

Van Zellers

From a 70-year-old vineyard, this Douro white marries schist-driven intensity with poise–barrel-fermented layers frame pineapple, lemon and apple, finishing vibrant, saline and deceptively long.

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Alcohol :12,50 %

Composition: 30% Viosinho

VZ Branco 2024

Douro, Portugal

Region and Vineyards

Douro is Portugal's most dramatic wine region, carved by the Douro River into **schist** slopes that store little water yet allow roots to pierce deep fissures for moisture. Shielded from the Atlantic by the Serra do Marão, it shows a warm, continental climate with marked sub-regional differences—cooler, wetter Baixo Corgo to arid Douro Superior—creating myriad mesoclimates across altitudes and aspects. White grapes are typically planted higher to preserve acidity and fragrance.

VZ Branco comes from a **70-year-old** vineyard on schist. Old vines in the Douro often comprise mixed plantings that deliver natural balance and complexity. Here, the blend features Viosinho, Rabigato, Gouveio, Arinto and Códega—classic Douro whites noted for citrus, floral tones and a mineral spine, with Rabigato contributing high acidity and lemon-orange blossom lift.

Winemaking

Grapes are **hand-picked** and sorted, then destemmed and gently pressed. Only the very first, highest-quality juice is taken to ferment in new and one-year French oak (225 and 500 L). This precision selection heightens purity and finesse.

Post-fermentation, the wine remains in the same barrels for **nine months** with bâtonnage, building mid-palate texture and lees-borne creaminess while retaining clarity of fruit. Bottled July 2024 (10,813 × 750 ml; 395 × 1.5 L). Tech profile: 12.5% vol; pH 3.27; TA 6.3 g/L; RS 1.0 g/L.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Pale straw with green glints; bright clarity.
- **Aroma:** Pineapple, crisp apple, lemon zest and orange blossom, with subtle oak cream and a whisper of wet stone.
- **Palate:** Fresh, vibrant attack; barrel-fermented density gives a layered, sleek mid-palate. Citrus-tropical fruit rides a mineral line; fine lees bring suppleness; finish long, saline and poised.

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Did you know?

The **first-run juice only** approach used here concentrates purity and aromatic detail before the nine-month lees regimen shapes texture—an increasingly favored path for premium Douro whites from old-vine fruit.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Bacalhau à Brás:** Salty cod, egg and onion are lifted by the wine's citrus drive; oak-polished texture embraces the dish's richness.
- **Butter-poached lobster:** Sweetness of lobster resonates with pineapple-citrus notes; bâtonnage creaminess mirrors butter while acidity refreshes.
- **Roast chicken with lemon and thyme:** Zesty aromatics echo the seasoning; mid-palate weight suits roasted skin and pan juices.
- **Aged São Jorge cheese:** The wine's cut and subtle cream thread balance nutty, buttery intensity.



Robert Parker (RP) : 91 Points (2022)

The 2022 VZ Branco comes from different older and newer vines. Grapes were fermented separately, all in barrel, and then blended. It's a serious and balanced white, with the most Arinto since 2006, which gives an austere twist to the palate. They now use some 500-liter barrels. It has a moderate 12% alcohol, a pH of 3.21 and 6.8 grams of acidity. 5,302 bottles and 401 magnums produced. It was bottled in July 2023.