

**WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY**  
**March 2025 Tasting**  
**The Wines of Quinta de Pedra Alta**  
**Presented by Andy Brown**

This month we welcomed Andy Brown, who was presenting to us for the first time. Andy is the Commercial Director for Quinta da Pedra Alta, a winery with a long history based in the Douro Valley region of Portugal. Andy has been the Commercial Director for over 6 years, building on a career in the wine industry which goes back 30 years. It is exciting when a Society can do a whole evening tasting wines from a single portfolio as it means members can explore the whole range of their wines. We started with a couple of white wines before moving on to taste three reds. As it was the Douro we had to finish with some port wines! All the wines of the Pedra Alta are blends, several made with grapes from vines that are more than 40 years old. This enables us to see how the winemaker influences the style and character of the wines through the careful blending of different varieties.

The Pedra da Alta wine estate lies on the steep valley sides of the of the Pinhao River, a tributary of the Douro, east of Porto. Its parallel rows of vines snake round the steep valley sides providing multiple aspects for vine growing. The estate lies within the demarcated area for the production of port wines and since the late '90s and early 2000s DOC Douro table wines have been produced here. The current owners took over the estate in 2018 and have since then focused on the production of high quality wines from blends of indigenous grapes with minimal intervention.

Our tasting began with a welcome wine - a **QPA Prova No. 6 Rose 2023** [£19.50, 11%] that had a barely visible pink colour though being made from the free run juice of Touriga Nacional grapes and it was light in all aspects alcohol/aromas and flavour. Perhaps a wine for rose fanatics?

The more serious tasting began with two white wines, the first of which was a **Pedra da Pedra Branco 2023** [£17.50, 11.5%] a 59/41% Rabigato/Gouveio blend that had a very pale lemon colour and without oak. This was clean, light and refreshing despite the lower alcohol.

The second white was a **Reserva Branco 2022** a three grape blend 67/29/4% of Viosinho/Gouveio/Donzelinho Branco [£26.50, 12.5%] with a pale lemon colour. This was more of a food wine, with more flavour from the main old, low-yielding grape variety and barrel fermentation adding texture and complexity - excellent with creamy bacalhau!

The evening's full house looked forward to the three red wines, the first of which was a **Pedra a Pedra Tinto 2022** [£17.50, 14%] blended from 51/34/11/4% of Touriga Nacional/Tinta Barroca/Touiga Franca/Sausao each adding different elements to this deep black-cherry-coloured wine. Berry aromas and flavours dominated with a good acidity level - a most approachable flavoursome wine!

The **QPA Prova No. 2 Tinto 2015** [£25.00, 13.5%] was a 'test' type wine of mainly Tinta Roriz and included old vines from a neighbouring estate. Dark cherry-red in colour with subtle fruit on the nose, this was a more restrained and elegant style of wine.

Our final red was a **Rio Tinto 2018** [£45.00, 14.5%] a predominant Touriga Franca 99% wine. Another dark, black-cherry coloured wine looked dense in the glass; berry-fruit flora and flavours dominated in this powerful, rich and full-bodied wine - excellent, but expensive!

And then came the ports! Our first was a **Pedra No. 03 White Port** [50cl £21.00, 18%] with a pale lemon colour made from a blend of 51/25/13/11% Rabigat/Gouveio/Viosinho/Donzelinho Branco grapes and intended as a 'new style' white port. Served chilled, sweet aromas and flavours dominated and for some members it was overly sweet. Apparently in Portugal it is served with tonic and ice!

Our penultimate wine was an **Alta No. 10 Ten-Year-Old-Tawny Port** [50cl £27.00, 19%] that was mid-red-berry colour and translucent. A blend of four grapes [Tinta Roriz/Barraca and Touriga Nacional/Franca] this was a luscious, complex and elegant Tawny Port and much preferred.

And finally, to the vintage port - a **Vintage Port 2018** [£52.00, 19.5%] made from 5 grape varieties, 49/27.5/13/9/1.5% of Touriga Nacional/Touriga Franca/Tinta Roriz/Sousao/Tinta Barroca. Dense black-cherry in colour emitting sweet berry aromas, on the palate this felt clean and light whilst being rich, restrained and elegant. And it should age well for another 20 years! It was a wonderful conclusion to a most enjoyable and interesting tasting.

Members present extend their heartfelt thanks to Andy for his informative and well-delivered presentation that provided a fascinating insight into the development of wine making in one Portuguese winery.