

Taylor Fladgate 2009 Vintage Declaration



TAYLOR FLADGATE®

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

Commenting on the declaration, Taylor Fladgate CEO Adrian Bridge said: 'I am delighted to announce our decision to release a declared vintage from 2009. The year has produced wines of massive scale, not unlike the iconic vintage ports of the early twentieth century. They are wines built to last.'

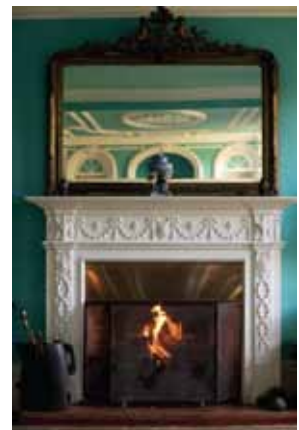
The last decade has been unusually prolific in great years for classic vintage port. The Taylor Fladgate 2009 follows a series of three outstanding vintages, 2000, 2003 and 2007. Adrian Bridge remarked: 'The 2009 is the fourth declaration in a decade. In over three centuries of Taylor Fladgate history, a sequence of great vintages like this has been very rare.' He added, 'It is also remarkable that these four years have produced wines so different from one another but all unmistakably Taylor Fladgate in style'.

2009 will be remembered in the Douro Valley for its dry summer, low production and very concentrated juice. Head winemaker David Guimaraens commented: 'The low yields produced wines with enormous density of colour and excellent tannic grip. However they also display good acidity and wonderfully complex fruit.' The Taylor Fladgate 2009 blend is based on the wines of Quinta de Vargellas and Quinta de Terra Feita. Since 2000, the firm's third property, Quinta do Junco, has also made a small contribution to the blend and has done so again in 2009.

Quantities are smaller than those of the three preceding classic vintages.

Tasting note

Inky black with purple rim. A nose of great purity opening on a vigorous note of concentrated black woodland fruit laced with raspberry and plum. Around this dense fruity core, with its attractive vibrancy and minerality, is a fragrant and complex aura of citrus fruit blossom and wild herbal scents of mint and lavender. Supported by a tight warp of thick sinewy tannins, the palate explodes with concentrated ripe black fruit flavour which surges into the long finish before being gripped in a tight tannic embrace. A wine which manages to combine the massive structure and powerful fruitiness of the 2009 harvest with elegance, poise and finesse.





Quinta de Vargellas

The wines of Quinta de Vargellas traditionally form the 'backbone' of the Taylor Fladgate Vintage Port blend. This outstanding estate, recognised as one of the world's finest vineyards, was acquired by Taylor Fladgate in 1893 although its reputation as a source of the finest ports dates back to the 1820's. Located in the remote eastern reaches of the Douro Valley, Vargellas is known for its elegant, scented wines, with their fine focused fruit and well integrated sinewy tannins. It is also known as a source of one of the rarest and most collectible vintage ports of all, Vargellas Vinha Velha, made in very small quantities from the produce of the oldest vines on the estate.



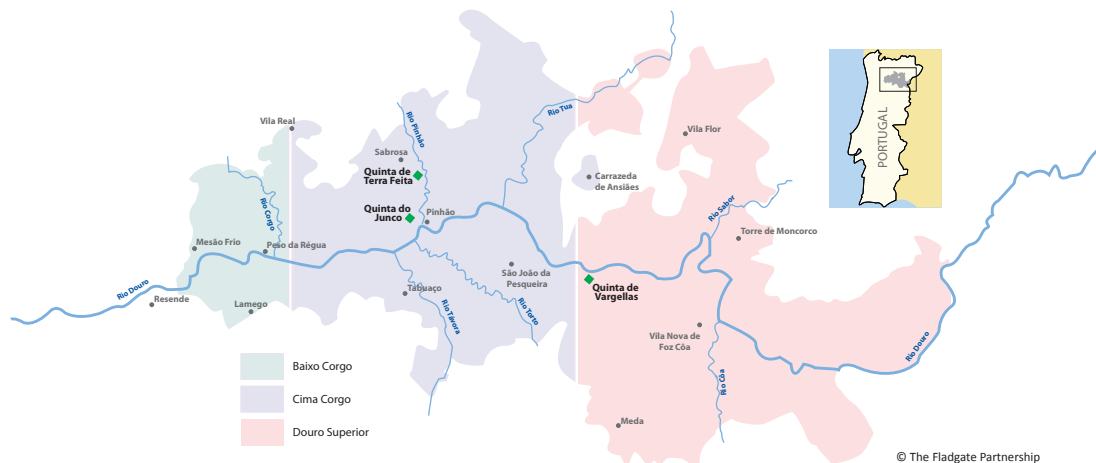
Quinta de Terra Feita

Also a traditional component of Taylor Fladgate classic vintage ports, the wines of Quinta de Terra Feita are full bodied, powerful and full of rich berry fruit flavour. They provide depth and volume to the blend. Located on the warm lower slopes of the Pinhão Valley, Terra Feita is one of the oldest port estates. Already identified as a source of the finest ports in the 1757 classification of Douro vineyards, Terra Feita has supplied Taylor Fladgate with outstanding wines since the 1890's. Acquired by Taylor Fladgate 37 years ago, the property has been the site of pioneering work in batch planting and vineyard landscaping.



Quinta do Junco

Quinta do Junco is another famous old Pinhão Valley estate which by 1761 had achieved 'feitoria' status, then the highest classification for a port vineyard. A relatively recent addition to the Taylor Fladgate stable, Junco's contribution to the Taylor Fladgate vintage port blend is small but increasingly important. Its wines are massive in scale, lending an additional layer of density and structure to the blend. Occupying a steep but open south facing hillside to the west of the Pinhão river, the vineyards of Quinta do Junco are well exposed to both sun and wind, benefiting from long hours of sunlight but avoiding the intense heat of less well aerated locations. A large area of the property was replanted by Taylor Fladgate in vertical rows, a system which has benefits for both wine quality and the environment. However the estate also includes 15 hectares of very old vines planted on traditional walled terraces.



Notes on the 2009 viticultural year and harvest

2009 will be remembered as a year of very low yields. This was partly due to the fact that the vines did not produce much fruit and also to the effect of the very dry ripening season. Dormancy ended very early, with bud burst starting at Pinhão in the first week of March. All vine varieties showed low fertility although the vegetation was healthy and vigorous. Véraison (colouring of the grapes) also occurred earlier than usual. The ripening season started with relatively cool weather which continued throughout July but in August this turned to intense heat. From July right through to the harvest in September, there was almost no rain. These hot, arid conditions produced concentrated musts, rich in colour, tannins and sugar and by early September the grapes had reached phenolic maturity. An early start to the harvest on the Taylor Fladgate estates ensured that the wines had a good acid balance and avoided over-ripeness. Picking started on 12th September at Vargellas, in the hotter eastern reaches of the Douro, and on 16th and 17th respectively in the two Pinhão Valley estates, Junco and Terra Feita.