

VAN ZELLERS & Co

SINCE 1620

THE OLDEST
PORT WINE FAMILY

THE TEAM



Joana Pinhão – Winemaker

Joana was born in Alpiarça, close to the Tagus river. This is a region with a great wine tradition and her family owned vineyards and olive groves where she used to work harvesting grapes during her summer vacations

In 2006, after completing the Agricultural Engineering course at the Instituto Superior de Agronomia (ISA) in viticulture and enology, she did an internship at Casa Cadaval wine estate. In 2007, after a harvest internship joined the oenology team at Quinta Vale Dona Maria/Van Zellers & Co, where she was responsible for Port and DOC Douro wines at Quinta Vale D. Maria for 12 years, continuing to be responsible for Van Zellers & Co's oenology until today. In 2009 and 2010 Joana worked during the harvest in the Toro region in Spain, and in 2012 she went to South Africa to experience their viticultural reality.

In 2011, in partnership with Rui Lopes, a friend from her days at ISA, she made a dream come true by producing wines from old Douro vines under the Somnium brand.

Over time, and seeing the recognition that the Tagus region has gained in the world of wine the idea came up of moving forward with another personal project in the region where she grew up. In 2015 the vineyards that she and her family own in the Alpiarça region were reconverted and the first wine Casal das Aires was released in 2019.

In 2020 the Parapente project, a multi-region project came to light, one Vinho Verde Loureiro, two whites and one red from old vines from Valpaços (Trás-os-Montes). Besides this project Joana is also responsible for the winemaking in other projects in the Douro and Trás os Montes and Alentejo such as Quinta da Ferradosa, Quinta das Brolhas, Quinta da Barca, Quinta de Santa Júlia, Quinta Valle Madruga and Ermo Wines.

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Luis Cardoso de Menezes – sustainable viticulture

Luis has a degree in Agriculture and is responsible for the sustainable viticulture that we practice in our vineyards.

Since a very young age, Luis has been an enthusiast for all matters related to nature and agriculture. As his family has properties in the Minho region, his professional life started by being closer acquainted with livestock and agricultural produces of that region, such as corn and Vinho Verde grapes. He has also worked in aquaculture projects.

The vineyard turned out to be the culture that was always constant in his life and the one that always constituted his greatest Challenge. In 2000 he started to dedicate himself only to viticulture, first in his own vineyards, in Minho, then as a consultant in other wine regions, being the Douro his main focus.

Together with Cristiano van Zeller, first at Quinta Vale Dona Maria and then at Van Zellers & Co, he learned to recognize the importance of old vines, its great complexity and capacity to produce grapes that make wines of unique quality. and to treasure and preserve an already scarce heritage.

Luis now faces a great challenge which is to maintain and recover this heritage in terms of bad viticultural practices of the recent past and recover biodiversity as well as traditional viticultural techniques.

Divided between sea and land, he spends his free time between diving and spearfishing, wildlife observation, rough shooting or hiking in nature.

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Francisco Pinto- Head of Viticulture and Winery

Francisco leads the entire team and is responsible for the warehouse, winery and viticulture, based on the knowledge of Luis Cardoso de Menezes and Joana Pinhão. An early riser who starts his day at 6 am is an expert in all the winery machines. A detailed perfectionist, highly organized and extremely dedicated to everything he does. A great team player for everyone and Cristiano van Zeller's right-hand man.

In addition to his passion for wine, as he was born and raised in the Douro, he is also fascinated by cars and off-road sports. He is the second generation of his family to work at Van Zeller & Co, after his father, João, who was the first employee, in 1996, at Quinta Vale D. Maria. Married to Bia, always kind and ready to help, he has a 2-year-old daughter called Francisca.

Para mais informações, por favor contacte:

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Siga-nos: