

## MÁRCIO LOPES Pequenos Rebentos

### DOC Vinho Verde (Monção e Melgaço sub-region)

We reckon this guy is one to watch!

Márcio is a young winemaker and micro-negociant, originally from Porto, born into an agricultural family. His studies of agronomic engineering took him to Melgaço in northern border country, where he became acquainted with Alvarinho (Albariño). Converted to wine-making, he came to Australia to do vintages in Rutherglen and Tasmania. Upon returning to Portugal in 2010 he began working on a handful of passion projects. Pequenos Rebentos (meaning ‘small sprouts’) was the first-born, based in the Vinho Verde appellation, mainly working with Alvarinho from the Monção and Melgaço sub-zones, and with Loureiro from Lima Valley. Márcio also has little projects in Ribeira Sacra, the Azores, Douro and Dao.



Márcio is committed to “making wines to open markets, not to answer to the market”.

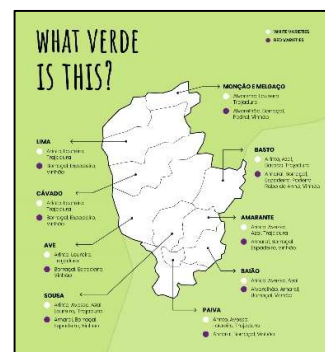
His wines are a far cry from the ‘spritz and sugar’ vernacular previously associated with Vinho Verde. His viticultural approach is sustainable with low intervention winemaking using indigenous yeasts, nitrogen for protection and low sulphur additions. We’ll get to know him through his work in the coastal northern Portuguese DO of Vinho Verde.

### DOC Vinho Verde

*Mass-produced dish soap with sugar and bubbles, or actual wine?*

Vinho Verde, aka ‘green wine’ refers to its normal status as young, sharp, fresh wine ... it can be made from red or white grapes, in fact historically Vinhos Verdes were more likely to have been red. In recent decades, most have been white, and largely lamentable: thin, gassy and residually sweet things attempting to ‘balance’ callow acidity. This stereotype is breaking down rapidly, however, as a number of quality viticulturally-driven producers have emerged in the footsteps of Quinta do Ameal. Vinhos Verdes can also be ripe, dry, still wines of quality and style. There are over 20 permitted varieties— with whites Loureiro, Alvarinho, Trajadura and Arinto being the most common.

Vinho Verde was demarcated in 1908, and confirmed as a DOC in 1984. Vinho Verde runs south from the Rio Miño (Portugal’s wet border with Galicia), and terminates at the northern border of DO Douro, inland from Porto. VV has 21,000 hectares under vine scattered across 9 sub-zones. It’s a predominantly coastal district, but sub-zones further from the atlantic display some continental as well as maritime character. The lightest wines from the region are typically from atlantic-facing sub-regions, characterised by a temperate maritime climate. Sub-regions inland can also be largely atlantic when in close proximity to east-to-west running rivers which funnel the ocean’s cool, humid influence inland. Otherwise, the wines of inland sub-zones show more continentality, with greater fruit intensity, body, texture and alcohol due to the dissipating ocean influence. The mountainous inland Tras-os-Montes region offers protection from winds, helping elevate daytime maxima and increase potential body of the wines.

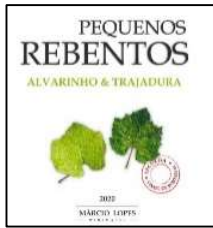


Until recently, vines were trained high (*uveira* or *vinha de enforcado*), or on pergolas (*ramadas* or *latadas*) with shady canopies that encouraged disease and inhibited ripening of the fruit. Now, region-wide, modern trellising (VSP) and a better choice of grape varieties is vastly improving the quality of the region’s wines. Moreover, winemakers are weaning off gas (an artefact of malo in-bottle) and sugar, with drier wines becoming more prevalent, more typically of 11-12% abv (formerly they would be 8-9% abv).

## 2020 Pequenos Rebentos Alvarinho-Trajadura

The sub-zone Monção e Melgaço is inland from Portugal's North Atlantic coast, and with a very specific microclimate, expressing less Atlanticity than the wines of the rest of the region.

The wines from here have Vinho Verde's typical freshness and minerality, but more body and flavour. Our selection to launch Marcio in Australia is a 50:50 Alvarinho-Trajadura (pronounced Tra-jah-doo-rah; aka Albariño and Treixadura if we were in Spain) from granitic soils. Grapes are hand harvested and transported to the winery in small crates, where bunches are destemmed, followed by a short 4 hour maceration, and a slow fermentation of 15 days in small stainless tanks. 12% abv, total acidity: 6.6g/l, residual sugar: 4.5g/l, pH: 3.26, SO2 free: 30mg/l.



*On the surface, ripe crab-apple, nashi pear, greengage and cress. Below the surface, jasmine, sage, cardamom and curry leaf give depth, charm and interest. Grassy fresh-tilled green herbs, and a touch of nutty roundness on both nose and palate and yellow sandy depth. For a light wine it has good depth and a nice pocket of roundness early, before easing to mineral-herbal line out back. It has a smooth gliding texture from the Trajadura, and a sweet-and-sour grapefruit acid finish, giving the wine swing and zing.*