

Mais do que uvas verdes

More than green grapes



DELECTABLE

It is very easy to dismiss a region, a grape, or a style. People think **Vinho Verde** is...well to sound like an earlier me, "It just means green wine, right?" Or it's assumed Vinho Verde is a fun white wine with a bit of spritz to it. Which it can be. They exist. But, Vinho Verde is not in fact a TYPE of wine.

It's a PLACE of wine.

Vinho Verde is a denomination of origin (DO) in **Portugal**, just to the west of the **Douro valley**, where **Port** comes from. The name comes from the fact that the land there is very green. Which should lead logically to another name.

Sadly, Greenland stole that marketing thunder. But Vinho Verde is greener.

Beyond those spritzty whites, it also makes full-on sparkling, red, rosé, sweet wine, and some distilled wine spirits. Also vinegar. But you probably shouldn't drink that. Unless...well I actually think I did just say it's okay to drink tasty balsamic in my **sweet wine column** so you do you boo.

In hopes of finding all the good and colorful wines of the region, I went to investigate, knowing not a lick of Portuguese. But I'm pretty good at Spanish and French. Plus, my first landlord in LA was Brazilian with spotty English and WE managed to communicate in a Spani-Portu-Glish language mish-mash, so I had high hopes that between Please, Thank You, and But Do You Have Cheese, I'd be okay.

Spoiler alert: Not once did I have to use the last of those phrases. There was ample cheese and bread at every meal. Portugal may just be my true home.

Although I didn't see any fries there, so maybe not.

To be fair, some of the wines I am including here did not have the official "Vinho Verde" seal, but instead are labeled as "Minho" or just a wine of Portugal. There are a variety of reasons for this. To be labeled as "Vinho Verde" requires adhering to the strict guidelines: grape, region, preparation techniques and taste all factor in.

Now, let me turn you on to the multi-colored stylings of the most excellent Vinho Verde.

BUBBLES

*** 2016 Quinta de Soalheiro Natur Pur Terroir Alvarinho

Imagine some lemon meringue pie with that slightly sweetened caramelized topping. But, like... it is not sweet. It is full and complex and will fill your soul.

And now for those winery profiles!

*** Quinta de Soalheiro

Experimental playing pushing making phenomenal wine. Truly a Wine Playground. Also they make sausages which, if you get into conversation with their winemaker and everyone is feeling cheeky, will make sense. As will the fact that they have the balls to make wines using eggs. Concrete eggs, that is. As well as vessels resembling Georgian qvevri/amphorae hybrids, stainless steel tanks, chestnut barrels, and oak as well! And lone tank of Sauvignon Blanc keeps a lineup of Alvarinho peppy and everyone guessing. Also in my top three. I'm not naming any more of the top three because it is too soul rending.
