

WINE DESCRIPTION

DOW'S 1966 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

After more than four decades, this wine has reached full maturity but still has plenty of structure and balance for extended ageing for many years to come. For the first 20 years of its life, this 1966 showed great depth of fruit, supporting the fruit were strong tannins and good acidity. This is clearly seen in the excellent wine that we taste today. The fruit is still present but balanced with long almond and caramel flavours, the result of long years gently maturing in bottle. The colour has faded to a soft red/golden hue. The nose is complex, rich and long. The powerful nature of this year has suited the Dow style admirably. Dow's tends to be a shade drier than other Vintage Ports, this slightly 'austere' style fits well with the years when there is an abundance of ripe fruit flavours in the wine.

The Viticultural Year

1966 was a wet winter in the Douro. May brought storms and low temperatures; fruit set was reduced as a result. July was fine and hot, but plenty of leaf growth prevented damage to the grapes. August was also very hot, but the vines resisted well due to the good water reserves in the soil.

Reviews & Awards

Five Stars (Outstanding)

"At Dow's Bicentenary tasting in 1998, a well-nigh perfect bottle, fragrant, very sweet yet with a Dow dry finish. Most recently: lovely, evolved, slightly spicity; very sweet for Dow, delicious, perfect now."

Michael Broadbent, *Vintage Wine*, Published 2002

94 Points out of 100

"This is an extremely racy and totally harmonious Vintage Port, with wonderful fresh aromas of flowers, fruit and berries. Full-bodied, with a sweet yet firm palate. Long, long finish. Super."

James Suckling, *Wine Spectator*, December 1999

"An attractive harmonious almost creamy bouquet, more flesh and body, also with citrus-like zest. My top mark of the dozen 1966's."

Michael Broadbent, *Decanter*, November 1993

"Dow: still subdued on the nose with plenty to go at, tight and tannic with bitter chocolate intensity. Restrained. This is up with the gods of 1963."

Richard Mayson, *Decanter*, November 1999

19 Points out of 20

"Fullish colour. No undue age. Full, rich and profound. Fresh and classy and on the dry side. Very fine quality here. Subtle. Multi-dimensional. Bags of life. Very lovely."

Clive Coates, *The Vine*, July 1999

Peter Symington, responsible with his son Charles for the vineyards and wine making, has been made 'Fortified Wine Maker of the Year' an extraordinary 6 times by the 'Wine Challenge'. Nobody else has won this important award more than twice. In 2003, his son Charles won the same award.

Vintage Overview

An outstanding vintage of exceptional quality. Rather unjustly overshadowed by the 1963. In recent years 1966 has become recognised as being one of the very best post-war Vintage Ports. Declared by most of the major Port houses. When young these were big, solid and well-built wines, with a perfect balance of tannins, fruit and acidity.

Contemporary Family Comments

"August was exceptionally hot, twice 45°C. was recorded. Fortunately the month ended with cooler weather and a little rain fell, but the first week saw a return to fine hot weather. The exceptionally wet winter left good reserves of moisture in the soil and leaf growth is above average, the prospects for quality are good."

Michael Symington
6th September 1966

Wine Specifications

Alcohol: 21% vol (20°C)

Total acidity: 3.9 g/l tartaric acid

Baumé: 3.5

