

CHRYSEIA

DOURO

The Symington family aimed to ally its extensive knowledge of the different Douro *terroirs* and grape varieties to the experience of Bruno PRATS in the Bordeaux region so that together they could produce wine from the best grapes grown on the best plots on the best estates, in true Bordeaux spirit.

Andrew James Symington first became established in the city of Porto in 1882. He quickly became a Port wine shipper and in 1914 assumed control of Warre's. The descendants of his three sons are nowadays the owners of Warre's, Dow's and Graham's, in addition to numerous estates which include some of the best in Cima Corgo. Charles Symington, following his recently retired father Peter is responsible for technical and production management, whilst Rupert, Paul, John and Dominic travel all over the world sharing the magic and secrets of their vintages.

After the sale of the *Château Cos d'Estournel* which he had managed for thirty years, Bruno Prats turned his wine growing activities to *Viña Aquitania* in Chile, to *Anwilka* in South Africa and more recently to *Alfina!* in Spain. The friendship between Bruno Prats and the Symington family was developed through *Primum Familiae Vini*, to which *Cos d'Estournel* also belonged.

In November 1998, James Symington proposed that Bruno Prats should take part in his project to produce a quality, non-fortified Douro wine. This proposal took shape in 1999 with the creation of PRATS & SYMINGTON. Experimental production in this first year enabled the best plots and most suitable grape varieties for the project to be selected.

The CHRYSEIA 2000 was the first commercially developed vintage.

CHRYSEIA is produced from selected plots on the best properties – or estates – belonging to the Symington family, namely Quinta do Bomfim, Vesúvio, and Vila Velha as well as two quintas belonging to Prats & Symington: Quinta da Perdiz, acquired in 2004 and Quinta de Roriz, acquired in 2009. With the acquisition of Quinta de Roriz, one of Douro's most prestigious historical quintas, the CHRYSEIA range has not only found a new source of grapes of great quality but also a prestigious home that matches the level of excellence that has been achieved since 2000.

In addition to the exceptional intrinsic quality of their *terroirs*, these estates offer another advantage which is unusual in the region, namely the many single-variety plots instead of the traditional mixed plots that are more typical of the region. These plots, which are planted by grape variety, may be harvested individually when the grapes are perfect and the wine can be produced separately up to the final stage of blending. Grapes are still harvested in the Douro region by hand, using small carrying boxes. The choice of plot and grape variety may vary from one harvest to the next, according to specific conditions. Touriga Nacional (40% to 60% of the final blend), an early, low-yield variety, provides the aromatic *finesse* of floral notes and silky tannins. Touriga Franca (40% to 60% of the final blend) is the most fully-rounded variety and supplies body and tannic structure. Tinta Roriz (known as *Tempranillo* in Spain) is used with discretion to provide peppery notes, as is Tinto Cão, a slightly later developing variety.

CHRYSEIA was produced at Quinta do Sol, near Régua until 2008. Since 2009, vinification takes place at Quinta de Roriz. After manual sorting out, the grapes are gently destemmed and crushed before fermenting in small temperature controlled stainless steel vats. Tannins are extracted by pumping over and prolonged maceration after fermentation. The main concern is to respect the essential characteristics of the grapes whilst also obtaining a balance with *finesse* which is light and favours the elegant, silky tannins. Charles Symington and Bruno Prats are personally involved in producing the final blends and during all the vital stages of production, from vinification to ageing.

Ageing takes place in new French oak barrels in a schist walled cellars. To prevent an excess of woody flavours which could compromise the aromatic *finesse* of the wine, CHRYSEIA is only allowed to age in barrels for a short period of time – 8 to 12 months – according to the year in question. 400-litre barrels are used to reduce the surface/volume ratio. Bottling takes place at Vila Nova de Gaia in the modern bottling centre owned by the Symington family.

CHRYSEIA was one of the pioneers in the now widely-recognised resurgence of non-fortified DOURO DOC wines. However, this wine, whose name means "golden" in ancient Greek – as does the name of the river in Portuguese – has remained true to its own style. Elegance and balance predominate and it has depth without heaviness and body without sharpness. CHRYSEIA symbolises the union of a noble Portuguese tradition and an equally rich Bordeaux tradition in the creation of a new and modern product.

