

PRAIA DO CARVOEIRO | FERRAGUDO | LAGOA | SILVES

# INSIDE

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## FROM GRAPE TO GLASS

The western Algarve's winemakers open their doors

## GONE FISHING

The country estate of Hideaway Lakes

## WINDSURFING CHAMP

Miguel Martinho flies the Portuguese flag

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Overlooked for many years as a credible winemaking region, the western Algarve has seen a number of serious players place their wines on the international wine scene.

Bit by bit, they have not only developed their labels, but also their infrastructures and facilities: with more and more visitors, some are not only offering wine tours, but also accommodation, for wine lovers to discover the growing importance of this regional produce. Offering a unique tourism product, it seems they're having the last laugh.

Making visitors feel part of the winery is the aim of José Manuel Cabrita at Quinta da Vinha, the Silves producer of Cabrita wines. With a reception room dedicated to providing wine tasting and tours of the winery available with prior reservation, at the time of going to press, José Manuel was awaiting approval for extensive expansion work. Planning to add a bottling and storage area, the renovation will also incorporate a large glassed area for groups that will overlook both the vineyards and the winery. "The idea is to have everything together to show visitors the whole wine-making picture," says José. With three large apartments for rent sharing a swimming pool also on site, each receiving a complimentary bottle of Cabrita wine, there's some serious oenotourism potential for





Quinta dos Vales

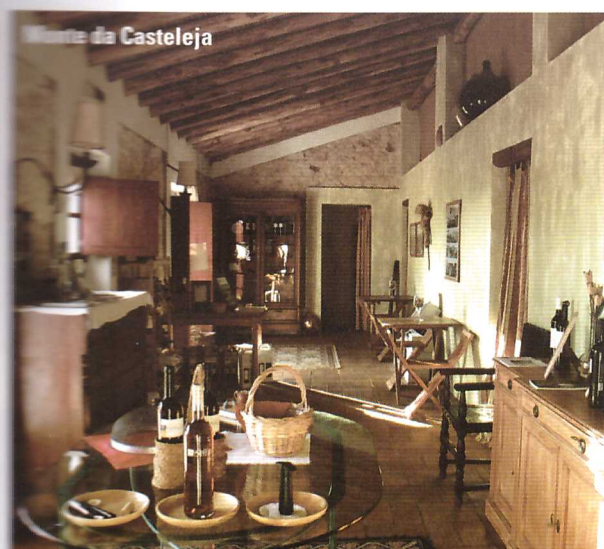
this small winery. For now, what shines are the wines produced here, not least the Cabrita red 2009 which picked up gold at the 2011 Concours Mondial de Bruxelles. Now producing a red, a white and a rosé, the latter two boasting brand new labels bearing the winery's signature goat, a new arrival is the Reserva Branco 2010, which will be joined by its red counterpart in July.

With a unique combination of wine and art, Quinta dos Vales in Estombar is also one of the few Algarvean wine estates to provide various accommodation options. The old farmhouses located throughout the estate's 50 hectares have been completely renovated and feature attractive décor, modern facilities and various swimming pools, with guests taking part in the various activities throughout the winemaking process. With works of art gracing the grounds and its own animal farm, the estate is also ideal for a day trip to sample the Marquês dos Vales labels, which have won countless awards since its inception. Visitors can taste three different wines which can be accompanied by a selection of regional products, or go on a guided tour of the winery and estate itself, where experts explain the overall philosophy and the wine-making process. And as the perfect match to any good wine is good food, lunch and dinner is also available with a selection of Portuguese and international dishes on offer. Providing an all-encompassing experience that goes far beyond the wine itself, owner and artist Karl Heinz Stock explains: "I have tried to create a relaxed atmosphere which appeals to all five senses, and that's something we take great pride in."



Quinta do Francês





Prominently set amongst 12 hectares of land, Quinta do Francês is the only winery in the area to grow its grapes in schist soils. Taking its name from the Frenchman who bought the land in 2000 – a pathologist of Italian descent, Patrick Agostini – the estate's location in the Odelouca hills is a unique one. And it seems to be a winning formula, with its four labels, particularly the top-end Quinta do Francês red, garnering much recognition since their launch in 2009. With a picture-perfect shop set amongst the vineyards, sown exclusively with red grapes, the winery offers guided tours and wine tastings Tuesday to Sunday (with additional nibbles by request and groups by appointment only), and sells locally produced treats like liqueurs and jam. Featuring an exterior patio and a large upstairs terrace, the estate is also hoping to organise events in the future. With a special relationship with the region's restaurants – Vila Joya has stocked his labels right from the start – Patrick explains: “We want to bring restaurant teams and their sommeliers to discover our terroir, the uniqueness of our soil and conduct talks about food pairing.” Hoping to create

partnerships with different entities, many plans are afoot at Quinta do Francês.

Producing up to 100,000 litres of wine per year, Quinta do Morgado da Torre in Portimão is one of the few wineries in the western Algarve hosting wine tours. The estate has been in the hands of the Mendes family since 1865, but the small winery was only added in 1999 and soon became well-known for its fruity and quality white, red and rosé wines. Spread throughout 162 hectares, 25 of which are vineyards (Syrah, Trincadeira and Viognier are amongst the varieties available), Quinta do Morgado da Torre takes pride in showing its assets to visitors: outdoor wine tasting sessions take place by request during spring and summer for a minimum of 20 people, and clients can tailor the experience, from the amount of wines available for tasting to the accompaniments. Throughout the year, visitors can drop by the estate's shop and sample some of the award-winning wines, as well as an array of local products, such as honey, biscuits, jams and liqueurs, free of charge. The shop is open Monday to Friday, from 10am to 12pm and 2pm to 5pm.