

# Douro Valley Winery visits

Many wineries require advance reservations for tours/tastings, either made online, by email or by phone. While many are open during high season on weekends, even Sundays, weekend options are more limited from November-April. Some wineries can be toured without opting for a final tasting (Quinta Bomfim), but most visits, after a tour of the vineyards, the barrel rooms and the ancient stone vats, end with a tasting of ports and/or DOC still wines, included in the price of the visit. At some wineries one can choose the type of tasting from a menu of options, from basic to premium. At other smaller wineries the tastings are set.

A few wineries open for private visits only (Quinta do Noval), while other larger properties accept large bus tour groups from the luxury river cruise boats (Quinta do Seixo, Quinta da Pacheca, Quinta da Rôeda).

Some offer dining options in their restaurants as well (Quinta do Tedo, Quinta da Pacheca, Quinta de la Rosa) and some offer picnic baskets to enjoy in their vineyards (Quinta Bomfim and Quinta do Pôpa).

During the harvest season appointments for vineyard visits should be made several weeks, if not months, in advance.

The special, 3.5 hour jeep VIP Vintage Tour with agronomist Alvaro Martinho, director of the 600 hectare Quinta das Carvalhas should be booked far in advance given its popularity.

Another special experience that should be booked at least a month in advance is the “Wine Maker for a Day” opportunity at Quinta Nova that allows the visitor to create his own blended wine.

With the exception of the wineries walkable from the village of Pinhão, the Douro wine estates are quite spread apart. What seems like a short drive can take 30 minutes or more on these wiggly, narrow roads, so one should plan to visit **two** or no more than three each day.

## Locations of quintas and driving distances

### Walkable in Pinhão

#### **\*Quinta Bomfim**

This relatively new and stunning, 2.3 million euro visitors’ center is owned by the prestigious Symington Family Estates and is one of the most esteemed vineyards in the

Douro. It's the closest winery to the rail station, just a 5-minute walk. To reach it, upon leaving the station, turn right and follow the road, beyond the gas station. Before the old metal bridge, take the road to your left and you'll see the signs. From 1st April to 31st October it opens from 10:30 to 19:00 every day (with the last visit at 6:00). From 1st November to 31st March it opens Tuesday to Sunday from 09:30 to 5:30 (last visit at 5:00). It closes on December 25 and January 1st.

The excellent tour /tasting lasts for just under an hour, starts in the small museum with an explanation about the history of the estate and the Symington family and then visits the original 1896 lodge and afterwards the new winery with its robot treading machines, where a video is shown of the traditional treading process at Quinta do Vesuvio and the modern process here, and ends in the stylish tasting room with floor to ceiling windows overlooking the river. One can choose from several different tasting options, such as the Premium Town Port Tasting. If you're a couple, you can split your tasting by choosing one port tasting and one DOC table wine tasting.

At Bomfim there's also the option of taking the tour without the tasting and the ability to wander through their vineyards with a map. One can also purchase a picnic basket, complete with a bottle of white wine, to take up and enjoy at the winery's Echo House, surrounded by breathtaking scenery. Cost: €25/p

### **\*Quinta das Carvalhas**

An easy walk across the bridge from Pinhão, it opens daily April-October from 10:00-7:30 and November-March from 10:00-6:00. This, the largest estate in the valley with some 600 hectares, the jewel of Real Companhia Velha, founded in 1759. It offers a very special "Vintage Tour", a 3.5 hour jeep tour with the estate's agriculturist, Alvaro Martinho, up into the hills, one of the Douro's best tours, and it ends with a tasting of four wines and a cheese platter in the quinta's English style lodge/tasting room. This extremely popular tour must be booked months in advance for the harvest season. The estate's stunning shop/tasting room can be visited without booking a tour. A tasting of four wines and one port costs €19. In summer the winery provides an outdoor terrace with picnic tables for tastings & *petiscos* (snacks).

### **\*Quinta de la Rosa** (walkable or short drive or €5 taxi ride from the station)

This working winery plus hotel/restaurant sits 1.2 kilometers from the village of Pinhão but is walkable. To reach it by foot, walk down to the riverfront and turn right, cross the pedestrian bridge over the river and follow the road past the Cais do Foz restaurant on your right, then walk uphill, crossing the train tracks, to the large white building on your left.

This estate is owned by the Bergqvist family who have been in the Port trade since 1815. The estate was given to

Claire Feueheerd as a christening present in 1906 and is currently run by her granddaughter Sophia Bergqvist. The estate produces both fortified wines and DOC wines, reds, rosés and whites. Its 30-minute tours are given at 11:30 am and 2:30 pm and from April-October also at 5:00 pm and tours end in their sleek tasting room overlooking the river and the village. The estate also offers a one hour, 15 minute guided walk through its Val do Inferno vineyards followed by a visit to the cellar and a tasting. The online booking process for these visits is very simple and easy.

**\*Quinta da Roêda** (short 2 km. drive or taxi ride)

Owned by Croft, this gorgeous estate dates back to 1588. This property is Croft's flagship vineyard and the oldest port producing estate in the Douro. It produces ports only, including a rosé port—the first estate to produce rosé port in the valley. Committed to organic farming, this estate uses no pesticides; they cultivate entirely by hand. When in Pinhão, we urge you to visit only if to explore its fabulous, truly beautiful vineyards with sweeping river views. It opens daily, including Sundays, from 10:00-6:30 pm. April to October and November to March from 10 am-6 pm. One can take a short but informative tour, and tastings are held in the large and inviting shop/tasting room (visitors' center), housed in the former stables, where one can purchase all types of wine accessories and the estate's olive oil. One can also enjoy a picnic on the terrace. During the harvest, with advanced booking, this estate also offers the chance to participate in the traditional foot stomping of the grapes in their granite *lagares*. It does accept bus tour groups from the large river cruises.

**Easiest from Pinhão (from closest to furthest)**

**Quinta do Infantado**

10-12 min. northwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank via the M50. This acclaimed port producer, founded in 1816 and owned by the Roseira family, sits within walking distance of the Casa do Visconde de Chancelheiros (see above). It was the first family property in the Douro in 1979 to estate-bottle their own ports rather than selling their wine to the port lodges of Vila Nova de Gaia. They produce reasonably priced rubies, tawnies, colheitas, LBVs, a white port and several red DOC wines. Tours and tastings here are given by family members, which make them special and quite different from the more formulaic tours at other large port houses. Open from Monday to Friday with visits/tastings at 4:00 pm. The classic "Dona Margarida" visit lasts for 60-90 minutes and there are two other more extensive tasting options that one can book online.

**\*Quinta do Noval**

15 minutes north of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank, via the M 535. This world-acclaimed estate dating from 1715, the “royalty” of port producers, that has been crafting its award-winning ports since 1715, offers breathtaking views high atop its steeply terraced slopes. The setting, surrounded by 145 hectares of high elevation vineyards, is simply breathtaking, and this extensive estate is quite spread out and resembles a small village. Private tours only must be arranged in advance. It offers the option of a private lunch in the mansion’s beautiful dining room. This fall the estate opened a wine shop on the quay in Pinhão (just north of the Veladouro Restaurant), whose hours are from 10:30 am-7:30 pm, Easter to October, and 10:30 am-1:pm, then 2:00-7:30 pm, from November to Easter.

### **\*Wine & Soul**

10 minutes straight north on the N322-3 of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank in **Vale de Mendiz** (N322-3). This very small, up and coming boutique winery was founded in 2001 by husband and wife winemakers, Jorge Serôdio Borges and Sandra Tavares da Silva. It produces fantastic DOC wines, such as the Pintas, which for its 2011 vintage Wine Spectator bestowed 98 points, Manoella reds and the Guru and Manoella whites, as well as ports. In 2014, Wine Spectator awarded Pintas’ 2011 vintage 98 points. Private visits must be booked in advance. One can select among 5 different tastings: Standard, Classic, Premium, Icon and Port Wine Tasting. New offerings this season: wines by the glass along with tapas, a picnic or lunch at their Quinta da Manoella property, wine blending or a day spent in the vineyard.

### **Quinta do Seixo**

13 minutes southwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Left Bank, east of Valença do Douro. This the valley’s most modern and most commercial winery, belonging to Sogrape, which opens daily 10:30-6:30, from March to October with the last tour given at 6:15. From November to February it opens daily from 10:30-12:30 and 2-5:30 with the last visit departing at 5:15. It does accept large bus groups to its vast estate. Seixo produces both fortified and DOC wines. The tour by black cape and sombrero clad Sandeman tour guides is a bit slick, a video is presented before visiting the state-of-the-art winery, and the visit ends in the designer-done tasting room/shop. While the tour may seem a bit too orchestrated for veteran wine travelers, the views from its belvedere are superb.

### **Quinta do Pégo**

12 minutes southwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Left Bank, west of Valença do Douro. This estate produces DOC wines, ports and olive oil and is owned by a Danish company, Amka. While production is not carried out here, one can visit its shop at 5:00 pm daily

to taste and purchase. Cost: €7.50 for the tasting of 2 DOP wines and 2 ports. The winery's elegant Grande Reserva 2015 is outstanding and worth the drive up to this stunning property.

### **\*Quinta do Pôpa**

16 minutes southwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Left Bank, east of Folgosa, and east of Quinta do Tedo. Open April-October, Tuesday-Saturday from 10:30-5:30; open November-March, Monday-Friday, from 10:00-5:00. These are the “new kids” in town, a winery founded in 2003 and opened to the public in 2012, producing DOC wines only, whites, rosés and reds and single variety wines. From April through October the estate offers the possibility of a **wine picnic**. After one's tour of the winery, lunch can be taken on site.

### **\*Quinta do Tedo**

17 minutes southwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Left Bank, east of Folgosa. Open daily 10:00-7:00 from April through October and open daily from 9:00-6:00, November-March. This estate, tucked into the confluence of the Douro and Tedo rivers on 18 hectares of organic vineyards, is extremely well organized for wine tourism, with easy, quick access off the N2, offering daily, quite informative visits. It also offers three kilometers of walking trails, an 8-room **B&B** and a lovely tapas-style **Bistrot Terrace** with scenic views of the Tedo River. For the beginner, this visit offers an easy and complete introduction to the art of port making, and the quinta also produces a tasty rosé port and olive oil. Their signature port is the Quinta do Tedo Grand Reserva Savedra. During the harvest guests can participate in the traditional foot treading of the grapes. The owners, who bought the property in 1992, are Californian Kay Steffey Bouchard and husband Vincent, a scion of scion of the Burgundy Bouchard Père et Fils family.

### **Quinta da Côte**

20 minutes southwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Left Bank, via N323 to EM504. To reach this quinta turn off the N2 when you see the sign for the Quinta do Seixo and instead of heading left to Seixo, continue to the right on the EM 504. The estate was purchased in 2012 by French winemaker Philippe Austruy, who added a stylish 7-room boutique inn (see above).

[Accessible from Pinhão but further afield](#)

### **Quinta do Portal**

20 minutes north of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank (via the N 323). This estate belongs to a century-old winemaking family. The contemporary wine making facility is the work of Pritzker prize winning architect, Álvaro Siza Vieira. The estate houses also houses an inn, **Casa das Pipas**, and an excellent restaurant, manned by young and talented Chef Milton Ferreira, “who uses locally-grown ingredients splendidly paired with in-house wines in a creative way.”

### **Quinta de Nápoles**

25 minutes southwest of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Left Bank, east of Folgosa, on the western bank of the Tedo river, accessible via the CM 1101, after Quinta do Tedo when traveling east. A highly contemporary, fortress-looking stone winery built into the mountain and designed by Austrian architect Andreas Burghardt in 2007 so that much of the wine making process is done by the gravity system. The founding winemaker is one of the prestigious and innovative “Douro Boys”, Dirk Niepoort, who produces fantastic DOC wines and ports.

### **Quinta Nova de Nossa Senhora do Carmo**

35 minutes west of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank (via the CM 1268), 8 minutes east of Quinta do Crasto. Tours are given at 10:45, 12:15 and 3:30 and at 5 pm from April-October only; one must book in advance.

This 250-year old stunning estate also offers **boutique accommodations** in 11 very comfortable rooms, an exquisite small 18th century chapel and gourmet dining via 3 or 5-course tasting menus in its **Conceitus Restaurant** with vine draped terrace. Guests have the option of participating in the traditional foot stomping of the grapes at harvest time or being a “winemaker for a day”. This is a red wine blending workshop and guests create their own blend through tasting pure varieties and combining/tasting to learn how each contributes to the flavor. They then get to take their bottle home with a personalized label.

The most pleasurable (also the least stressful) way of reaching the winery for a visit and lunch would be to cross the Douro on the **Rivus boat**, which offers a simple transfer service to the Ferrão north quay, below the winery. It’s only a 10-minute ride, and the cost is 10€/person, each way. Catch the boat at the Ferrão south quay next to the Restaurant Casa dos Peixinhos in Tabuaço, right on the N222 (facing the Ferrão north quay). Book at least 24 hours in advance. Or you can indulge in the complete Rivus experience, starting at 10 am, with a 1 hour, 30-minute cruise, landing at the Ferrão

north quay with a transfer to the winery, followed by a winery tour/tasting at 12:15 pm, then a 3-course degustation lunch in the Conceitus Restaurant at 1:45 pm and transfer back to the Ferrão south quay at 4:00 pm. Cost for this complete experience: €190/p

### **\*Quinta do Crasto**

40 minutes west of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank, via the sinuous CM 1268. Please note that the journey here can be a very challenging drive for the uninitiated, with the narrow highway's blind curves and lack of guard rails. It's much better and far less stressful to take train to Ferrão with pick up at station by winery vehicle. Open 10 am-6 pm.

This is arguably the Douro's most prestigious DOC wine estate, over 400 hundred years old, dating from 1615, and often considered by wine enthusiasts as one of the world's best vineyards. In 2008 Wine Spectator declared the Quinta do Crasto Reserva Vinhas Velhas 2005 as the 3rd best wine in the world. This truly stunning estate, owned by the Roquette family since 1918, affords simply spectacular valley views, boasts a highly Instagram-able infinity pool designed by Pritzker prize winner Souto de Moura and produces truly superb wines. Eighty percent of the estate's grapes are now used for the production of red wines, while 10% are reserved for port and 10% for white wines. Visitors can enjoy their tasting either on the lovely terrace while soaking up the exquisite views (weather permitting), or around a table or on the cozy sofa in the family living room. They also have the possibility of enjoying a copious winery lunch for €40/p, including wine. This is a unique experience not to be missed during your Douro visit.

The most pleasurable (also the least stressful) way of reaching this winery for a visit and lunch would be to cross the Douro on the **Rivus boat**, which offers a simple transfer service to the Ferrão north quay, below the Quinta do Crasto. This service, south to north bank, is offered at 11:45 am and at 1:30. The return north to south is available at 3:30, 4:00 and 6:00 pm. It's only a 10-minute ride, and the cost is 10€/person, each way. Catch the boat at the Ferrão south quay next to the Restaurant Casa dos Peixinhos in Tabuaço, right on the N222 (facing the Ferrão north quay). Book at least 24 hours in advance.

### **Quinta da Gricha**

30+ minutes east of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank in **Ervedosa**. This estate now belongs to Churchill's Port, purchased in 1999, and its historic lodge dates from 1852. The one hour visit is given at 11:00 am and tasting here will be of five wines, three port wines (a white, a reserve and a 10-year old tawny) and two DOC Douro wines. There is the possibility of staying for lunch after the visit and weather permitting, to dine outside on the Patio das Laranjeiras is the the orange trees or inside at the 8-personal

communal table. Access to this “off the beaten track” winery is down a very narrow one lane road.

### **Quinta de Ventozelo**

15 minutes east of Pinhão, Cima Corgo, Right Bank just south of **Ervedosa do Douro** on the N222. This is one of the oldest and largest wine estates in the entire valley (200 of the 400 acres are devoted to vineyards), now owned by the French company Gran Cruz. Records of this property date back to 1569, when it was developed by Cistercian monks from São Pedro das Águias monastery. Now with a 28-room, 4-star hotel, the winery is open for visits daily and offers tours ending with five different tastings, priced from €9-€35. One can also follow the tour and tasting with lunch in the complex’s Cantina daily from 12:30-3:00 pm. Advance bookings required.

### **Easiest from Régua (from closest to furthest)**

#### **Quinta de Tourais**

5 minutes southwest of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Left Bank (N222 west 2 kilometers) just before reaching Quinta da Pacheca. Once a farm of the monastery of Salzedas, this is one of the oldest estates in the region, currently producing still wines only. This small winery with only ten hectares makes these exceptional D.O.C. wines under the supervision of winemaker/owner Fernando Coelho, who produces his excellent wines, a lovely rosé and three reds in small quantities. Coelho is part of an informal group of five independent Douro winemakers from the Baixo Corgo called Douro4u. He started making his Miura label for 11 lucky friends, then started to sell a few bottles and it quickly took off. Production here is limited to about 4,000 bottles a year. Each of his wines has a special wine label, a design commissioned from an artist, enameled directly on the bottle.

Open daily from mid March through mid November from 10 am-12:30 pm and again from 4:30-7:30 pm. The Quinta de Tourais wines are featured at the family’s charming Tasca da Quinta restaurant in the center of Régua (see under “Dining”).

#### **Quinta da Pacheca**

8 minutes southwest of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Left Bank, in Cambres, near Lamego. Open daily March through November from 10-12:30 and 2:30-7:30. (It does take bus tour groups.)

This fine estate dates back to the 18th century (1738) and produces ports, still red and white wines and offers a chic boutique hotel, excellent restaurant, it can be catered as a wedding venue and even offers guests the unique opportunity of sleeping in one of the



ten unique “wine barrel suites” placed amidst the vineyards! During the harvest season guests can participate in the traditional grape stomping program for €85/p. This 6-hour activity begins in the early morning hours with a trip to the vineyards to participate in the harvesting, accompanied by the employees. It continues until the late morning and ends with a typical winery lunch, then a guided visit to the winery where participants can tread the grapes the old fashioned way in the ancient granite vats (with shorts and t-shirt provided). The estate does accommodate large bus groups.

### **Quinta do Mourao**

10-minutes southwest of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Left Bank in Cambres, of the N222 going west towards Lamego. This winery consists of a 16th century manor home, a chapel, a modern schist winery covered with a trellis of wooden posts built into the hillside, surrounded by 26 hectares of vineyards. This estate produces both port (tawnies are a specialty as is their 50 year old white port) and DOC wines.

### **Quinta de Marrocos**

8 minutes southeast of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Right Bank (N222, 2 kilometers) This estate of the Correia de Sequeira family is now part of the Gold Drink enterprise. It's one of the oldest estates in the valley and grapes are still tread by foot stomping in the ancient granite *lagares* (vats). Both ports (including a white port) and DOC wines are produced here by oenologist Rita Sequeira from vines that are over 100 years old. The family farmhouse, dating from the 17th century, and decorating with antiques, was originally a Franciscan convent and offers 4 agro tourism style guest quarters. Guests dine in the ancient farm kitchen on local products and the estate's own olive oil. During the harvest guests can participate in picking the grapes and also participate in a *lagarada*, the traditional grape pressing by foot celebration.

### **\*Quinta do Vallado**

10 minutes east of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Right Bank, on the banks of the Corgo tributary. Open daily. Tours in English, lasting 1 hour, 15 minutes, are given at 11, 2:30 and 4:30. This highly prestigious winery, more than 400 years old, established in 1716, is one of the oldest and most famous. It was once the property of the legendary Dona Antonio Ferreira and still belongs to her descendants. It produces outstanding red wines and olive oils and provides a very informative tour of its 2009 state-of-the-art cellar, led by professional guides. This should be a “must visit” for anyone visiting the Douro Valley. At their newly expanded shop, which doesn't close at mid day, they also offer tastings.

### **Quinta Maria Izabel**

20 minutes east of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Left Bank (N22 to EM513-1). Open Mon-Fri, 10:00-12:00 pm and again from 2:00-5:30. In '20 it will open a small hotel with 14 suites. This winery was opened by Brazilian businessman João Carlos Paes Mendonça and produces red and white still wine along with ports. *We have yet to visit this estate.*

### **Quinta dos Murças**

25 minutes east of Régua, Baixo Corgo, Right Bank, in Covelinhas (take N22, cross the dam, then N313-1). Open 10 am-7 pm and owned by the prestigious Herdade de Esporão winery of the Alentejo D.O. Here they offer four different tasting options are available during their private tours, along with three different hiking trails. This 150 hectare estate is dedicated to organic production. Their policy is to cultivate only one third of the land and leave the rest to grow wild. The production is primarily of red wines (with an entry level “Assobio” white and rosé), while only 10% of the grapes are used to produce port.

The estate also offers the main house with pool, consisting of 5 bedrooms, and divided into two family areas, as a whole house rental for guests.

The best, as in easiest, methods of reaching this estate are 1: to take the train from Régua or Pinhão to the Covelinhas stop or 2: go by car to the D.O.C. restaurant in Folgosa right on the N222, park and wait by the pier for the Quinta’s solar boat to take you across the river. Advance bookings essential.

### **Quinta da Gaivosa**

20 minutes north of Régua, Baix Corgo, Right Bank reached via the N2 highway, midway between Régua and Vila Real and north of the village of Santa Marta de Penaguião. This architecturally interesting black brick winery is run by the Alves de Sousa family. The patriarch, Domingos Alves de Sousa, was a visionary who believed it possible to produce high quality dry red and white wines in the Douro and for his efforts has won international acclaim. Robert Parker has rated 14 of his wines between 90 and 96 points. The winery opens for private visits five days a week, from Monday to Friday, from 9:30 am-12:30 pm and again from 2:30-5:30 pm. The 90-minute visit ends with a tasting of 5 wines, 1 white, 2 reds, a white port and 10-year old Tawny port, and costs €20/person. The Quinta da Gaviosa was in 2017 the winner of the Best of Wine Tourism regional award for Architecture and Landscape.

## In the more remote Douro Superior

### **Quinta do Vesúvio**

Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Douro Superior. It belongs to the Symington Family Estates and is usually not open to the general public except for passengers of the very expensive, luxury Presidential Train.

### **Quinta de Ervamoira**

Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Douro Superior. This winery belongs to Ramos Pinto and access is by jeep and guide only. A visit here could be combined with a visit to the Foz Côa Archaeological Park (open air petroglyphs) and lunch at the Foz Côa museum, but it would make for a very long day. Or one could spend the night at Quinta do Vallado's stunning Casa do Rio.

### **Quinta do Vale Meão**

Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Douro Superior. The Deutsch Family Wines & Spirits has now opened this estate to visits. The easiest way to reach it would be to take the local train from Pinhão to its final stop in Pocinho, then arrange a taxi to take you to the winery. Pocinho taxi telephone: (+351) 964 078 451

Be aware that temperatures in this very dry sub zone of the Douro Superior can be extreme in summer, soaring to 45C and over.