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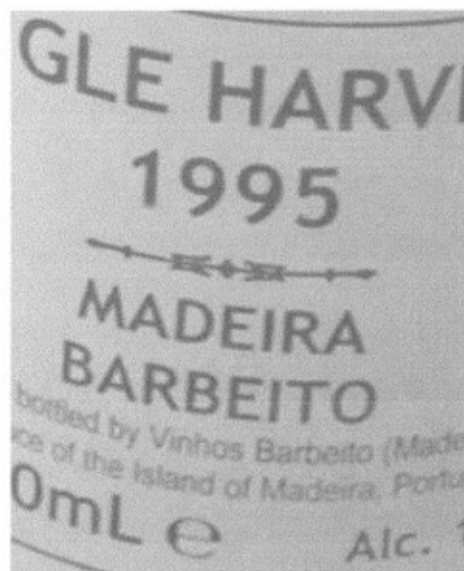
Jamie's blog

## Spotlight on Madeira Barbeito

Barbeito is a family-owned company formed in 1946, and their philosophy is to offer 100% *canteiro* wines, with no added caramel or deacidification. Old French oak is used. This is authentic Madeira. One of the innovations that Barbeito has pioneered is bottling single harvest (*colheita*) wines in 50 cl bottles. The range was presented by Ricardo De Freitas, managing director and grandson of the founder, both formally and then later over dinner at Moro in Clerkenwell.

I asked Ricardo about the wines from before 1946, which was when the company was formed. It turns out that these were bought from families on the island with older stocks. I'm deeply impressed by the Barbeito wines, and the notes speak for themselves.

UK agents are Raymond Reynolds



### Barbeito Single Harvest 1995

I've had this a number of times now. It's made from unfashionable Tinta Negra Mole, a cross between Grenache and Pinot Noir that's been grown on the island since the 19th century. Made in a medium-dry style, it has a lovely complex, spicy nose with a touch of marmalade and raisins. The palate has some sweetness and lovely vivid acidity, with a nice orange peel bitterness. Lots of complexity. Very good/excellent 92/100 (Around £14, various outlets including Berry Bros)

### Barbeito Boal Reserve Veremar

Complex nose with raisiny, caramel notes and an acid lift. The palate shows a good concentration with a medium sweet character and high acidity giving freshness. Lovely. Very good+ (£8.99)

### Barbeito 10 year old Boal

Lovely smoky, spicy complexity to the nose with raisiny caramel notes. Really lovely spicy palate showing a lemony edge and good acidity. Some sweetness but overall brilliantly balanced with marmaladey complexity. Very good/excellent 93/100 (£20)

### Barbeito 20 year old blend Malvasia

They're the first company to try this: a blend of four different Malvasias, the oldest 30 years old. Intense, herby, spicy nose with freshness from the lifted lemony acid. Complex and beguiling on the palate: spicy, intense, rich and full. Complex and well balanced. Very good/excellent 94/100

### Barbeito Malvasia 1993 Colheita Single Cask

Just 549 50 cl bottles of this made. Lovely forward nose is warm, rounded and spicy with some caramel notes. Marmaladey and spicy. Explosive palate is spicy, rich and intense with high acidity and lots of complexity. Very good/excellent 94/100 (£17.95 for 50 cl)

### **Barbeito Verdelho 1980**

This comes from three 620 litre French oak casks whose contents were blended before bottling. The nose displays nice savoury, slightly herbal spicy complexity. The palate is savoury and rich with a spicy edge. Fine and elegant with high acidity, a waxy texture and a hint of sweetness. Very good/excellent 91/100

### **Barbeito Verdelho 1902**

Some 200 litres came from this cask, which was bottled directly from the cask itself. It sells for around 250 Euros ex cellar: this was the wine served at Ricardo's mother and father's wedding. Deep orange brown colour. Massively complex tarry, caramelly nose which is quite unusual, with woody, savoury notes and an acid lift. The palate is hugely complex, showing tarry, spicy, vanilla and raising notes together with lots of acidity and a massive length. Quite amazing, and presumably an immortal wine. Excellent 98/100

### **Barbeito Malvazia 1900**

Complex herby nose is herby, leathery and spicy with some sweet raisiny notes. There's lovely caramelly and raisiny complexity on the palate with huge acidity. Bracing and spicy with enormous length. Marmalade and citrus fruits on the finish. Excellent 95/100

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*see also: an earlier report on [Barbeito's wines](#); and a [more recent one](#) (May 2004)*

*wines tasted May 2003*

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