

CROFT 2009 VINTAGE DECLARATION



Croft is pleased to announce that it has declared the 2009 vintage.

Croft's CEO, Adrian Bridge, commented: '2011 will mark the tenth anniversary of Croft's return to family ownership. Our investments at Quinta da Roêda continue to enhance the reputation of this iconic vineyard and have borne fruit in the fourth vintage to be declared since we acquired the property. It therefore gives me particular pleasure to announce the declaration of the Croft 2009.'



A year of low productivity and dry conditions during the ripening season, 2009 will be remembered as a year of very dense, concentrated, deeply coloured wines with considerable ageing potential. However they also impress with their fruit quality and their multidimensional complexity.



Croft's head wine maker David Guimaraens noted: 'The return to traditional foot treading at Quinta da Roêda means that we could bring out the best in the 2009 wines. We were able to extract all the density and the massive tannins typical of the year without sacrificing complexity and finesse.'



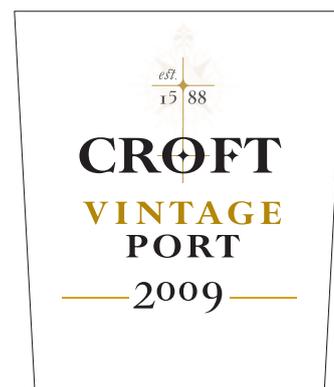
Head viticulturist António Magalhães remarked: 'Roêda is a very large property. Although we have replanted extensively we can continue to draw from the historic parts of the vineyard, which are the essence of this unique terroir, for our vintage ports.'

The Croft 2009 vintage blend is made up entirely of wines from Quinta da Roêda and displays the distinctive scented quality and rich round fruitiness which are the hallmarks of the estate's wines. All the wine was made in traditional lagares.

Owing to the very low yields at the 2009 harvest, the amount of vintage port is less than in the previous three declared years.

Tasting Notes:

Deep purple black. The nose combines an opulent and seductive fruitiness with an intricate kaleidoscope of complex multidimensional aroma. Pungent resinous scents of eucalyptus and rock rose, notes of lychee and passion-fruit combine with exotic hints of leather, musk and cedar. The palate is round and velvety and the dense but well integrated tannins are wrapped in a cloak of succulent berry fruit flavour. The jammy fruit carries through into the finish where it is lifted by an attractive crispness and pungency.



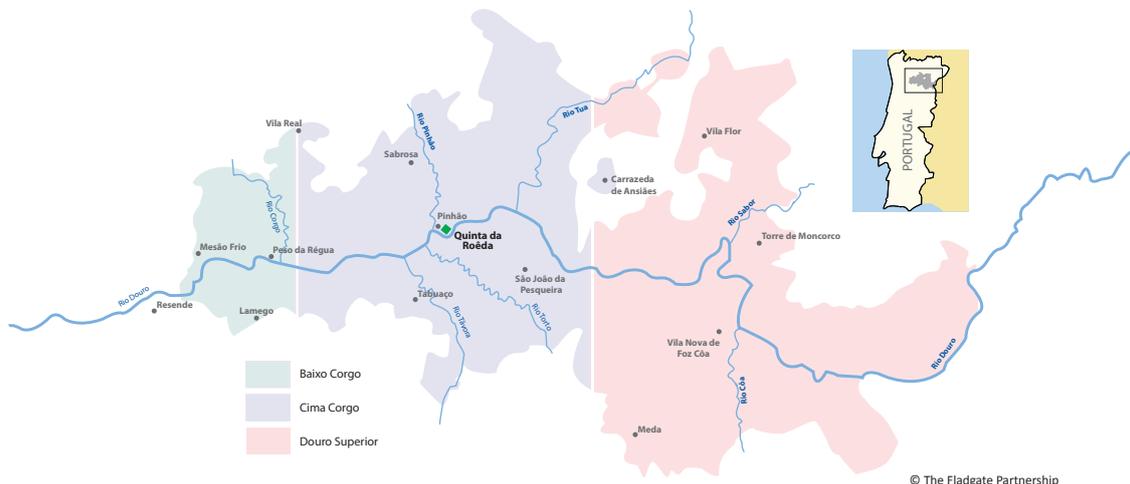


Quinta da Roêda

Quinta da Roêda forms a vast sweep of terraced vineyard located on the north bank of the Douro just upstream from the village of Pinhão. The estate has long been regarded as one of the finest of the Douro Valley estates. The 19th century poet Vega Cabral wrote, 'If the Douro may be called the golden ring of Portugal, then Quinta da Roêda is the diamond set in that ring.' The estate was acquired by Croft in 1889 and was extensively renovated by the firm, with replanting continuing throughout the first half of the 20th century. Since Croft's return to family ownership, with its incorporation into the Fladgate Partnership, the property has again been the source of major investment. This includes the building of traditional lagares (granite treading tanks) allowing the reintroduction of foot treading, still unsurpassed as a method of extraction for vintage port.

The character of Croft Vintage Ports is one of the most individual of all. Scented, exotic and crammed with luscious opulent fruit flavour, they develop great richness and complexity with age. Quinta da Roêda is at the heart of this distinctive house style. Its wines always form the base for the Croft Vintage Port blend and, in the case of the 2009, all the components of the blend in fact come from the property, including wines from the estate's extensive terraces of old vines.

Before dams tamed the Douro in the last decades of the 20th century, it flowed over a series of treacherous, fast running rapids. One of these was located on the curve of the river in front of Quinta da Roêda and the sound of the water rushing over the boulder-strewn riverbed could be heard throughout the vineyard. The name Roêda is said to be derived from the word that described that sound, 'arrueda'.



Notes on the 2009 viticultural year and harvest

2009 was marked by an early start to the viticultural cycle. At Croft's Quinta da Roêda the first buds began to appear on 8th March. The shoots were vigorous and the vines produced very healthy leaf canopies. However all varieties showed low fertility and produced a small amount of fruit. The first signs of colour in the grapes also appeared earlier than usual. The ripening season started with relatively cool conditions which continued throughout July but in August the weather turned very hot. Almost no rain fell during the summer and the very dry conditions remained into September. The combination of the arid conditions and the small amount of fruit meant that yields were very low and musts showed above average concentration in sugar, tannin and colour. Picking at Quinta da Roêda started earlier than usual on 9th September.