responsible for the legendary vintage wines bottled under those names in the past and the Madeira "conglomerate" that produces wine under those labels today. I tend to find the current MWC bottlings, typically under the [Blandy's](#) and [Cossart Gordon](#) labels, to be rather sweet compared to the other major producers, presumably because they are mainly aimed at the British market, which is known for favoring sweeter fortified wines. The current winemaker, Francisco Albuquerque, is pictured above on the left, leading our morning seminar.

Henriques & Henriques

The final producer represented at this tasting was [Henriques & Henriques](#). This firm was founded

Joaquim, had no familial heirs when he died in 1968 so he passed the company on to three friends and partners: Peter Cossart, Alberto Nascimento Jardim and Carlos Nunes Pereira (notice how the same family names keep showing up throughout the Madeira trade?). In 1992, the company, which owns the largest single vineyard on the island, started an expansion program, initiating construction of a new headquarters at Camara de Lobos and a new vinification center at Quinta Grande. Their U.S. agent is Europvin USA's Drake McCarthy. As further described in my tasting notes below, I was quite put off by some of the latest releases from this company, as they didn't taste much like Madeira to me. Former winemaker Luis Pereira made some elegant wines, and John Cossart, the second generation of Cossarts to run the company, was a very effective leader until his death in 2008. The current CEO and winemaker, Dr. Humberto Jardim, seems to be experimenting a lot with new oak, which is highly nontraditional. I don't think the noticeable oak treatments serve these wines well at all.

Sweetness Levels and Non-Vintage Categories

Before we move on to my tasting notes on each of the wines below, it might be helpful to review the various types of Madeiras, including the categories indicating how dry or sweet a particular wine will be. Traditionally there were four primary high acid white grapes from which Madeiras were made. In progressive order of sweetness, from very dry to usually quite sweet, those four grape varieties were [Sercial](#), [Verdelho](#), Bual and Malvasia (also known as "[Malmsey](#)"). Although those four varieties became nearly extinct on the island as a result of phylloxera in the late 1800s, when vineyards were replanted with the easier to grow and higher yielding red grape Tinta Negra Mole, along with American hybrids, the names of those "noble" white grape varieties were still used to designate the style of the wines subsequently made primarily from Tinta Negra Mole. In 1993, however, wines made from Tinta Negra Mole can only use generic terms for sweetness levels, and the names of the noble white grapes, enough of which have now been planted to make up about 10% of the island's wine grapes, can only be used on a wine if at least 50% of it comes from those grapes. For wines made up largely of Tinta Negra Mole, the terms designating sweetness levels range from "seco" or dry (0 to 45 grams per liter residual sugar), to meio seco (medium dry, from 45 to 65 grams RS), to meio doce (medium sweet, 70 to 95 grams RS), to doce (sweet, 110 or more grams RS). Colheitas come from a particular harvest, and must spend a minimum of 5 years in oak. Other categories of blended wines—wines from more than one vintage—include Finest, or three-year-old Madeira, which will consist primarily of Tinta Negra Mole, possibly with some Moscatel. This is the lowest level of Madeira, lacking the aging needed to make for anything more than a cooking wine. The next category is Reserve or five-year-old Madeira. If any of the noble, traditional varieties are used, they must be aged for a minimum of five years. Then there is Special Reserve or 10-year-old Madeira, which is the minimum amount of time required for these wines to start to get interesting. This is followed by Extra Reserve or 15-year-old Madeira. Another blended type is known as Rainwater, which is typically a softer, paler version of a medium dry Madeira.

[Barbeito](#) (and Rare Wine Co. bottlings)



Ricardo de Freitas

was an impressive lineup from the man I consider Madeira's greatest living winemaker. That is, his wines are so good is all the more impressive because he gets so much out of relatively young vines. The oldest, the 1978 [Boal](#), was the best of the lot, truly complex and intriguing, but also remarkably well balanced and silky textured. My next favorite in this group was the 20 Years Old Special Reserve [Malvasia](#), with its combination of orange marmalade and light smokiness. Of the Rare Wine Co. Historic Series bottlings, I most enjoyed both the Savannah [Verdelho](#) and New York [Malmsey](#). Over dinner, Ricardo told me that he has a grower whose young Bastardo vines are now in their fifth year and producing well. Bastardo was the only black grape variety used to make vintage Madeiras prior to phylloxera, and I've had a few very rare and memorable bottlings of that pre-phylloxera Bastardo. Ricardo said he's learning from these young vines and looking forward to making wine from them.

- **1978 [Barbeito](#) Madeira Boal** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange amber color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; appealing, light coffee, almond, reminiscent of Moroccan bastilla on the nose with a hint of passion fruit; tight, silky textured, tasty, balanced, rounded, tart orange, tart passion fruit palate with a vague sense of light salt; long finish 92+ points (30 grams per liter of dry extract; bottled in early 2011 from demijohns where it was aged since 2008) (92 pts.)
- **NY [Barbeito](#) Madeira VB Reserva Lote 2 Casks 12D & 46A** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark apricot gold color; salt, tart baked lemon, tart baked citrus, smoke nose; soft, creamy textured, tart lemon, baked lemon, tart apricot palate with medium acidity; long finish 90+ points (90 pts.)
- **1996 [Barbeito](#) Madeira Boal Colheita Cask 307 A+E** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; lifted, light coffee, toffee nose; rich but very poised, coffee, toffee, tart date palate; medium-plus finish 90+ points (90 pts.)
- **NY [Barbeito](#) Madeira [Malvasia](#) 20 Years Old Special Reserve (Lote 10292)** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark orange color with pale yellow meniscus; orange marmalade, lightly smoky nose; rich, medium bodied, orange marmalade, tart orange palate with medium acidity; long finish (92 pts.)

Medium brown amber color with ruby lights and pale yellow meniscus; sweet, nutty, fruitcake, baked fig, maple syrup nose; tasty, silky textured, poised, coffee, dried fig, almond, light salt palate with medium acidity; long finish (made with old stocks of Tinta Negra aged over 50 years) (91 pts.)

- **NV [Rare Wine Co. \(Vinhos Barbeito\)](#) Madeira Savannah [Verdelho](#) Special Reserve** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium brown color with ruby lights and light yellow meniscus; peanut, praline, lightly salty nose; tasty, silky textured, tart praline, peanut, pear, baked apple palate; long finish 91+ points (more complex and tasty than last year's version) (91 pts.)
- **NV [Rare Wine Co. \(Vinhos Barbeito\)](#) Madeira [Malmsey](#) Historic Series New York [Malmsey](#) Special Reserve** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium brown color with ruby lights and light green meniscus; rich, dates, fresh fig, marmalade nose; rich, silky textured, tart date, coffee, lemon marmalade palate; with good acidity; medium-plus finish 91+ points (91 pts.)

Henriques & Henriques



Dr. Humberto Jardim, CEO and winemaker for Henriques & Henriques



As mentioned above, I have a problem with the prominent new oak flavors on the latest Madeiras from Henriques & Henriques. The oldest wines in this tasting, the [Terrantez](#) 20 Years Old and Bual 15 Years Old, which were presumably made by Humberto Jardim's predecessor Luis Pereira, were the best of this lineup. The [Sercial](#) 10 Years Old was really showing its American oak, as was the 1997 Single Harvest Tinta Negra Mole, and the Rainwater was downright weird, one of the most disappointing Madeiras I've ever tasted. Enough with the new oak already! That's not what made these very traditional wines so great.

- **1997 [Henriques & Henriques](#) Madeira Tinta Negra Mole Single Harvest Fine Rich Madeira** – Portugal, Madeira
From 500 ml – medium brown color with yellow meniscus; roasted almond, focused, VA, burnt almond, woody, dried kelp nose; creamy textured, burnt almond, lightly smoky, youthful palate; medium-plus finish (aged in American whisky oak casks, and six mos. in small casks; 115 grams residual sugar; would pair well with creme brulee) (88 pts.)
- **NV [Henriques & Henriques](#) Madeira [Verdelho](#) 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Light medium amber color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; nice, tart baked lemon, lightly smoky, light coffee nose; light, nutty tea, light coffee palate with a touch of honey and good acidity; medium-plus finish (aged in American oak) – (89 pts.)
- **NV [Henriques & Henriques](#) Madeira [Rainwater](#)** – Portugal, Madeira
Light medium orange gold color; intense, fig cake, fruit cake, chocolate nose; odd, creamy textured, mocha, walnut palate; medium-plus finish (83 pts.)
- **NV [Henriques & Henriques](#) Madeira [Sercial](#) 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark orange gold color; odd, American oak, roast coffee nose; creamy textured, hazelnut, tart roast coffee palate; medium-plus finish (86 pts.)
- **NV [Henriques & Henriques](#) Madeira [Bual](#) 15 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Dark red orange color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; fig cake, dried fruit cake, baked lemon nose; appealing, silky textured, hazelnut, tart dried fig palate with a sense of smoke; long finish (90 pts.)
- **NV [Henriques & Henriques](#) Madeira [Terrantez](#) 20 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark orange color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; appealing, tart date, baked orange, light curry nose; appealing, silky textured, tart baked orange, hoisin sauce, walnut palate with good acidity; long finish 90+ points (90 pts.)

Justino's (and Broadbent bottlings)



Broadbent's Rebecca "Boo" Mahmoud

This generally good lineup, my favorites were the 1996 Justino Henriques Broadbent Colheita, 1999 Justino Henriques Tinta Negra Mole Colheita and the Broadbent Malmsey 10 Years Old. The latter is actually a terrific value, available at a number of retailers in California for \$35 to \$43.

Feedback

- **1999 Justino Henriques Madeira Tinta Negra Mole Colheita Fine Rich** – Portugal, Madeira
Dark amber brown color with yellow meniscus; rich, roasted hazelnut, coffee, VA, black tea nose; soft textured, silky, nutty, rich coffee, hazelnut, toffee palate with near medium acidity; long finish (91 pts.)
- **NV Justino Henriques Madeira Malvazia 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium brown amber color with ruby lights and yellow meniscus; appealing, light caramel, tangerine cream, honey nose; sweet, honeyed, light caramel, tangerine cream palate; medium-plus finish 88+ points (good as a light version of Madeira; 120 grams residual sugar) (88 pts.)
- **NV Broadbent Madeira Rainwater Medium Dry** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium red orange color with pale meniscus; pancake syrup, light caramel nose; simple, light caramel, light toffee palate with low acidity; medium-plus finish 85+ points (85 pts.)
- **NV Justino Henriques Madeira Full Rich** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark red orange color with pale meniscus; apricot, baked apricot, marmalade nose; tasty, simple, rich marmalade, smoky apricot palate; long finish 87+ points (87 pts.)
- **NV Broadbent Madeira Reserve Fine Dry 5 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Dark red orange color with medium yellow meniscus; tart roast coffee, chicory, smoky nose; simple, tart coffee, smoky palate; long finish (89 pts.)
- **NV Justino Henriques Madeira Reserve Fine Dry 5 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange color with 1 millimeter meniscus; lovely, tart baked apricot nose; silky textured, tart baked apricot, smoky, honey palate with some acidity; long finish 88+ points (88 pts.)
- **NV Justino Henriques Madeira Old Reserve Fine Rich 10 Year Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark red orange color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; smoky, lightly briny, tart coffee nose; tasty, tart coffee, briny, hazelnut palate; long finish 90+ points (90 pts.)
- **NV Justino Henriques Madeira Sercial 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange color with 2 millimeter clear meniscus; intriguing baked pear, salt brine nose; tasty, brine, baked pear, iodine palate with character and near medium acidity; long finish (89 pts.)
- **NV Justino Henriques Madeira Boal 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark orange red color with pale yellow meniscus; appealing, baked apricot, salt nose; tasty, silky textured, tart baked apricot, salt, hazelnut palate; long finish (90 pts.)
- **NV Broadbent Madeira Malmsey 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium red orange color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; appealing, date, tart apricot nose; appealing, silky textured, juicy, tart apricot, date palate with balance; long finish (91 pts.)
- **1996 Justino Henriques Madeira Broadbent Colheita** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange amber color with ruby lights and yellow meniscus; appealing, tart poached pear, baked apricot, honeyed, light date nose; tasty, silky textured, juicy, tart baked apricot, tart orange, mineral palate with medium acidity; long finish (92 pts.)

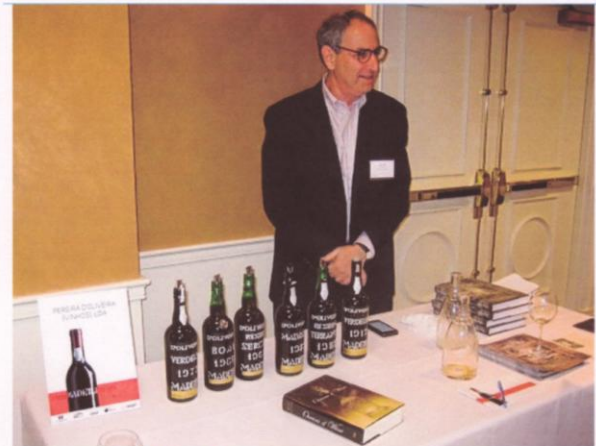
Madeira Wine Co. (includes Blandy and Cossart Gordon labels)



I was rather disappointed with this lineup from Madeira Wine Co. Even their oldest offering, the vintage 1976 Terrantez, from a very rare traditional grape variety that's been even rarer post-phyllloxera, showed little of the exotic and complex flavors I've grown to expect from the several examples of Terrantez I've been lucky enough to taste. The best of this lineup, and a comparatively good value, is the 1994 Blandy Malmsey Colheita. I found many of the blends to be simple and sweet compared to the equivalent Justino's bottlings. The Alvada is a 50-50 blend of Bual and Malvasia that Madeira Wine Co. pioneered. I have yet to see the point of this non-traditional blend.

- light tart orange nose; rich, silky textured, complex, smoky, Brazil nut, tart coffee, very nutty palate with near medium acidity; long finish 91+ points (a good value at \$40 to \$50) (91 pts.)
- **NV Blandy Madeira Verdelho 5 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange amber color with yellow lights and 1 millimeter clear meniscus; intriguing, almond, light saltwater taffy, sesame seed nose; smoky, light saltwater taffy, roasted sesame seed palate; medium-plus finish (aged in seasoned American oak casks; a blend of wines from 4 to 8 years old) (88 pts.)
- **NV Cossart Gordon & Co. Madeira Bual 10 year Medium Rich** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; light coffee, dried fig nose; tasty, simple, dried fig, coffee palate; long finish 88+ points (88 pts.)
- **NV Blandy Madeira Medium Dry Rainwater** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange color with 2 millimeter clear meniscus; dried fig, coffee nose; soft, medium bodied, roast coffee, dried fig, salt palate; medium-plus finish 85+ points (85 pts.)
- **NV Cossart Gordon & Co. Madeira Bual 5 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium orange red color with pale meniscus; intense, date, date cake nose; date cake, honeyed, coffee palate with lowish acidity; long finish (85 pts.)
- **NV Blandy Madeira Alvada 5 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium brown color with pale meniscus; sweet coffee, fig cake nose; smoky, sweet roasted coffee, fig cake palate with near medium acidity; medium-plus finish (86 pts.)
- **NV Blandy Madeira Malmsey 5 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium brown color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; fig pudding, fruit cake, sweet coffee nose; sweet, fig, fig pudding palate with low acidity; medium-plus finish (84 pts.)
- **NV Blandy Madeira Malmsey 10 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark brown color with light yellow meniscus; fig, baked fig, sweet coffee nose; sweet coffee, dried fig, Fig Newton filling palate; medium-plus finish 87+ points (87 pts.)
- **NV Blandy Madeira Sercial 15 Years Old** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark golden color with 1 millimeter clear meniscus; light cashew, light baked lemon nose; sweet baked lemon, cashew palate; medium-plus finish (86 pts.)
- **1976 Blandy Madeira Terrantez** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark red orange color with light yellow meniscus; appealing, lifted, roasted coffee, date cake nose; silky textured, rich, appealing, date cake, mocha, tart fig palate; long finish 90+ points (90 pts.)

Pereira D'Oliveira



Wine Co.'s Mannie Berk

was a lineup of the youngest vintage Madeiras available from my favorite current Madeira user. Even though these wines were relatively young by D'Oliveiras standards, they were y the stars of the tasting. The oldest, the 1912 Verdelho, which was poured during the evening seminar, is an unusually intense and powerful wine, totally belying its 99 years of age. It's hardly a typical vintage Madeira, with its unusual nose reminiscent of dried kelp, curry powder and Brazil nuts, but its unique character and wallop of intensity definitely got my attention and haunted me for the rest of the day. The 1989 Malvazia is one of the most complete, delicious and rounded young vintage Madeiras I've ever tasted. At only 22 years old, it's a mere toddler amongst vintage Madeiras, but it's also a terrific value for a vintage Madeira at less than \$100. The 1983 Boal and 1973 Verdelho were also, for me, some of the best wines of the day.

- **1912 D'Oliveiras Madeira Verdelho** – Portugal, Madeira
Dark brown color with yellow meniscus; unusual, deep, salty, fresh baked pretzel, dried kelp, light iodine, Brazil nut, curry powder nose; tasty, deep, intense, complex, powerful salty, iodine, dried kelp, tart baked orange palate, reminiscent of an aged Marco De Bartoli Marsala; very long finish (94 pts.)
- **1983 D'Oliveiras Madeira Boal** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark brown color with ruby lights and yellow meniscus; intense, fragrant, dried fig, light curry, tea, salty nose; tasty, rich, concentrated, salty, tart lemon coffee, saltwater taffy, light curry palate with medium acidity; very long finish 92+ points (92 pts.)
- **1968 D'Oliveiras Madeira Boal** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium dark red orange color with ruby lights and pale yellow meniscus; hazelnut, date cake, ginger cake nose; tasty, silky textured, rich, tart date cake, lemon coffee palate with near medium acidity; long finish (92 pts.)
- **1989 D'Oliveiras Madeira Malvazia** – Portugal, Madeira
Medium red orange color with ruby lights and 1 millimeter clear meniscus; tart date, date cake, roasted coffee, almond, light caramel, salt nose; rich, glorious, soaring, tart date, light coffee, lemon, honeyed, dried apricot palate with wonderful acidity; long finish (a remarkably complete, complex and delicious vintage Madeira at this relatively youthful