

## 29 Nov Madeira – Why You Should Toast the Holidays With A Glass of This Historical Cheer!

Entertaining

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### Madeira was the favored drink of our founding fathers.

by Warren Bobrow

They brought this historic fortified wine over from England with them by ship to toast the holiday season. Madeira is also nearly indestructible. I've had a bottle for about four years now. You only take a small sip of it, and then you can re-cork it. This is liquid history in a

glass.



Our founding fathers enjoyed different styles of Madeira in each pre-colonial city. The Rare Wine Company worked with Vinhos Barbeito on the island of Madeira to create uniquely historic flavor profiles for the major seaports from New Orleans to Boston. I have in my hand a bottle of the Charleston, SC version.

Actually what I have is more than that. When removing the cork, (it had dried out a bit) some of the contents spilled out- all over my hands, the table and my

keyboard. Now the room smells like a trip to another century.

Madeira hails from the island of Madeira. This island historically belonged to Portugal. The style of the wines is very port-like, yet distinctive to the flavor of the place. The Charleston, SC version is robust and nutty. It has a nose like freshly cooked boiled peanuts and a salinity that reminds me of an afternoon I once spent eating freshly roasted oysters on Bowen's Island. The Charleston example is aromatic, crisp and quite dry on the finish. I

can imagine little glasses being sipped after dinner with Benne wafers as finger foods. My desire to expand the study of the culinary arts brought me to Charleston back in the late 1980's and I enjoyed many a bowl of She Crab Soup. A small glass of this Madeira could easily replace the addition of Sherry wine.

Simple flavors- yet layered with centuries of technique.

It's ironic that I hold this historic bottle of Madeira in my hand during the holiday season.

This is the time that I reflect on the hard work it must have taken to build our country. How drinks such as Madeira followed historical events such as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The English, conquerors of the sea and the Portuguese fishermen to the world met on centuries ago and developed wines that slaked the thirst of world travelers. Wine would spoil on a long sea journey and Port would sour. The addition of brandy to the production of Madeira made for a hearty drink with much fortitude.

You can literally put the bottle into a window- in the sun for several weeks without damaging it. This is powerful stuff indeed!



Madeira, unlike other wines, ages naturally in the sun

#### ***Tasting Notes:***

Sherry and more familiar Port notes give way to steaming boiled peanuts (in salt water) in the mid palate. Essences of quince, raisins and roasted apples come into view. The alcohol is quite brooding in the background. (19% by volume) Making a lasting appearance on your palate is the taste of saddle leather, cut French herbs and charred citrus fruits. A

small glass is very sophisticated as a drink and you could show your good taste by awarding a kind friend, a bottle of their own. They will never forget your generosity. The Rare Wine Company: Historic Series- Madeira, Charleston-Sercial-Special Reserve Wine Produced and Bottled by Vinhos Barbeito (Madeira) Lda., Funchal Produce of the Island of Madeira, Portugal

**<http://www.rarewineco.com/>**

**Warren Bobrow** is the Food and Drink Editor of the 501c3 non profit **Wild Table** on Wild River Review located in Princeton, New Jersey.

He is the cocktail blogger for Williams-Sonoma.

He is a Ministry of Rum judge and a Barbados Rum Fest judge. Warren is also a trained cook who started in his climb to a cook as a dish dog/pot scrubber.