

Graham's The Stone Terraces 2017 Vintage Port



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At Graham's flagship vineyard, Quinta dos Malvedos, the stone terraces that border the estate house have been meticulously groomed since the early 1900s to produce Ports of exceptional concentration and power, using viticultural techniques that have barely changed in over a hundred years. A relatively rare phenomenon in the Douro today due to their prohibitively high construction and maintenance costs, these schist walled terraces, with their unique ability to store the sun's daytime heat through the nocturnal hours, bring considerable benefits in the final stages of ripening.

The 2017 is only the fourth ever bottling of The Stone Terraces. The wine reflects the characteristics that have made this such an excellent year. We had an unusually precocious harvest. Picking began at Malvedos on 28th August and the last grapes came in on 15th September, a date on which we would more normally be starting. The hot and dry conditions for the year reduced yields overall in the Douro, although the Touriga Nacional which features so prominently in the Stone Terraces recorded yields of 750 grams per vine, which was only slightly less than normal.

The vinification of such small batches provides a challenge in itself and would scarcely be possible without the flexibility that is provided by Graham's modern lagares at the Malvedos winery, which can be filled to a relatively low level and operated at not much more than 25% of their full capacity when required. This is essential when vinifying what typically amounts to not much more than a few boxes of grapes from each of the Stone Terraces vineyard parcels, with quantities further reduced by rigorous bunch and berry selection and, in 2017, a very low yielding year. Treading in lagares allows us to maximise extraction from such unusually concentrated grapes. The contributing Stone Terraces vineyard parcels at Malvedos were parcel 37, known as 'Cardenhos', and parcel 43, called 'Port Arthur', each of them with little more than 1,300 vines.

Symington Family Tasting Room, 2019

Extraordinary scents of orange blossom and rockrose, with notes of pine needles and bergamot in the background. The palate is opulent and seductive, revealing mesmerising concentration and incredible intensity without detracting from the wine's exceptional structure and balance. Very fine acidity provides remarkable freshness, which reflects the cooler east and northeast facing stone terraced vineyards at Malvedos. This wine has to be tasted to be believed.

James Suckling, 2019

Score: 100 Points

The aromas here are amazing: crushed blueberries and raspberries with wet earth and dried flower. Orange blossom. Tar and stone. Full-bodied, very sweet but the powerful and fine-grained tannins balance the wine out. Tannins and fruit envelop your mouth with each sip. Great potential. Single vineyard Port. 600 cases. Try after 2030.

Fernando Melo, April 2019

Evasões

Score: 19,5/20

Another micro-terroir from the Symington stable that over time have revealed exception characteristics, this one, produced as the name suggests from the traditional Stone Terraces at Quinta dos Malvedos. Aromas of bergamot and tropical notes – passion fruit – which are also present on the palate. Very fine tannins, notable density, indestructible structure, and with very finely tuned acidity.

Julia Harding MW, 2019

<https://www.jancisrobinson.com/>

Score: 19,5

Black core with tiny narrow rim. Fragrant with lifted, floral black fruit. Wonderful complexity on the palate: those fresh dark fruits, some smoky earl grey tea leaf, and all that floral intensity even though there's masses of dark fruit. Tannins are incredibly silky, like slub silk, and add another layer of purity to a wonderfully expressive wine. Perfect harmony. (JH)20% Drink 2030-2070

José Afonso, May 2019

Grandes Escolhas

Score: 19,5 Points out of 20

Extremely concentrated, but without losing its elegance. Figs, a slight nuttiness, cedar resin, esteva, chocolate, citrus and some sage. Extremely aromatic and complex. On the palate it is generous, full-bodied and fathomless with vigorous but extremely silky tannins. Very complex, very long and unbelievably seductive.

Roger Voss, October 2019

Wine Enthusiast

Score: 98 Points ('Cellar Selection')

Rich tannins are balanced by the ripe blackberry fruits in this beautifully layered wine. Its acidity shines through enough for the intensely structured fruit and tannins to promise great aging potential. It is a fine wine that will be ready from 2028.

Visão Magazine, April 2019

Visão

Intense and deep colour, with sumptuous aromas, notes of esteva, orange blossom and tropical notes. The palate is concentrated, opulent, seductive, with perfect with structure and balance, it leaves a sensation of competence.

José Augusto Moreira, Abril 2019

Fugas

Score: 99

Due to its aromatic intensity, complex sensations of fruits... it has created a new quality standard. It will easily obtain the highest scores. Depth on the palate, opulent and seductive, and incredible intensity distinguish it from everything we are used to. It's something else! A novelty.

Nuno Guedes Vaz Pires, 2019

Revista de Vinhos

Score: 20/20

Black colour. Exotic and luxuriant aromas: black and red berries... saffron and other spices. Opulent and succulent, with great structure, very firm yet elegant tannins, with good acidity and freshness right to the end. And the finish is...never ending!! A wine that puts Vintage Port on a pedestal.

Ronald de Groot, 27 May 2019

Perswijn

Score: 19

Nose: intense, chocolate, spices and plums, violets. On the palate: lush and seductive, alcoholic, powerful.

James Molesworth, October 2019

Wine Spectator

Score: 98 Points

Packed with juicy, bramble-laced black currant, açai berry and fig notes, this features the vivid fruit and energy of the vintage. Graphite and tar flavors score the finish, giving this terrific cut and extra drive. Seriously long, with the fruit staying very persistent. This is built for the long haul and has a bit of a regal feel. Best from 2035 through 2060.—J.M.

Neil Martin, June 2019

Score: 97 Points

The 2017 Graham's The Stone Terraces Vintage Port is certainly a step up from the regular Graham's. The Stone Terraces takes its name from the terraces at Quinta dos Malvedos where it was picked from August 28 until September 15. This is more complex on the nose with compelling aromas of damson, bilberry, hints of lavender, orange blossom and camphor. The delineation is wonderful. The palate is medium-bodied with saturated tannin, brilliantly-judged acidity that counterbalances the intense black cherry, boysenberry and blueberry fruit. There is superb grip here and conveys a sense of symmetry that leaves you yearning for the next sip. This is the more erudite sibling of the regular Graham's that will deserve a decade in the cellar. Total production is 6,360 wax-sealed bottles, 180 magnum and 120 Tappit Hens.

Richard Mayson, July 2019

Decanter

Score: 99 Points

The fourth release of this wine from these east and north-east facing traditional stone terraces at Quinta dos Malvedos. It has magnificent colour and an extraordinary nose, lifted and powerfully ripe with glorious overlying floral aromas. It has succulent berry fruit and massive concentration in the mouth – magnificent, the quintessence of the finest Douro fruit. Powerful, muscular tannins stack up to a broad and ripe finish, leaving a mouth watering, almost Burgundian, freshness that seems to be one of the hallmarks of the best wines in this vintage. Outstanding. Just 6,360 bottles produced.

Drinking Window 2035 – 2060