

## Ramos Pinto

So first of all, Ramos Pinto, it's a family name. In fact, it started in 1880. So in the 19th century, and it started as being a port Winehouse producer, creator. And this is already something special at that time. The founder of the House was a young man. He was like 21 years old when he started a company. It was named Adriano Ramos Pinto. He already had some time, some experience working in other port wine houses. So he knew a little bit about the business. So when he started the house Ramos Pinto in the company, he knew also that there were already a lot of big port wine houses in the scene, you know, and it would be very difficult to compete with them. We're talking about English families, Spanish families, Dutch families that had established themselves in the Porto Village, Porto City. to dedicate them. To trade. To the business. Not only for port wine but for all other kinds of goods. Okay.

So that's why big names that we still know today and some of them still run by the family, you know, English names. They were at that time trading the port wine, but they were merely what we called shippers. They were just shipping it. They would buy the port wine in the barrels, that we would go to the Douro region where the port wine is made. And they would select the barrels. They would transport the barrels down the river Douro until the Porto City. The wine, the barrels would be stocked on the south part of the south shore of the river, which is called Villa Nova de Gaia. And over there the question of time, they would ship the barrels in big boats to transport them to, I don't know, United Kingdom, North America or Australia. You know, that was how business was made.

The bottling of port wine was always done in the destination Companies. it was not even done in Portugal. So they were shipping, they were buying and reselling together with other goods. You know, they would fill the ships with barrels, with textiles, with other kind of products. When Ramos Pinto started, the idea was to change a little bit This and Adriano, the founder, he said, no, I'm not just going to trade port wine. I'm going to make my own Port Wine. Now I'm going to make it with the grapes from my properties. Better saying his father properties at that time he had vineyards in the Douro. So his idea was to start small, making what you would say. It's a top quality port wine and then selling it. The problem was that if you make your own port and if you have these viticultural costs, the wine growing, of course your costs of production are very high. So at that time, Ramos Pinto was three times more expensive than the rest of the other wines or port wines that existed. So the way that he started or thought about to sell his port wine was in fact to start convincing his public, his consumers, to buy it and to see port wine as a luxury, high quality wine.

So what he did was all my port wine I will never sell it in barrel. I will bottle it myself, make beautiful labels, communicate with my public. And so my public will be willing to pay more for my port wine. Then he will be tasting my port wine and will be convinced of the quality. And that was how easy it was to start that model.

Well, my name is Rodrigo, Rodrigo Lencastre, and I'm the export director of the House Ramos Pino which is a family Winehouse since 1880. And we are here to talk a little bit about Ramos Pinto, a lot about the Douro region and about the still wines of the Douro and the port wine. Of course, that's that's the big, big aim here.

So we start with the wine. I talk a little bit about the well, house, the history, the tradition and the viticulture and so on. But we will be tasting, so maybe we can then start now. We start with a still wine. See, it's difficult to drink port wine and then taste the still wine port wines are very, very dense in terms of alcohol, mostly sugar structure. So we have to start with the dry wines and Ramos Pinto although we are originally a port wine producer, we were also the first port wine house to start making quality still wines in the Douro. We are using the same grape varieties from the same Douro region that we use for port wine. And we are just showing you the terroir, the expression of that region with indigenous grape varieties in a still wine. Historically speaking, we've always been doing still wines there in the Douro but they were not very qualitative. You know, the good fruit was always for port wine. Port wine was the business in the region, and it was a little bit undervalued, the still wines. Ramos Pinto, we thought, no, we have also to give value and higher the value on the quality of our still wines. So in 1990, we've created this wine called Duos Quintas.

Duas Quintas It means in Portuguese two estates. And that already tells you a little bit the story about this wine.

So being winegrowers we know very well our vineyards, our properties, let me just say we have four estates in the Douro region in different places in a total of about 260 hectare planted hectares of vineyards. It's 280 sorry. And we know them by heart. You know, for five generations the family has been working these vineyards in order to get the best fruit out of it. So by having that know how, we also knew in advance which vineyards would probably be better to make a still wine and not just port. So that's why we came up with this concept of blending two estates, two terroirs.

## **Quinta da Ervamoira**

So one estate is called Quinta da Ervamoira. Quinta da Ervamoira is our biggest property. It's really very close to the Spanish border. So if you look at Portugal map on the north part of it to the interior, you will have the Douro region. It's where the river Douro passes through and ends up in the Atlantic in Porto City. Close to the Spanish border We have Ervamoira there. We have a very dry continental climate. Rain is very rare on that part. So at the same time, we have the traditional shiststone soil, which is basically covering 95% of the Douro region, the shiststone, which is also very important for the for the vineyards and for the plants. And it's slightly lower in altitudes. It's like around 300 meters, 200 meters, something like that, meaning that the fruit, the grape that you get from Ervamoira, It's really a very ripened, structured, concentrated fruit, which is great for port wines because they need all those characteristics. But for a still wine, you have to be careful. You don't want to make it too powerful, you want to make it with some balance.

## **Bons Ares**

So in order to balance those grapes, you are taking grapes from a second estate. A second Quinta called the Bons Ares. Bons Ares as well. Buenos Aires. If you want to translate for a common or more a more known word, it's an estate of that we own on a top of a mountain, about 600 meters altitude, where it's a little bit more fresh and windy and humid. And it's one of those few places in that region where we have granite stone soils, meaning from this Bons Ares property, we can really get the fruit with that freshness, that natural acidity that we need to balance or counterbalance that powerful, tannic ripened structure of Ervamoira. And that's how you do this.

## **112 indigenous grape varieties**

This concept of Duas Quintas to find the right balance and besides the terroir, then you have also the grape varieties, you know, in the Douro we have 112 indigenous grape varieties identified, surely more to come. We are always discovering new things, but at present it's about 112 grape varieties, so it's a lot to choose from. But for the time we are working more with about, like I said, around 15, 20 grape varieties. So in order to get the best expression in a wine from that specific Terroir you need to work with your indigenous grape varieties, that's what we have here, three grape varieties mainly it's the Rabigato, Arinto and Viozinho. But again these indigenous grape varieties, they have really adapted themselves to that very dry, hot place that is the Douro. They have very thick skin so they can really sustain sunlight, warm and and strong sunlight without burn. And so they get the acidity always very present, even when when we are harvesting in August. September. Okay. So a blend of terroir, meaning a blend of domains of estates, a blend of altitudes, a blend of shift- and granite stone, a blend of grape varieties. Enough with the blending. No, we still have to blend a little bit. What you are going to do with a wine? We blend stainless steel stage with about 30% in this specific wine Austrian oak fence.

## **2022 Duas Quintas Reserva**

Okay, so what you are tasting is the Duas Quintas Reserva wines the for the reserve. What you are having now is something a little bit more structured. Already we make a selection of older plants, older vineyards,

older plots where the fruit will bring a little bit more expression, more rich complexity to the wine. We are talking about wines that we really want to show is the fruits and not the rest. So we want to keep it simple. So the Reserva white as it is. well, it's always difficult for me and for any kind of wine producer coming to Germany and talk to you about white wines. But yeah, you have to give it a try. No. So the Duas Quintas Reserva white 2022 is a gastronomic wine for sure, given its structure. And it's interesting also for aging it too. We sometimes open some bottles with 10, 12 years of this wine specifically. And it's the port wine houses today. Like I was saying, they have their own estates and properties. They make part of their production. But they always need to buy most of their grapes due to their quantities of production. We still are quite small as a house. We have less than 1% of the whole market share. When I say we produce more or less 1 million bottles, we are talking about 104 million bottles produced every year, more or less for the whole industry. So I like to consider ourselves kind of the biggest small producer of port wine because we get to have this sensibility of small producer having limited resources to make our wines, but trying to make them excellent. And at the same time, we don't have either quantity or volumes or even price margins to go and negotiate with modern distribution.

### for the red now...

Let's go for the red now. Another, of course, Douro wines, Still wines are mostly known for the reds south or European wines. So we are always looking for something with more consistency and more concentration. A lot of the fruit with Ramos means we have all that. Of course, like I say, we try to show you the fruit and the Terroir but we try to show it with elegance, with balance. And again, it's the same principle or the same idea of blending the two Quintas, the same quintas - Ervamoira and Bons Ares. So you get these beautiful fruits expression in this wine with a very nice mouth, you know, very nice structure, you know, longer, long and full. But with the tannins at the end, that should be firm but soft, not too aggressive, not too dry. Makes it like you want to chew the wine. You know, this is what we want in our wines as natural as possible. How do we do this? Besides the blending of the estates, we are going to blend four grape varieties here, which are quite classic in the Douro: Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca, Tinta Roriz, Tinta Barroca.

### Why do we blend?

Why do we blend everything in the Douro? That's always a question. First of all has to do with history, because you can imagine that these 112 grape varieties that always existed in Roman times, 2000, 2500 years ago when we already had vineyards there, they were not planted by plot. They were all field blended. And it was so almost until the sixties of the last century, everything was field blended. That's why Port Wine is always a blend of different grape varieties. We still do the blends knowing exactly how to blend it. So we basically vinify the wine almost 100%, separate the grape varieties, and then we do the blends afterwards after unification in order to have this balance. But we do it not only for the balance, but because we also believe that to have all the full characteristics of a Douro wine.

So I give you a very short example. You have four classics that I told you: Touriga Nacional, you know, probably the most known grape variety from the region. Because it's really a beautiful, complex, fruity that presents you a nice aroma. So a little bit floral. Even so, it's a very nice compromise in terms of fruitiness floral complexity. But Touriga Nacional has a slight it's not a problem, but it is what it is. It lacks a little bit of a structure of body in these wines. So that's why we take the Touriga Franca Touriga Franca is not the most interesting grape variety, but it brings to the wine that structure that we need, that concentration. And then we also use the Roriz, the Tempranillo, to reinforce a little bit, also the fruity side of the wine and the tannins structure as well. And finally, we go with the fourth which is Barocca, which is also not a very interesting grape variety by itself, but it brings to the wine because it's quite watery too, and it has a very fresh and delicate but not very expressive, but that freshness and that those delicate nuances, we take them into the wine. **So in the end it's like one plus one is three.** You know, you get these four grape varieties, have the full character of the total. That's the principle and the idea, the modern idea behind this, grape assemblage before it was history, it was nature, everything was field blend it. Today, we continue to do it. Do it because

we believe it's the best way to show you a total character of wine. And that's a little bit about those still wines.

## What is Portwine?

Now, what is port wine? And just going back to basics, which I think it's always nice to go back and there are no confusion. Port wine is basically a fortified wine. What is that? It's a wine that is made with indigenous grape varieties from the Douro region. And which fermentation starts and which fermentation we will block, we will stop by adding a very strong brandy that's port wine, okay you'll find port style wine is also being done in Australia and especially in old British colonies Australia, South Africa because they even imported the grape varieties, the Tourga Nacional, the Roriz and so on. But as you surely know, it's like very, very important is the terroir, and the terroir of the Douro it's it's really amazing and an essential and key factor to the port wines. So by adding the brandy, which is always a very neutral brandy made out of wine, we don't want any color in the brandy, We don't want any aromas in the brandy. And the brandy, we just want the brandy to stop the fermentation and not give anything to the wine. We want the port wine to just show grape. Okay. We are talking of 77% alcohol brandy, which is really very strong and that we are adding usually an average of 30% brandy to 70% port or 70% wine That's why port wine has to have a lot of concentration, a lot of flavor, a lot of color, a lot of aromas. That's why we need to crush grapes, either with your feet or with vertical presses in a very intensive way, a lot of extraction, so that then the wine will get that brandy and still perform and still deliver you all the flavor of a wine, of the grapes. Okay. And that's basically port wine.

## white Portwine

After that, you will choose how to age your port wine. And that is what is going to define the style of port wine that we will get in the year. Okay. What we have in the glass now, we have in the glass. It may even seem to you that it can be a Tawny like a more red wine, tawny aged oxidative color. But it's not. It's a white port aged in the barrels for about eight years. very important to know. Every time we speak about age in port wine, we are talking about blended years younger and older. It's not whiskey that is going to indicate you to minimum. No. Here we can play with younger and older to get that average or to get that character of an eight year old wine. Okay. Each port wine house will do the blends, but before they sell it, before they sell that specific Cuvée, they have to approve it. Send samples to the Port Wine Institute. It's kind of a public organization that exists and it's controlling all the quality as well as quantity that is the coast to the market. In terms of quality, they get all these samples not knowing more from where it's kind of a blind tasting. They just know that the wine should perform or should deliver a ten year old or an eight year old or something like that. And then they will have a group of eight people which do nothing more during their day that's just tasting, tasting, tasting. Which is not hard. It can be hard, you know. Yeah, that's true. It's very true. Especially with port wine even. But what they are going to do is we call this organoleptic control in the sense that they are just controlling if it is the right color for a ten years old, if it has the right aroma complexity for a ten years old. And finally, if in the mouth it has the structure, the density and the flavors of what it should be, a tawny or a port wine with ten years. And then they will say yes, and you can sell it afterwards. Or they can even say, No, it's not enough. We feel too much fruit here. So this won't be able you won't be able to sell it as a ten years. When that happens and it's rare because usually port wine houses know what they are sending already. But when that happens, basically the port one house has to take that wine and make something else out of it, you know? In the Port wine. Nothing is wasted, everything is reused. Imagine if it's not enough for ten years. They can just age it for longer and in some years try again. Or they can use it for another blend of another kind of port. nothing is wasted, everything is reused in port wine. So that's how you get your age approval by the Port Wine Institute. So it doesn't mean at all that we have a wine that age for eight years in the barrel. They can be there, but it's always that average.

Finally. white port is usually young, you know, young, white port, fresh, quite fruity, not so complex. You will find usually more accessible price white ports that have about one two years of stage in stainless steel most of the time at end, they only spend like one month in an oak fat to gain a little bit of color. And the the

flavors and the aromas, they will stay simple, you know, very fresh, enjoyable. You keep it in the fridge. You can then drink them with some ice. You can make a cocktail with port or tonic with tonic water and lemon and and mince. No, no, no problem. It's wonderful. But they won't be very rich and complex for what we did here. And this is something that we aim for, mainly for gastronomy. We took the white port and aged it in barrel port wine barrels for about these eight years average. We have port wines here with 2 to 3 years of age and we have port wines that get up to 1963 and 1964. Those are the oldest two year - Jahrgang - that we have in the blend. Okay, so this is the beautiful part of port wine blending. You go and get stocks that your great great grandfather did it for you and you blend it and you drink it in a bottle today. Okay. So that's how we these are very old port wines that you get this more oxidative complexity. The wine becomes more rich, long, dense in your mouth, more caramelized because the contact of the woods and in this case for port wine is always, always old oak, never young. Again, the oak, the only thing has to do is let oxygen pass through and work the wine and you have wine will suffer this kind of oxidative evolution. The longer it stays in the barrel, the more caramelized flavors it will have. More evaporation it will have. So it will be even more concentrated and dense. What we did here is basically that process, but with a white, white port.

So in the end, Adriano White Reserva is for me one of the best or most interesting wines, because as you taste it, you feel it's it's still fresh, very vivid, like in vibrant, like a white port. But then you get this beautiful caramelized acidity of evolution, complexity also without at all unbalancing balancing the wine. The wine is always very fine, long with a nice point of acidity to make it elegant. And by doing so the wine will not be so heavy as a lot of port wine our port wines are, so it doesn't tire your palate and so you can pair something with it. So this is the White Port, Adriano White Reserva.

## harvest time

We talking a little bit about the vinification process of the port wine already told it's quite simple you know just stopping the fermentation you must say we do the harvest time between uh, it starts early August and it ends up early October for us. It takes a long time to do the whole vintage, the whole harvest. As you can imagine, we have 280 hectares of planted vineyards and we make what we call the selective harvests. So it's like searching for the right moments. To pick the grape, pick up the grapes and the you know for sure I think the Barocca will have a different time of maturation and ripening than the Touriga Nacional – you have to respect that. So that's why take more than two months to make the whole harvest for us. We have like 70 people that have to go early in the morning to pick the grapes and do it very quickly.

## The Douro region

Another parenthesis about the Douro region, it's a very hilly region. It's full of mountains. Most of the region is always filled with hills and mountains. So that's why most of the vineyards are always planted on terraces, on slopes. You know very well how it goes here in your region as well. But the thing is that we are talking about a region that has 250,000 hectares of limitation. That's the map. That's the line. If we count only the planted surface, we are only talking about around 40,000 hectares of planted vineyards. It's still a lot. Okay. If you go there and you take either a car or the train or even a boat, you will see it's a beautiful, unique view. Mountains and mountains and mountains of vineyards like pyramids. Meaning also that most of the work is still made by hands. You know, to get the mechanization is really hard.

Besides the limited mechanization, you have a lack of people living there. You know, it's a poor region in general, was always poor. And so to get people motivated to stay there and work hard, it gets really, really difficult. So that's why costs of viticulture in the Douro are really, really high. In the end, you still have very low yields, meaning very low productivity in averaging the Douro one hectare will give you, if you are lucky, 4000 and between 4000 5000 kilos. Talking about 30 hectoliters.

If you think about I don't even go to champagne because it's another planet. But you think about Chile even, you know, they have these very plain surfaces where it can have a lot of plantation density. Everything is mechanized. The guys, they take out almost like 14,000. 14. Yeah, 14,000 kilos. That's what I wanted to

say. While we are taking 4000, meeting a lot of costs of viticulture, very low yields, meaning if you are wine growing, if you are a wine grower, you are completely handicapped in a way that to your competitors that buy wine or just buy the grapes, they have much less expenses. And in the end, they can present much more competitive prices. So we try to explain to people, yeah, Ramos Pinto most of the times is more expensive than something that you will find for sure, something that we will find in the supermarkets. But we are because we really work our vineyards as we should.

## **Work without herbicides intervention**

And finally, not only that, we still make it harder in the sense that we were the first house in the Douro in 2009 to quit the herbicides intervention and the chemicals intervention before people were talking about organic or or certifications at all. Again, family spirit thinking about how will this be in five generations for the next next generations to take over? We need to make samples. We cannot just kill the land like we are killing. So we stopped the herbicides and the artificial chemical intervention by doing that. I give you an example. In 2009, we had about 40 people working in the vineyards, you know, and today we have 140 people working in the vineyards. That tells you what we have to deal with. We are now having a lot of people that come from Africa, from Angola and Mozambique, Portuguese speaking countries that we have to receive, give them home, uh, train them, you know, and, and of course, pay them as they should to have people working there. Because, like I said, mechanization is very limited. We choose to go this very sustainable, wine growing way. So we have to have more people even working the vineyards. So in the end, yeah, it's difficult for us to place our prices so high, but we do it for one reason is what we believe is the best way to make our wines and which is going this way. Okay.

## **The red Portwines**

For the next one. We have then the red port wines. Okay. We we'll have three rubies and three tawnies Okay. So I told you, we stopped fermentation in September, October, and the wine receives the alcohol, and then we will transfer the wine to vats that are in the Douro. So the wine will spend the winter time still in the Douro. Also because the Douro is colder in the winter than Bordeaux or Villa Nova de Gaia and you need very low temperatures to stabilize the wine together with the brandy, have it all bound together, so it's good that it stays during winter time in the Douro. And when spring comes right now, we start transporting the wine to Villa Nova de Gaia, close to the sea and the river in front of the Porto City. And Porto is on the north side and Villa Nova de Gaya on the south side. And over there we will choose what to do with the wine. If you want to do a ruby, then we will have to. Or we will place the wine and stock the wine, store the wine in very big vats, not barrels, but the really very big vat. You can even store some of them in stainless steel, you know, and then blend it with the vats to keep fresh fruitiness. Why? Because rubies are what you have in the glass are all about the red wine. It has to have grape, it has to have the red fruits. Has to be that beautiful concentration and still have the tannins. So Ruby Port wines are closer to a red wine, in fact, than a Tawny for sure. And by doing them and placing them in the very big vats, you know, our biggest has 94,000 liters capacity, we're talking about gigantic vats. So the so much wine inside has a limited contact with the wood with the surface. So it doesn't oxidize. Oxygen doesn't work too much the wine, and the wine keeps the red ruby color. The wine will keep the fruitiness the beautiful concentration or that the sweetness of the grapes still very present with a nice acidity to to balance it all and even tannins. Okay.

## **Collector Reserva**

What we have here in the glass, it's not a young ruby, but we always go for the next level, which is where we want to make a difference in terms of quality one step higher. This is a kind of a reserva ruby that we called collector has to do with with the labels, with a with a poster. That's for people who used to collect all the labels of Ramos Pinto. They were very beautiful and still are. A Ruby Reserva, will, of course, have a longer time of stage compared to young. A young Ruby two years and it's done. It's very, very fruity and concentrated, a little bit edgy in terms of tannins, you know, quite alive. By prolonging the time in the vats here we have an average again average. It's an age, five years of age where you get rubies with two or three

years together with the rubies of six, seven, not older than that, then we get more elegance and so we get a ruby that is very round, creamy, with very soft tannins at the end compared to the young one, This one here is really on this balance is finesse and all the characteristics of a ruby, you know, that freshness it's really important to have this clear ruby port. They age in very big vats. They're not barrels. The tawnies they will age in barrels and oxidize. Okay, so this one, for example, is a ruby ready to drink There's no sense in keeping this bottle to age it because it's not meant to age. That's why it also has this kind of bar drop corks. It's meant for you to open and close and drink it with time. You don't have to rush. You know Port wines are fortified, have a very strong alcoholic structures beside they already oxidize quite a lot. So you can take two months or even three depending a little bit on where the bottle level is to drink it all. Okay. And this tells you immediately, if you look at two, this means that the wine is ready to drink. It's not meant to age. So I can open and close and drink, take my time drinking.

## **Port wines with a classical cork are meant to age**

When we go to another level of port wines with a classical cork, then we have the vintage and late bottle vintage. These wines are meant to age. And these wines, That's why they have a classical cork, You know, you keep them horizontal and you just wait for them decades and decades. That can really have a long potential as well. And these wines are always single years. You don't age a blended port, that doesn't exist. You only age in the bottle. Good years. There is no sense also in bottling bad years in terms of quality so that those very good years are called the vintage years. Okay. Every year all producers will choose the best wine. In our case, we are going to take the best grapes from the best plots of vineyards. We are going to trade them, crush them with the „lagar“, traditionally, with the feet, a lot of extraction. And then we are going to wait about one year and a half to see how the wine evolves in that very big vat. So it is a vat It should be a ruby, and then we taste it again after one year and a half. And if we feel that, we are convinced that it's really an excellent quality and then we decide to to bottle it as a vintage or a late bottle vintage. But that decision, again, has to be approved by the Port Wine Institute. We cannot do it by ourselves. We have to send a sample to those guys to taste it and approve it. Okay. So what?

## **2018 Late Bottled Vintage LBV**

You are the next one here. It's a ruby again. You just ruby. It's all about the color and the English, They were naming this color a ruby color. Okay. And it's all about having a red wine, deep color. And that's always the ruby in the color. And it's all about the fruit and the aromas and the flavors. That's about Ruby. The first one was a blends very balanced. It's very round and elegant and creamy. This one is a single year. It's a late bottled Vintage from 2018 Late Bottled Vintage LBV. That's why the letters it means that it was or is a vintage quality wine, but it's bottled later. So the top vintage qualities, the vintage ports they have only two years of aging and big vats, and then they are bottled. When we bottle the vintage, we don't filter, we don't clean the wine, we let the sediments go of the vat, go inside the bottle. Those are the reason why the wine is going to age. If you clean the wine in its bottling, the wine will be not will not aging. You know, this is clean. This is clean. Filtered by not filtering, We give the wine the ability to continue to age in the bottle. So all vintages are unfiltered in the bottle and they can age for 100 years, even depending how we store and also how the wine behaves. Late bottled vintage, However, most of them that you see in the markets, they are filtered. They are not unfiltered, meaning they are ready to drink. Most of the LBVs in the market. If an LBV doesn't say nothing on the label, it means that it is filtered. If it says unfiltered and it's rare, then you know this one You can keep it and aged for long. Okay not only the aging potential is interesting to explain to people you know this is a very nice gift of this year and you can just forget it and drink it in 30, 40 years. But also for our experience, you know, when you taste an unfiltered LBV like we are having today compared to other LBVs that are filtered, ours will have more full bodied, longer, deeper mouths You know, they become more interesting and more alive at the end. You feel the tannins quite, quite present at the end, much more than in the the blended collector, which were quite smooth and elegant and creamy almost. But this is really authentic wine. We always say that the LBV is probably the best money for value that you can

get because you are having the best wine of that year Deal with the aging potential that you if you want. It's unfiltered because of that and also because unfiltration the wine it's much more complex.

## History: Sweet port wine was an accident

The English houses it has a little bit of history. The English houses were really responsible for the beginning and development of port wine business, that's for sure. No doubt about that. They were really very important if it was not for them. We have no port wine business. But what they were doing the fortifying the wines from the Douro we were doing since many centuries before. Just imagine the Portuguese going their boat trips, you know, through the Atlantic, going through Africa, going to Brazil, going to Japan, even to Timor in Indonesia in the 14th, 15th century, water after a couple of days was infected in the boats, that was sure. Normal wine after a couple of weeks with the movement and the storms and the heat was also gone completely. So the way to have a sustainable resistant beverage during this long trip boats was fortifying the wine and that and therefore they would go for the Douro to search for the more concentrated, powerful wines, fortify it - dry, usually not sweet. So they would end the fermentation and then add the brandy, and then it would go. And that was what we were drinking, the boats. That was port wine already without being named port wine. Port wine business started a lot earlier as a port wine. And finally it's also it was dry at the beginning. It was not sweet port wine.

**Sweet port wine was an accident.** Nobody knows very well there are so the bit like or it's always an accident or something. But basically they say there was a very specific year, in the 19th century, early 19th century, that was very hot. So hot that the fermentation was blocked of the wine so they could not make full fermentations. And then the English came to buy the barrels. Portuguese, as usual, will try to sell everything, even if it was not 100%. The English did taste, said, Oh, but this is not good, is sweet, but what are we going to do? There is no more wine. So in the end they said, okay, let's give it a try, put some brandy in it and ship it. And you had the first port wine shipments, sweet port wine shipments arriving in England. And at that time they sell everything much more quicker. And then you had a discussion through 40 or 50 years between the side that wanted always traditional dry port ones and the other ones that were saying, no, we have to go for sweet port wines and other ones that would say we can have both. And in the end, for some reason, possibly some lobby reason, it stayed always sweet port in the lobby. I think it's natural. The sweetness always wins, you know, it's easier and that's how it gets. You know, it ends up being a more economical strategical decision than the natural one to sweet port wine.

## Why is it called port wine?

You may even think. Why is it called port wine? It's made in the Douro-region. It stocks and ages in Villa Nova de Gaia, which is a different city from Porto. Why is it called Port wine? Well, because the ships of the English after loading in Villa Nova de Gaia, they have to cross, they have to pass through the Porto custom building, which was on the Porto side and received the Port customs stamp on the barrel. So the English, they would get the barrels saying port stamp or port wine. Port for Porto City got the fame without doing nothing for it', just collecting the tax. So again, they would get this young port wine to England and bottle it there. But they were always saying, you know, we bottle the wine here. Very short time of stock of aging. So the wine was always Ruby was always fresh. It had the it had the brandy. Recently, everything was mixed up. So it was not even drinkable. So they would bottle the wine in England, store it for about 20, 30 years, and then sell it.

## The vintage tradition of the English

The English always had the tradition of buying some cases for the year of birth of their son and then keeping them until their son was 18 years of age. And then they would offer these cases to their son. And their son was supposed to drink those wines throughout his lifetime in very important dates, either when he was married, when he got his first kid, I don't know. That was the English tradition. You know, English are always filled with traditions and that was the vintage tradition. So they are the ones who really treasure and



value vintage port wines. What you have here, it's a vintage trade. This is, let's just say, the creme de la creme, and the best of the best. And it's aged for two years, not four like the LBV. by aging, only two years. You also prolong the aging potential of such wine, you know, because these two extra time, years time that it spends in the vats, the wine is also already losing a little bit of the tannic structure and acidity and so on. and they'll be the unfiltered. You can easily age it 40, 50 years, 50 years already will be a nice a nice old age for an LBV but a vintage port. Yeah. You're still drinking 120, 130, 140 years old. Vintage. You know, we are drinking today. We are not drinking because it's very rare. But when we are have the chance and find the bottle. 1880, for example, from the year of the foundation of the House. And they still deliver beautiful freshness and acidity with very delicate notes.

## **A young vintage from 2018**

So in order to have that aging potential, you really have to have a huge concentrated wine at the beginning. That's what you have in your in your glass. We have here a very young vintage from 2018. And when they are young, they are very exciting because in their first two years in the bottle, two or three years. So again, this is 18, it was bottled in 2020. Okay. And until well, today, maybe still today, the wines are exuberant, they are very fruity. They are expressive opulence. It's really fun to drink This wine is all tasting. It's almost like you are chewing the wine. After that three, four year time, the wine starts to close, you know, and then it will only this vintage will only start being ready to drink again. After all, it depends on the year, but it's 18, 20 years, meaning right now the wine will be start to closing this one and then you will have to wait until two thousand and, probably until 2040 to start reopening the bottles again. So this this is these wines either are very young and great to drink or then you have to drink them with at least 18, 20 years like a grown up.

## **Why you press the grapes with your feet**

Okay, I was telling you, these wines are so concentrated, like, you see, because precisely they will have to age for a century, so they need to have that concentration. How do you get that? Trading the grape with the feet helps a lot. You know why? People think it's kind of a I know it's very nice for tourists to go there and they take some photos is good marketing. Yeah, it's very good marketing except that it's, uh, we did a lot of research, we did a lot of methods: vertical presses, robot silicon feet, human feet. Nothing is compared with your human feet. It's in a granite stone swimming pool called lagare where we place all the grapes you have, like a huge mountain of grapes, but has left up to two meters high even. And then in the evening, starting around 8:00 when it's cooler, you get a group of about 12 people getting inside that swimming pool that lagare from the starting from the back and slowly the very constant rhythm with a very special movement of the feets crushing the grapes, and they start at 8:00. They are behind. They don't even see them because there is this mountain of grapes. And then at 11:00 everything was already treated. And what you get here is that you have the skin of the feet. Can this movement in the granite stone? That's why it's granite, because it's a cool stone that keeps cold. It doesn't warm very easily and it's rough. So because it's a rough surface, when you do this with the skin, you get a lot of the skin of the grapes. You know, you know what flavors, colors, almost everything comes from the skin of the grape. So by doing that, you get a lot of color, a lot of aromas, a lot of flavors in to that juice with one very important thing. Your skin is intense, but it's not hard. So you won't be breaking any kind of seeds or any kind of steam. And that's wonderful, because if you are crushing and you break the steam or even the seeds, the Kerne, you get green tannins, you get astringent notes that are errors in the wine are bad for the wine. So with your feet you get all the good and leave all the bad in the skin. And so so that's the perfect way with robots or with presses, you either calibrate it too much or to less meaning. If you put it too much, you can break seeds and not good. Then you you want to be careful, you put it a little bit less, but it hasn't got that intensity that you want. So it's a human feet It's the best of all, you know. And we still do it for our vintage and a late bottled vintage and some of the port that will age for longer.

Today we had with COVID, it was forbidden to trade the the grapes. And we had also it was a poor coincidence to install in our granit stone lagares, I was kind of a this big robot with the silicon feet to complement the and today what we do is when we have people enough, we do it with the feet. When we

don't find people to do it, we have to do it with your silicone feet. There is no, no, no solution. But when you do it with your feet, it's all for vintage. Okay. Um, and finally, when you do it, you do it at least three times, not just one evening. The evening after they come back and they spend three times just extracting, extracting, extracting. And the third evening, usually and normally, between the third and fourth day. Then we add the brandy to stop the fermentation and we transfer all the wine directly to the vats. That's how you do a vintage the best of the best of that year.

### ***classic house vintage and single quinta vintage***

Finally, to end up the vintage, you have what we called *classic house vintage* and *single quinta vintage*. House vintage is when you see the label and it only comes the producer name a Ramos Pinto. What is that? It is when you are going to take grapes from different properties, estates, you know, it's you can choose them from different parts in order to have what we considered a character of perfect character, of a vintage of that producer of that house. You know, it's different then when you have a single quinta, meaning when you have a vintage, it is made with grapes from one specific terroir, from one specific property or estate. So on one hand you have house vintage, which is more prestige because it's the perfect result of that house. On the other hand, you have a single Quinta, which is the terroir, so you can choose. Traditionally, this is very English. House vintages are more expensive than single Quintas. Trust me, it's not a question of quality. In fact, it's really a question of prestige. But of course in a terroir, in a single Quinta you will have all the characteristics of that specific place. So it will not be as perfect with all that full that we want as a house vintage. But I think for wine lovers even more, it's also very exciting to find out the flaws of that terroir and. The wine is not perfect, you know that. It's for me. That's also part of the fun, in fact. So you have these two style of vintages which represent two different views. One is the house, one is the family and its way of making the wine with the perfect fruit. Another one is the terroir is in nature. And and you can choose from that. Okay.

### **2018 from Quinta do Bom Retiro**

What we are having here is a 2018 from Quinta do Bom Retiro, which is one of our estates, the more central one and oldest one. And in Bom Retiro, it's, it's very interesting there because we started, we started doing vintage bought from Bom Retiro in the early times of the company. And the last time they did a vintage bought from Bom Retiro, was in 1924. And then for some reason the family stopped doing that and then it was Ana Rosas, Ana Ramos Pinto Rosas, she is the chief winemaker, what we call the master blender of Ramos Pinto port wines. She decided in 2014. Redo or take again the idea of doing a vintage from Bom Retiro, And since then we did 14 and did 18 - These are the two single Bom Retiro vintages that we have done since then, which present you a very special, more fresh and even dry kind of port wine, you know, compared to other vintages and other styles You know, the English style is much more on the powerful concentration. Ramos Pinto style in all the port wines is more about elegance, freshness, a little bit more delicate in its aroma. And this vintage shows it perfectly. Of course, it's all about the fruit. It's very intense, but it's very balanced and a little bit more drier and even at the end with the tannins as well. Okay. So this is something rare and I'm happy because we only do from this one. We only did 8000 bottles. Okay? We do very selective and very limited productions of vintages. When we do, we don't go over one. We don't go more to of a 11.000 bottles so. You know, like I told you, English, they have this tradition of vintages. When they do, they do 60,000, 80,000 bottles. It's all about the vintage for them. Well, we love vintage. We make it very selective and with very long aging potential as well. Must say, we still have in our stock in our in our lodges, our cellars in Villa Nova de Gaia vintage from 82 from 83, from 97, 94, 2000 and some more 2004, seven. So we have these older vintages that are also available for you to buy. If I would have to recommend you now. Good money for value. Go for 2000, go for 94 Ervamoira in the list because they are beautiful free. They are very nice to drink it right now.

This one here is young, completely young, and not only young, the 18 now is going to start to go to sleep. This wine is going to close now all the vintages after three or four years in the of the bottling, they start closing and then have to wait ten 15 years to to let it reopened again. So so to to drink right now. I really go

immediately, go for the 2000, go for the 97 and the 94. Of course, the older they get, the more expensive they become. But these are amazing wines.

## 10 years old Port

We are pouring you now a ten years old. So again, we are going to take younger and older wines to make this blend. This ten years old. It has on the label Quinta de Ervamoira basically meaning that all the grapes and all the stocks that we use to make this blend they come from that specific quinta, that specific estates terroir, but I would say every 15 years something like that we do an extreme refresh really there are not we do it that way. You know, we don't we get completely and start something you and and also we we use something of what was used in the early times like like this range here, you know, the beautiful labels. These are these are labels and posters from early twenties, you know, from nouvelle epoch, this beautiful, beautiful advertisement to communications that we had. I can tell you the story afterwards. That's also interesting to know. But well, that ten years, as you see, now gets a clearer color, the color becomes a little bit more clearer, not as deep as Adriano. And in your aromas and in your mouth, you will see that. Yeah, here we are talking about oxidative world already.

You know, the average age here in fact goes up to 13 years, more than 13 years. If we do average mathematic for us, we want to do more. We want to bring to the wine more complexity, more rich flavors, so that it can really stand out from what's typical ten years are all about. Besides that ambition that we have of standing out terms of, of complexity and, and, and the high quality for a ten years old. We have also a technical issue here, which is that grapes that we take from Ervamoira which is everything that we do for this wine from that Quinta Ervamoira, they are from that very hot, dry place, close to Spanish border. So we take these grapes and we've unified them and then we have very deep, strong colored wines. And because of that, the wine takes longer in aging to get the right color so that the Port Wine Institute can then approve it. Because those guys, they are they are serious. They have to have they look for color, for nose and for flavor. And if they think it's not enough, so our because we have problems with the grapes of Ervamoira too, we need more time to age the wine to have a clearer color. We end up also having a more complex and rich wine in terms of tawny expression, if we want to see like that. So this is already a very beautiful, rich, intense, but balanced, long, vintage with a little bit of terroir of Ervamoira which is difficult to get them in oxidative wines like these, because we've aged a lot. We lost the fruit aroma. You know, you don't have any more tannins like a rubies and no more fruity expression. But here you have a little bit of the saltiness, some almonds the warm flavors of. It's, you know, hazelnuts. And this is something that we get a lot from Ervamoira also. Okay.

So so having Tawnies blended years from one single estates is really very rare, only very small producers, meaning producers that have one quinta, make very small productions, they can name their wines also that. Quinta We are probably the single ones in terms of dimension that it's a little bit bigger that can still make it ten years with one quinta de Ervamoira - grapes Okay,

## flashback: early marketing

We are going back in time again. I'm always about flashbacks and go furth and then back and so on. But yeah, it's like these modern films now, you know, Pulp Fiction, we do it like that as well. So we go back again to the beginning of the house. Like I said, this young guy messing around with the big sharks of the port wine and the guy is messing around and it changed completely. You know, it's not about business anymore. It's about making it the best way possible, you know, being winegrowers of port wine.

So, like I told you, he had huge costs of production because you already know a little bit about the reality that we have in the Douro Like I tell you, they had three times more expenses and three times more expensive. That's what I wanted to say compared to most of the competitors at that time. So that's why he

started. I'm not going to sell such a beautiful wine and expensive wine in barrel. I have to give value to the wine. I have to have a beautiful packaging. I have to communicate to pass this to public. He was already thinking about marketing before it even existed as a word, you know. So again, all 100% of the port wines of Adrianos people were always bottled in beautiful bottles and with beautiful labels on it. And because he was quite a well, a Bourgeoise guy, he he had means he was not a poor guy. He came from a wealthy family that had properties in the Douro. And he also knew a lot of artistic people, not only in Portugal, but also in France, in Italy, even in Russia. So he ordered or he he placed orders to all these French and all these European artists to draw either labels or beautiful posters for their wines. So that's why we have a beautiful collection in Porto to see in our Museum of Art Deco of of this publicity from art deco and nouvelle l'époque and early 20th century that we are still using from time to time. Okay. So that's how Ramos Pinto became known. You know, that was a little bit story about about also these labels, for example.

## We finish in greatness

So what we do now, we will finish in greatness, okay? And we will go to the 20 years olds from Bom Retiro You know, in terms of categories, port wine categories, you have ten years, 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, and more recently a 50 years even category. Um, more recently because it was authorized by the Port Wine Institute three years ago, I'm not mistaken to have a 50 year old port wine. you look at our. Brochure on or leaflet there, and you'll see that we only have ten, 20, 30. People sometimes also ask us, do you have colheitas? What is colheita? Colheita is a Portuguese word for harvest and it means do we have a wine from one single year aged in barrel? a Tawny not a vintage, not aging in bottle, but that age in our cellars and then we bottle it with one single year. You have colheitas from every year if you want, and a lot of houses, they sell a lot of colheitas as it's good for for the business. People like to have the birthday year of the kid or whatever and colheitas are less expensive than vintage and they are Tawnies ready to drink so it's nice. You have to pay attention in the colheitas to to to the year of the harvest and the year of the bottling year of the bottling is important for you to know if it's aged for six years in the barrels or if it's aged for 30 something different as you can imagine. But enough with that.

We don't have a 40 years old or a 50 years old. We don't we don't sell colheitas this kind of single year tawnies. - Why? we are small producers and not matter, you know, we have to make choices. We could make our 40 year old or even a 50 year old. But by doing that, we would definitely take out old wines in our stocks that we need for the blending of the 10, 20 and 30. Meaning it's like the blankets. Either you cover your head or your feet. So we prefer not to do them and have always excellent. Ten, 20 and 30 years then to do a little bit of everything and being okay. So we prefer to be excellent in these things. Colheitas is the same. We have colheitas in our cellars, they are there, but we use them to to increase or to to to to not increase, but to make better the blends of our port wines. We have to make these kinds of decisions not do anything and go to everywhere. Have to be humble to say, yeah, we don't do a 40, we don't do a 50, we don't sell colheitas. But on the other hand, we present you fantastic ten years, fantastic 20 years and 30 years. That to explain you to you a little bit about that. The 20 years you have in the glass comes all from Bom Retiro. Well, the grapes, of course, but also the stocks. The oldest year of the blend of the 20 years or the oldest Jahrgang is 1924. So like I was telling you, we have 100 years old wines in our cellars that we are still using for for for the wines that we offer you today. Five generations of the family that started doing this wine already at that time. You know, that's the beautiful part of the of the blending of the port wines. Okay.

So together with these very old stocks or resources that we can use from our family to make beautiful, complex, rich. Tawny Ports, we also have this beautiful chance to have an estate called Bom Retiro that provides us beautiful grapes to do it And here, **20 years is always considered by by the people from the port wine business the perfect age to identify the style of each port wine house.** Why? Because a 30 years old, it's already too oxidized. And you they get to be less different between houses. And at ten years it's still young. So the 20 years is perfect. So you can really understand if you take a 20 years from Grahams you take a 20 years from Taylor to 20 years from Niepoort, or 20 years from Noval, 20 years from Ramos

Pinto and all these and you'll see each one is different in their way. And there you identify the style of the house and we are very proud to say, uh, it's, you know, it's, it's, it's, we are modest, but sometimes we need to push a little bit our thing up when you go there and you ask our because we know each other it's families are friends with one another know very well the Symingtons we have. Uh, and we are friends with Symingtons that have a Graham's and so on. And these guys, of course, someone tells us, where can I find the, the best Tawnies is usually the best 20 years. I need it. So I know. Well of course you have ours, I have to say. Of course. But they say. But if you you don't, you don't want to have ours go to Ramos Pinto. Why? Because you feel it's this wine is so rich, complex, dense, but at the same time, velvet, Smooth. Elegant. Constant, fresh. Not not want to say light. But really, it doesn't tell you at all. So this is one of these great wines that you can enjoy. You drink it, drink it. You feel automatic. It's it's really this enormous complexity that you can always stay and meditate with your eyes closed, but it doesn't tire you. You know, I always say this is you only 20 years old that can really open the bottle and drink it with one friend just like that because it doesn't tire. Again, We do it with this freshness at the ends that really counterbalance any kind of possibility to have or either the alcohol or the sugar taking over. And and this elegance and this freshness in all of them that's Ramos Pinto identity. That's where we stand out. That's our way of doing our port wines, which is quite recognizable compared to others.

You know, You go and buy a bottle of port wine from the supermarket, which is not very enjoyable. In fact, you say, Oh, it's much more sweet than Ramos Pinto to go and check out the residual sugar. You'll see it's more or less the same. It's all about, first of all, the grapes that you pick in the vineyards, then the blends that you do in your cellar. And you are constantly doing blends, which is don't do well in blend when we want to bottle. No, the technical team is constantly tasting every month all the ones that are in stock. And if they feel that the wine is going down, they will already start blending it. There is no method, there is no solera system whatsoever. This is just decision of the of the winemaker in this case, the master blender Ana Rosas with his team. With her team. Let's say we need to do something to that wine over there. Yeah, that wine. It's going down a little bit. Let's push it. Let's put this wine here a little bit younger and give more freshness to it. So sometimes we have here blends that already come from blends, from blends from blends from it's like a genealogical tree.

That's why port wine is so beautiful. On one side, you have Mother Nature. the Douro region, which is beautiful, unique. And then of course, these wines with the vintage one, one single here, it's all of what nature can give you. That's why we say here, it's the hand of God that's making the the wine. On the other hand, you have the Tawny world. It's all about blending. It's all about what you decide to do. It's all about and the end result. We much more depend on your decision than on what Mother Nature gave you 100 years ago when the fruit was young. So that here is the hand of man and of God and of man. It's a good compromise.

## **The little family in the great family**

And finally, you know, I think we have to be crazy people to still doing this business. It starts already in the Douro where it's so hard to wine grow.ing Ramos Pinto Port wine house is still run by the fifth generation of the family. Jorge Ramos Pinto Rosas is the CEO Ana Ramos Pinto Rosas is the master blender of Port Wine chief winemaker of Port Wine, João Luís Baptista the chief winemaker for still wines, for all these key positions it's still family we working in the house, the people working in the vineyards. A lot of them are already sons of people who already worked before. So it's really a big family, big family spirit. But right now it's not no longer owned by Ramos Pinto the business. in 1990 after two decades 70 and the eighties very difficult for the port wine houses in terms of financial crises and managing all that Ramos Pinto at that time. We're about 34 descendants that were trying to manage things. It was not manageable anymore, so we had to sell the business. You know, that's always sad. That's what happened with 99% of the port wine houses, some nice exceptions. Niepoort. Niepoort still runs its show and it owns it. So that's that's very true. But for us we had to sell it. It was the best way and the only way that the house could continue to exist in terms of management and so on. So. But what could happen was what happened with a lot of how beautiful Port

Wine houses a big group comes big. Either a foreign investor or whatever. You have a big group now with with a Venezuelan bank. Imagine that! So ants would buy the business and family would go away and they would use the brands to start doing something. But by family going away, you know, you lose the soul, you'll lose the style, you'll lose the knowhow. And it's inevitable. Without family, these wines go down in quality and in the end, it's in everything.

With us, we are very lucky because we had another wine family, the Louis Roederer family is a champagne house. And with the same values of of Ramos Pinto very very wine growing in its production. And they at that time it was Jean-Claude Rouzaud the CEO, He fell in love with the region with the Douro region. And he said this is the future of the wine. You know, you have so many different altitudes and expositions, 112 grape varieties. We have to we have to stay here. We have to have a foot here. We became the first wine house that the Louis Roederer family, bought, acquired. Today they have also wines from the Rhone, Provence Domaines Ott, they have from Bordeaux Pichon-Comtesse Lalande they have in the United States. And that was the first step at that time. And very important, they say we are family business, we know family. So we only buy and take over with. One condition is that you stay here, you stay and continue to manage the business and do your wines is always what we are going to do here. Going to help you out. Investing in vineyards, investing in wineries without our colleagues from Roederer really we we would not be here in terms of of of wine offer and quality if they were not there. And still today, it's amazing because the full respect that we get from them, you know, it's it even gets up to the results. They don't want results. They don't want to see us showing or presenting budgets with enormous result. No, they say invest, innovate. Take your time. We are just changing now. Replanting this year, 40 hectares of new vineyards and we were like a phrase what we are going to do this represents we are talking about €3 million and the I say worry invests time will we will come and in the next 2030 years you will see when we have such a solid background behind us, it's we even feel more sure of what we are doing with full family, Ramos Pinto character.