



MADROÑA

Did You Know? New-World and Old-World Port Facts



February 1st - Port is a fortified wine originating from the Douro Valley in northern Portugal.

February 2nd - The innovation of adding brandy (fortification) to wines came about as a way to stabilize wines for travel by ship between Portugal, where the wine was produced, and British Isles, which was the primary market.

February 3rd - The creation of Port came about in large part due to the fact that English had a taste for wines, but were frequently at war with the major wine producing nations of Europe: France and Spain. The English needed another source of wine, and then needed a solution to safely transport it.

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February 5th - In 1857 President James Buchanan was presented a case of "Fine Old California Port" by William Wolfskill, a vintner in Los Angeles. The President was impressed, declaring that California would be "a great wine producing country".

February 6th - The first known Port wine made in California was produced by French emigrant and California wine pioneer Jean Louis Vignes in the late 1830's.



February 7th - Port is made using Portuguese varieties; there are 48 grape varieties permitted in Portugal for the production of Port. Of these 48, Madroña grows 71 can you name them?

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February 8th - Tinta Roriz, one of the six varieties most highly regarded in Portugal, is called Tempranillo in Spain. It is the primary variety of Rioja.

February 9th - Port is classified into several different styles, each with a legal definition. There are eleven primary classifications of Port style: Ruby, Ruby Reserve (formerly Vintage Character), Tawny, Aged Tawny, Colheita, Crusted, Vintage Port (VP), Late Bottled Vintage (LBV), Single Quinta Vintage Port (SQVP), and White Port. These classifications are based on the type of grapes, and how they are selected, vinified, stored and aged.

February 10th - Port and chocolate is considered a classic combination, but savory cheeses, especially blue cheeses, invariably pair well.

February 11th - Many sweet or dessert wines claim to be "port-style", but for a wine to meet the legal definition of Port, it must have an alcohol content of between 18% and 22%.

February 12th - Madroña has been making traditional Ruby Port since the early 1980's, both under the Madroña label and for St. Amant Winery in Lodi.

February 13th - Madroña's New World Port can be classified a Single Quinta Vintage Port and/or a Vintage Port, and is made from Touriga Nacional, Tinta Cao, Tinta Roriz, Alvarhao, Tinta Amarela, Souzao, and Bastardo.

February 14th - One of our favorite ways to accompany Port is with the Port Sampler Plate. Easy to do - simply grab a nice Bleu cheese (we prefer Valdeon), some dark chocolates, and some walnuts. Arrange on a serving platter and pass with the Port. It is a great way to sample the many flavors that work well with Port.

February 15th - Many people associate Port with dessert, but it makes a great aperitif (before dinner) for special occasions.

February 16th - Port is typically sturdier than table wines after having been opened. Ruby Ports can last a week or more opened; Tawny style Ports can last a very long time after opening, as they have already experienced oxidation during their production.