WINE DESCRIPTION

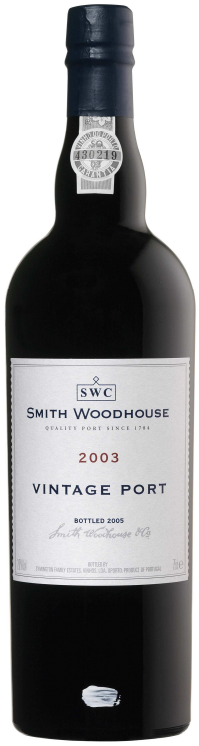
SMITH WOODHOUSE 2003 VINTAGE PORT

SMITH WOODHOUSE

Smith Woodhouse is a specialist producer of premium quality Ports. The uniformity of this quality is underpinned by Smith Woodhouse's own Madalena vineyard from where the wines are largely sourced. This small Quinta (vineyard property) has the highest "A" quality rating and is located in the Rio Torto district, acknowledged as one of the finest Port growing areas. Over the coming years, the recently acquired Quinta do Vale Coelho, further upriver in the Douro Superior, producing full and elegant wines, will gradually form an important component of Smith Woodhouse's Ports.

THE VITICULTURAL YEAR

The winter leading up to the 2003 vintage was unusually wet, with double the normal rainfall, but this was balanced by higher than normal temperatures throughout the year. Budburst came early after a warm spring, in mid-march. Excellent flowering conditions and continued hot weather greatly benefited the development of the bunches, and some welcome rain refreshed the vineyards in July. The intense heat of the summer months hastened the ripening of the fruit. The harvest started on the 22nd September, under ideal conditions, and just in time to avoid the first heavy rains of the coming autumn. The yields were low but the grape-musts had intense colour and aroma, clearly destined to develop into superb wines.



Vintage Overview

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

Tasting Notes

Very dark, opaque. Lifted floral aromas on the nose. Combination of floral notes and "esteva" with spicy peppery undertones. Very powerful and rich with tightly packed layers of ripe berry fruit flavours on the palate which provide a persistent, very long aftertaste, also suggesting hints of dark chocolate.

Contemporary Family Comments

"It is rare to have such good weather and the grapes in such good condition. Baumés were not too high and acidity levels were normal, both clear proof that we had not had excessive heat. Yields were very low as is the norm for the Douro. Barroca made good structured wines, particularly from the meia-encosta vineyards. The Nacional and Touriga Franca performed particularly well, giving wines with lifted aromas, powerful colour and ripe tannins"

Charles Symington, October 2003

Food pairing suggestion and serving

Smith Woodhouse 2003 Vintage Port is a fabulous way to end a lunch or dinner. It pairs wonderfully with chocolate desserts, such as chocolate mousse, but it can also be enjoyed on its own, providing a memorable moment in the company of good friends.

Storage

Store the bottle horizontally in a dark place with constant temperature, ideally between 12ºC and 15ºC.

Decanting

Stand the bottle upright for a short while before you intend to decant (20 to 30 minutes at most). Pull the cork slowly and steadily and leave the bottle for a few minutes. Clean the neck of the bottle. Pour the wine into a clean and rinsed decanter. Once you have started pouring do not stop until you see the very first traces of sediment begin to appear out of the bottle. You may prefer to use a decanting funnel.

Wine Specifications

Alcohol: 20% vol (20ºC)

Total acidity: 4.5 g/l tartaric acid

Baumé: 3.8

Reviews & Awards

SILVER MEDAL

International Wine Challenge 2006

"Intense, pungent nose. Complex, fine. Very fresh fruit, clean. Full palate, fresh, has depth and structure."

18 out of 20 points

"Purplish crimson. Vigorous, savoury, not especially sweet. Grown-up vintage port. Lovely weight and integration. Already hints at complex flavours to come."

Jancis Robinson, jancisrobinson.com, May 2005

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.