

VAN ZELLERS & Co
SINCE 1620
THE OLDEST
PORT WINE FAMILY

PROFILE



Cristiano van Zeller

The Boss

Cristiano is part of the Douro and the Douro defines his way of living and working.

Cristiano contributed and developed wine projects that are today a symbol of the new Douro. The Douro is a region that produces high quality DOC wines along with fabulous Port Wines resulting from the preservation of indigenous grape varieties and traditional vineyard plantings and vinification techniques alongside with other innovative ones.

Cristiano van Zeller is the 14th generation of a family continuously working in the Douro region since 1620, producing and selling Port and Douro Wines. While finishing his Porto University studies to become a civil engineer, he started his wine working life at the family company Quinta do Noval. He later became CEO and President of the company just before the harvest of 1982 and maintained the responsibility until the family decided to sell and sold the company to AXA in 1993. He also had responsibilities as a member of the board, later as Vice-President and in 1990/1991 as President of the Port Wine Shippers Association.

He left Quinta do Noval at the end of 1993 and started immediately, at the beginning of 1994, completely new wine projects in the Douro, first with Quinta do Crasto (1994-2000), then with Quinta do Vallado (1997-2007) and finally his own project, having bought with his wife Joana, in 1996, her family property Quinta Vale D. Maria. This was the time of the start of a small “revolution” in the Douro: the emergence of Douro still wines.

In 1997 he created, together with Javier Hidalgo, of Hidalgo La Gitana Sherry Co., Spain, the first single-vineyard sherry in history, the Pastrana Manzanilla Pasada and in 2007 he also

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created and is currently co-owner and shareholder of Hacienda Terra d'Uro, in Toro, Spain, producing Toro DO wines.

Cristiano is a founding member of the Confraria do Vinho do Porto (1982) and of the group Douro Boys, the most innovative and dynamic group of producers in Portugal, based in the Douro (Van Zellers & Co., Niepoort, Quinta do Crasto, Quinta do Vallado and Quinta Vale Meão).

In 2007 he got back Van Zellers & Co., the original family company founded in 1780, which had been sold together with Quinta do Noval back in 1993, and re-built the company, from the ground, since then.

In 2017 Quinta Vale D. Maria merged with Aveleda, SA, owned by his cousins, the Guedes family. He then became a member of the board and a shareholder in the family group.

The 31st of December 2020 was Cristiano's last day as an executive working member of the family at Aveleda/Quinta Vale D. Maria. Since the 1st of January 2021 Cristiano is fully dedicated to his own old family company Van Zellers & Co., which is still owned by him, his wife and three children.

Cristiano is currently chairing the Federation of the Douro Farmers.