



Antonio Madeira

A soulful expression of the Dão's ancient vineyards, Antonio Madeira Vinhas Velhas offers a captivating interplay of wild aromatics, tension, and finesse.

Dão

D.O.P. SUB-REGIÃO SERRA da ESTRELA

ANTONIO MADEIRA



Vinhas Velhas Red 2021

Dao, Portugal

Region and Vineyards

Antonio Madeira's Vinhas Velhas Red 2021 hails from the heart of the **Dão region**, one of Portugal's most historic and mountainous viticultural zones. Located within the subregion of **Serra da Estrela**, the vineyards lie at altitudes between 500 and 600 metres. This elevation, combined with the cool Atlantic breezes filtered through the mountains, fosters a **long growing season** that preserves acidity and enhances aromatic complexity.

The vines are **exceptionally old**, ranging from **50 to over 100 years**, and are trained on poor, sandy **granite soils**. Many are **field blends**, a living relic of Portugal's viticultural heritage, with over **20 native red varieties** interplanted. While **Baga, Jaen, and Tinta Amarela** dominate the cuvée, others like **Marufo, Tinta Pinheira, Bastardo, Alfrocheiro, Touriga Nacional, and Alicante Bouschet** contribute subtle inflections. Cultivated biodynamically and entirely by hand, these vines yield small quantities of intensely characterful fruit that form the foundation of the wine's unique identity.

Winemaking

Vinification adheres to **minimal intervention** principles and highlights Madeira's dedication to preserving the character of each vineyard. The grapes are **harvested manually** into small baskets, with an initial sort conducted in the vineyard. Following **gentle destemming and pressing**, the must undergoes a **cold maceration of 4-5 days** to enhance aromatic expression.

Fermentation begins naturally in small tanks or open plastic vats, with **indigenous yeasts** initiating the process. A single **daily punch-down** is performed by hand over the course of the **12-14 day fermentation**, ensuring gentle extraction. The wine is then transferred to **used French oak barrels** of 400-600 litres, where it rests for **two winters**—a practice that stabilizes the wine naturally without the need for fining or filtration. This restrained aging regimen contributes subtle texture and polish without imposing overt oak influence.

Alcohol :13,10 %

Composition: 100% Vinhas Velhas



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Pale to medium ruby, with slight translucency, reflecting its old-vine and high-altitude origins.
- **Aroma:** A heady, expressive bouquet of wild herbs, red cherry, cranberry, dried rose petals, forest floor, and crushed granite. Subtle notes of spice, pine resin, and flint accent the complexity.
- **Palate:** Light on its feet yet intensely flavoured, this is a wine of tension and precision. Red fruits mingle with earthy mineral undertones and floral nuances. The tannins are finely grained, the acidity vibrant, and the finish long, savoury, and slightly saline.

Did you know?

Antonio Madeira is not originally from Dão, but of Portuguese descent and born in France. After discovering his roots, he relocated to Portugal and began rescuing old, abandoned vineyards—many on the brink of extinction. His Vinhas Velhas cuvée is considered one of the most authentic representations of **pre-industrial Dão viticulture**, embodying a rare blend of cultural preservation and winemaking artistry.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Roast suckling pig:** The wine's freshness and fine tannins cut beautifully through the richness of the meat.
- **Grilled wild mushrooms with polenta:** The earthiness of the mushrooms echoes the wine's forest floor and mineral notes.
- **Herb-crusted lamb chops:** Complements the wine's herbal aromas and adds a savoury depth to its subtle red fruit.
- **Aged Serra da Estrela cheese:** A local pairing that highlights regional harmony between acidity, texture, and flavour.



Robert Parker (RP) : 93 Points (2021)

The old-vine red 2021 Vinhas Velhas Tinto comes from different plots of mixed varieties, 75% of them Baga, Jaen and Tinta Amarela and the rest some 20 old varieties, some almost lost, Marufo, Tinta Pinheira, Negro Mouro, Tinta Carvalha, Bastardo, Alfrocheiro, Touriga Nacional, Alicante Bouschet and many others. The fermentation was inspired by Henri Mayer, a cold soak and a soft vinification, he calls an infusion. It matured in 225-, 400-, 500- and 600-liter oak barrels for 18 months. It has 13.5% alcohol, a pH of 3.69 and 6.01 grams of acidity. Madeira told me that the search is "for a wine with intense flavors, depth, mineral, fresh and with salivating saltiness, a wine for the table." In 2021, the wines have lower alcohol, and somehow, this wine feels a little more marked by the oak despite the fact that the oak was all used. It has fine tannins and good freshness, very tasty flavors and a fine thread. 7,000 bottles produced. It was bottled in August 2023.



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