

WINE DESCRIPTION

DOW'S 2003 VINTAGE PORT


ESTABLISHED 1798

DOW'S PORT

Dow's

Dow's is owned and managed by the fourth generation of the Symington family, Port producers since the 19th Century. The family, whose experience dates back over 100 years, supervises all the vineyards, winemaking and ageing of this wine.

Dow's owns two of the Douro's finest Quintas, Senhora da Ribeira and Bomfim. They were acquired in 1890 and 1896, making Dow's one of the first houses to invest in premium vineyards.

Tasting Notes

Dark and intensely purple right up to the rim. On the nose, a restrained and subtle aroma of rockrose and gum-cistus. On the mouth the Dow's 2003 has powerful and rich tannins with immense ripe fruit flavours. There are layers of bitter chocolate flavours with the characteristic freshly-ground black pepper finish. Less intensely sweet than all other leading Vintage Ports, Dow's 2003 has the thoroughbred drier style that will give excellent ageing potential.

The Viticultural Year

Bud burst took place at Bomfim on the 15th March (with some variation for the different varieties), a little earlier than the norm due to warmer weather. April was quite damp, with a rather unwelcome 99mm of rain and preventative treatment was required both against mildew and oidium. Flowering took place under very good conditions in mid May, which was particularly dry. Veraison took place for Touriga Franca on 18th July followed by Barroca and Roriz. For Nacional, veraison only came in the first week of August. Then came the famous and much vaunted 'hot summer of 2003'. Thankfully, the heat did not persist and from the 14th temperatures returned to the more normal scales of between 34°C and 36°C. It was a little hot in September: daytime temperatures were in the low 30's and nighttime temperatures around 18°C. Consequently the grapes were coming into the wineries quite warm, especially in the afternoons. Cooling equipment was important. The fruit was in quite excellent condition and Baumés were very good indeed.

Reviews & Awards

93 out of 100 Points

"Aromas of blackberry and licorice follow through to a full-bodied palate, with lots of sweetness, fine tannins and a caressing, textured finish. Refined."

James Suckling, Wine Spectator, 30th April 2006

92 out of 100 Points

"The black kernel of flavour that often forms the core of a Dow vintage is there in this wine, surrounded in '03 by juicy sweetness. Firm, bitter chocolate tannins are present behind the lush, honeyed fruit; savoury herbs parallel the sweeter, floral tones..."

Joshua Greene, Wine & Spirits, December 2005

94 out of 100 Points

"The complex aromatics of the opaque, black-colored 2003 Dow Vintage Port display chocolate, dried oak, black cherries, blackberries, copious spices, and a myriad flowers. This fresh, backward wine offers a medium to full-bodied, deeply concentrated core of spice-laced dark fruits. Softly-textured and seductive in the mid-palate, it boasts abundant layers of candied Damson plums, blueberries, black cherries, molasses, and hints of chocolate before revealing its firm structure..."

Pierre Rovani, Wine Advocate, October 2005

95+ out of 100 Points

"... Rose petals and violets waft from within the glass and the nose is just fantastic. Seemingly more fruity than typical for Dow, the palate provides powerful plum and cassis with a mouth feel that makes a minute to figure out. Everything is big here: the fruit is ripe and concentrated, the tannins are chewy and astringent, while the acidity acts as the life support system at its core..."

Roy Hersh, For The Love of Port, 26th October 2005

Vintage Overview

The 2003 wines have great 'traditional' tannic structure with attractive ripe fruit flavours - classic Vintage Port. A general declaration.

Contemporary Family Comments

"It was deeply satisfying to have harvested such an excellent vintage before the rains came. It was also particularly pleasing to have had conditions that allowed for ripening so perfectly a vintage."

Charles Symington
October 2003

Wine Specifications

Alcohol: 20% vol (20°C)

Total acidity: 4.58 g/l tartaric acid

Baumé: 3.7

