



Name of Wine: Soalheiro Alvarinho

Producer: Quinta de Soalheiro

Region: Vinho Verde sub-region of Monção and Melgaço

Vintage: 2010

Vine Ages: Average 35 years old

Grape Varieties: 100% Alvarinho. The superstar white grape of Vinho Verde, known as Albariño across the border in Spain makes rich, full-bodied and fragrant whites. In Portugal they tend to have a more mineral based structure.

Grape Source:

Vineyards: 10+ hectares of organic dry farmed vineyards on the south bank of the Minho river near the town of Melgaço in a sun-drenched pocket they called “the suntrap.” **Soil:** Granite.

Vinification:

Harvest/Maceration/Fermentation: Hand harvested and fermented with native yeast in stainless steel tanks. No oak aging. No malolactic fermentation.

Alcohol Volume: 13%

Tasting Notes:

“Luis and Maria João Cerdeira farm their vines organically, blending their own fruit with grapes from selected growers near their estate in Alvaredo (Melgaço). They consistently produce a concentrated wine – in 2010, the warm, dry season ripened the fruit early, with generous yields. The wine is luscious, its intensity is coasting from scents of hay and lime to pear and pastry. Tight, mouthwatering acidity highlights the taste of the earth, a wine caught between the mountains and the sea. Delicious if you decant it now with roast sturgeon or any other meaty fish, this will also benefit from several years in bottle.”

93 Points – Best Vinho Verde, Wine & Spirits Magazine, Winter 2011

History:

In 1974 João António Cerdeira, supported by his father Antonio Esteves Ferreira, planted 4 hectares of Alvarinho just outside of Portugal’s most northerly town of Melgaço. In 1982 they produced the first Alvarinho wine in Melgaço – Soalheiro. Now João’s, son and daughter, Luis (a trained winemaker) and Maria, run the vineyards. João started off as a tax inspector and, after doing military service in Mozambique, returned home to his father’s small Alvarinho vineyards. After the 1974 April Revolution, João decided to expand the family vineyards by illegally planting 4 additional hectares of Alvarinho to make the biggest single vineyard in the region (these plantings were later legalized). Joao spent his early wine career studying in Burgundy and is widely regarded throughout Portugal as one of the leading producers of Alvarinho in Portugal. Soalheiro is widely regarded as one of the the top Alvarinhos coming out of Portugal today.

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