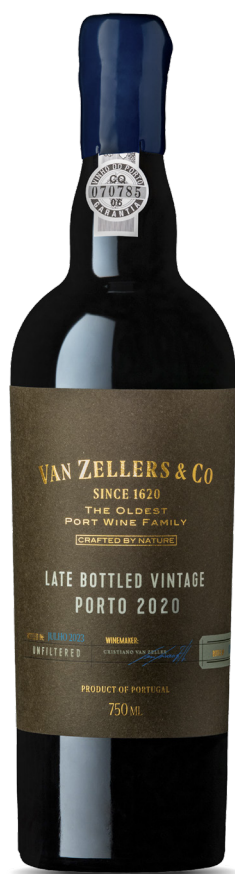


When we think of nature, we think of all the ways it dazzles our senses. Nature is alive, moving and reproductive. Nature changes and nature has its own ways. Our nature is to create wines that show the life and soul of a place and of a wine. Something ever evolving, that we do not control and don't intend to. We intend to see it live in a bottle. These wines will not only show the unique characteristics of a place, but they will live in bottle, changing throughout time with a life of its own. The idea to bottle what nature has created is what makes winemaking so exciting.



LATE BOTTLED VINTAGE PORT 2020

CONDITIONS

The viticulture year of 2019/2020 was characterized by oscillations in temperature and in annual average rainfall. It can be generally called a hot and dry year. As rain did fall in Spring, there was greater pressure for mildew, in particular, which came earlier than usual. Oidium remained active until the early stages of maturation. This demanded constant care of the vineyard. Other potential infections had little to no effect in the areas where Van Zellers & Co vineyards are found.

A good accumulation of rainfall at the end of April (35% higher than average) meant that there was no lack of water in the soil for the normal development of the plant. July was the hottest in memory since 1931, and as Cristiano best describes 2020, is that it is the most similar to 1820.

Little rainfall in August helped to replenish some of the water level, however that did not prevent the harvest from being pushed back around 10 days. Unexpectedly during the last week of August and first two weeks of September there was a surprising de-hydration of the bunches, mainly Touriga Franca, which led to a 30% to 35% loss of production regarding 2019 and to high sugar levels, making it very important to pick early. One of the most difficult harvests in living and written memory due to the very high sugar concentrations and dryness of a lot of bunches, but with healthy musts and good phenolic compounds. This was The Harvest for the “magic” of the winemakers.

GRAPE VARIETIES

Crafted by Nature, the Van Zellers & Co LBV Port comes from very old vineyards, planted as a field blend. There are more than 25 different traditional Douro grape varieties. Predominantly Touriga Franca, Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz, Tinta Barroca, Rufete, Tinta Amarela, Tinta Francisca and Soiusão, among others.

VINIFICATION

All grapes were hand picked and carefully selected before being taken to the winery. The grapes were crushed by foot, before fermentation, together with 10% of the total grape brandy which is added to the final Port. This allowed us to macerate the grapes at cooler temperatures and for a longer period before fermentation. When the must was ready for the addition of the remaining grape brandy, the fortification was made in one single moment, adding all the brandy to the must and skins in the lagar. Some more treading ensured good homogenization of the whole wine and that the fermentation was stopped. The blend of must and brandy stayed in the lagar for two more days, with very slight treading twice a day (10 minutes each time). It was then racked to the storage vat together with all the press wine (we use traditional basket presses). The wines were aged in very ancient (more than 100 years old) wood Port casks and small stainless steel vats until the beginning of December 2024.

BOTTLING DATE

February 2025, 2582 X 75cl

TASTING NOTES

Bottled unfiltered in the traditional style, the 2020 Late Bottled Vintage Port from Van Zellers & Co shows the depth and richness that define our house style. Deep ruby in colour, it opens with a generous nose of wild blackberries in syrup, cassis, and hints of licorice, framed by warm spice notes of cracked black pepper and cardamom. On the palate, the wine reveals excellent structure and volume, with a velvety texture and a fine integration of brandy. Its natural freshness brings balance to the richness of fruit, and promises graceful evolution in bottle.

Serve slightly cool, at around 16°C.

Pair with strawberry cheesecake, Serra da Estrela DOP cheese, or rich chocolate truffles for a decadent finish.

WINEMAKERS

Cristiano van Zeller and Joana Pinhão

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Region: Douro

Soil: Schist

Alcohol: 20,2%

Baumé: 3,2

pH: 3,71

Volatile Acidity: 0,23 g/dm³

Total Acidity: 4,0 g/dm³

Total SO2: 14 g/dm³

Residual Sugar: 98 g/dm³