

Quinta do Monte Xisto 2017 Douro by Julia Harding

This is João Nicolau de Almeida's project in the Douro Superior. An estate of 40 ha, 10ha planted in 2005, in Vila Nova de Foz Côa on the left bank of the Douro River. Organic farming using principles of biodynamic agriculture. The estate is planted with the red varieties Touriga Nacional, Touriga Francesa, Tinto Cão, Tinta da Barca, Tinta Francisca, Sousão and Roriz. Rabigato is the one white variety. This wine is Touriga Francesa (50%), Touriga Nacional (45%) and Sousão (5%). Planted on schist at 200–300 m. Harvested by hand, vinified in lagares by foot treading. The fermentation took place over six days at the lagar with indigenous yeasts. This was followed by eighteen months of ageing in 600-litre barrels.

The colour of darkest black cherry, black at the core and purple at the rim. Beautifully fragrant, immediately open and aromatic with an inviting combination of sweet dark-red and black fruit, blueberry, rock dust and a floral quality. On the palate, there's a dark and dusty "nesse that complements the intense purity of the fruit. There's plenty of tannin but somehow the wine slides across the palate in a gentle, dry grip. Mouthwatering and scented to the long finish. There seems to be a little bit of heat on the finish but I don't think I would notice this if the wine were a degree or two cooler.

Producer	João Nicolau de Almeida & Filhos
Appellation	Douro
Region	Douro
Country	Portugal
Colour	Red
Score	17
When to drink	2020-2028
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Date tasted	8 Aug 2019
Reviewer	Julia Harding MW