



## Vó Vera – A Tribute to Granny

02/05/2016

*During easter, at my most recent visit to Vinhos Barbeito, Ricardo Diogo presented a wine to me with the words; you can't write about this. Not yet. Fine, easy to respect that, I thought. Then he poured the wine. It was amazing; it is amazing. And all of a sudden it wasn't as easy to hold back my words on the wine. For a month! You see, this is a new take on Malvasia and a wine which pretty much sums up what Ricardo is all about; curiosity and a constant search for different expressions of Madeira. And I'm just a sucker for these ethereal Malvasia wines of his...*

I can write about it now as the wine has been released. Vó Vera, meaning Granny Vera, is a 30 Years Old Malvasia and totally different in style to for example Vinhos Barbeito's 40 Years Old Mãe Manuela Malvasia. Where the latter, while a profound wine, is easier to immediately understand, the Vó Vera is like sipping a Turner painting. Nourishing the soul, caressing the senses. You just feel the inner harmony from the very first sniff.

I have known Ricardo and followed his wines for quite some years by now. I remember his 30 Years Old Malvasia released a decade ago, the Lote Especial. It was insane and I made associations to the 1967 Château d'Yquem. In short, it was a totally new way of interpreting Madeira. Then he said he had to wait a decade before daring to release another 30 Years Old Malvasia as the Lote Especial was so good. How should he be able to come up with something as overwhelmingly impressive? 10 years later he presents this one to me, and I can't help but to think what he has accomplished in between. As a Madeira lover and consumer, it's an honor following Ricardo's never resting search for the different ways of expressing Madeira.



*This is most likely where you'll find Ricardo when visiting – tasting & blending.*

**Vó Vera** is a tribute to granny Vera. Ricardo has blended wines between 30 and 70 Years and the result is a Malvasia with a hard to believe-freshness, ethereal and almost weightless impression. It fills your senses and dances on the palate. A quite high volatile acidity in the older wine which Ricardo has added to the blend explains the freshness, but also the sugar level which is less than 100 grams, plays an important role for how this wine is perceived. And yes, it's a pretty low residual sugar level for Malvasia. The bouquet shows seductive smoky and vanilla scented oak, quite unusual for Barbeito. But never intrusive or dominant, just staying in the background. And then the oriental spices; curry, clove, nutmeg. The walnuts are freshly picked, the orange peel marmalade so gentle and the bouquet comes with that, for me, lovely old stone cellar scent. I'd like to say you can't get much more complexity but then I'd be lying. However, if you buy this one, keep the bottle for a year or so before you pop it, then it will define the very essence of complexity and finesse. On the palate, it's all about a caressing impression. If it weren't for some Malvasia markers, I'd be guessing on the wrong grape here having the lower sugar level in mind. Weightless mouth feel yet there is this classy acidity providing amazing structure to the wine. It's all about finesse although it comes with intensity. Spicy, fresh finale with fine oak and gently flowery notes.

**The Mad about Madeira rating:** 97 points.

This is how you celebrate a company's 70 years birthday. Look out for more new stuff from Vinhos Barbeito to highlight 1946-2016 – for example the newly released super fresh VB Lote 4.

**Find the Vó Vera?** Check with **Vinhos Barbeito's sales department** as there are only 612 bottles produced.