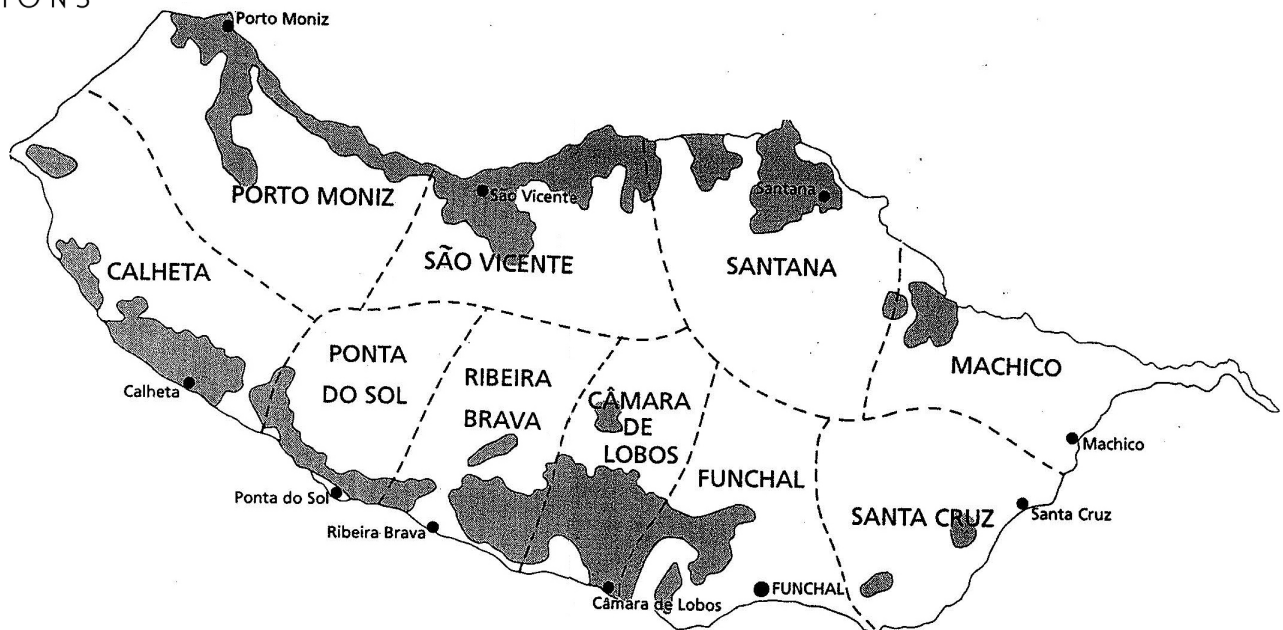




POLANER
SELECTIONS

Madeira Primer



Place: 360 miles west of Morocco. 700 miles south of Portugal of which it is politically connected
Climate: Ocean/tropical – humid with rain
Soil: Volcanic/basaltic and on steep mountain sides
White Grapes: Boal, Malvasia, Sercial, Terrantez, Verdelho, Moscatel
Red Grapes: Bastardo, Tinta Negra Mole

STYLES/LABELS

- Varietally Labeled Wines – 85% must be from named variety
- Vintage wines or Frasqueira – must be aged for a minimum of 20 years in cask. 85% must be from the variety and 85% must be of the vintage on the label.
- Colheita or Harvest – must be aged for a minimum of 5 years in cask. 85% variety named and 85% from vintage named.
- Sercial - 0.5 degrees to 1.5 degrees Baumé.
- Verdelho - 1.5 degrees to 2.5 degrees Baumé.
- Bual (aka Boal) - 2.5 degrees to 3.5 degrees Baumé.
- Malmsey (aka Malvasia/Malvazia) - 3.5 degrees to 6.2 degrees Baumé.

VINIFICATION/AGING

- Vinification – much like standard wines. Grapes are harvested, crushed, pressed and fermented. Most varieties, reds especially are separated from the skins. Ricardo Freitas of Barbeito does some skin contact in whites.
- Fortification – quality wines have fermentation halted by fortification when the wine is at the desired sugar level.
- Estufa or oven – this is the aging process meant to duplicate long sea voyages in cask through tropical climates by instead artificially heating the wines.
- Canteiro method – top quality wines such as ours are all done this way. This method means the wines are aged without the use of artificial heating and simply by being stored in warm rooms of the winery for many years of aging.



POLANER
SELECTIONS

Madeira Primer

HISTORY & AMERICA

Madeira: America's First Wine.

Madeira took a big boost in the colonies in 1665 when the British banned the importation of products made in Europe unless shipped on a British vessel from a British port. Madeira was specifically exempted.

For two centuries, Madeira was the wine of choice for most affluent Americans. Francis Scott Keyes is said to have penned the Stars Spangled Banner, sipping from a glass of Madeira. George Washington's inauguration was toasted with Madeira, as was the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Wealthy families from Boston to Savannah established extensive collections of Madeira. Madeira became high fashion, and "Madeira parties" (forerunner of today's wine tastings) became major social events.

D'OLIVEIRA

- Of the 100s of families that produced and shipped madeira over the centuries only 4 remain – Blandy, Borges, D'Oliveira and Barbeito.
- D'Oliveira is one of three independent companies to have survived from the pre-phylloxera era and managed to do so through its great stocks of very old wines.
- Founded in 1820 and housed in a cellar dating back to 1619, D'Oliveira was able to amass a good deal of wine through marriages with other wine producing families.
- No other continually family run and owned producer has such large stocks of old wines that they made from estate vineyards and aged in their cellars.
- The finest reputation for classic Madeira – when the Madeira Wine Co. (Blandy's, Cossart) ran short of old vintages in the 70's and 80's they turned to D'Oliveira
- They believe in cask aging and only bottle based on demand.

BARBEITO STORY

- Of the 4 remaining madeira families Barbeito is the only one founded post phylloxera in 1946.
- During World War II, production and sales of Madeira ground to a virtual halt. The U.S. market disappeared because of a government ban on poorly made Portuguese glass bottles. And for six years, marauding U-boats made it nearly impossible to ship wine to Madeira's most important market, the United Kingdom.
- Mario Barbeito believed simply that the price of madeira would only go up as it got older and so he began searching the island and buying up as much of the great old wines as he could. Instead of selling the great old wines, he held them as "nest eggs" content to age them and make money off of more modest wines
- Manuela, his daughter took over the business after his death and she too kept her father's thought process and held on to the older wines while collecting even more great old wines...like the 1795 Terrantez and 1834 and 1875 Malvasias.

RICARDO FREITAS BARBEITO

- In the 1990's, Manuela began letting her son Ricardo take over the reigns. Armed with a history degree from Lisbon and a great respect for classic madeira and the wine's history, he partnered with Rare Wine Co. to create the Historic Series Wines.
- He also continues to collect and search out old wines on the island, as he finds them, just like his mother and grandfather.
- He is also building his own legacy with his "Signature" series of wines where he combines the best elements of Madeira's classical tradition with his own quest for purity and, vineyard and varietal expression. These wines, made in tiny lots, with their astonishingly graceful style, has prompted British wine critic Jancis Robinson to call Barbeito the "Lafite of Madeira."
- Ricardo is a believer in the importance of Tinto Negra Mole and its ability to make great classic madeira. He has helped push the Madeira Wine Institute to allow it to be mentioned on a label and added to the "noble" varieties. Signs show he will win this fight!