



## Vadio

Baga Tinto Vertical Tasting 2005-2012  
Bairrada, Portugal

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This issue presents a vertical of Vadio's Tintos, all Baga. They were all tasted in Bairrada and retasted at home (except for the 2012, since the USA bottle was corked). Note that there is no 2008 because changes in progress at the winery disrupted production. Also, there is no 2010 here (although it was tasted and drank well) because it was not marketed: about one-fourth of the juice apparently was showing TCA. Vadio pulled it, admirably. VADIO started in 2005, with just .5 hectare of old vines (60-years-old), a family vineyard. Today, the winery has 4.5 hectares, including contracts with small, local producers. All the Baga vineyards are "planted exclusively in limestone soils and farmed with integrated pest management."

### Tinto 2005 - 89 Points

The 2005 Tinto was aged for 18 months in used oak (80% French, the rest American). It is the first in this issue's vertical, but it is going to be re-released and actually available for purchase. (The price references the re-release price rather than current levels.) This should be a nice opportunity to acquire maturing, graceful Baga. On opening, it was fresh and lovely, showing fine complexity, notable acidity and just some hints of tertiary nuances. It also seems vibrant and focused, still rather youthful in some respects. It comes



at just 11.9% alcohol(!). The biggest issue on opening was its oak. That kept improving with time as this opened up and evolved, easily becoming the most expressive wine in this issue's vertical (not coincidentally, the oldest). It is a very graceful and refined wine with that classic finesse. It may still get better over the next decade or so, but it is beautiful now, with classic nuances of gracefully maturing Baga. It is a very classy, beautifully built Tinto that does a fine job of civilizing Baga. Verticals are often illuminating. On its own, this is completely satisfying and an overachiever. Next to its 2007 and 2011 siblings, it falls just a bit short. Everything is relative. It may last even longer than I think, but considering the lack of track record at this young winery, let's take that in stages. I'm not so sure it will stay at peak for all of its youthful life. It's lovely now. That's a hint.

### Tinto 2006 - 88 Points

The 2006 Tinto is a Baga that was aged for 18 months in used barrels (80% French, 20% American). It doesn't, the winemaker admits, have quite the same definition and lift as some of other vintages--but everything is relative. Even though 2006 is not a great year in general in Portugal, this is a very respectable effort for a young winery in this year. If anything, it has more weight than the 2005, although not its refinement and crisp personality. It still has some acidity, that good concentration and a nice burst of flavor on the finish, with touches of earth and game. If it lacks a truly vibrant core, it was still well worth the release price and then some. It is aging rather gracefully, too. At the re-release price, you get a chance to acquire some Baga with age on it that is in a good place. As with the others in this vertical, let's take its aging potential in stages. This is only the second release--there isn't a lot of track record. It seems to be doing fine, though.

### Tinto 2007 - 92 Points

The 2007 Tinto is a Baga aged for 18 months in used barrels (80% French, 20% American). It is impeccably balanced, but right at the moment it is tightly wound and powerful, too. It is very young. It is here in this issue's vertical that I would argue that the winery finally strikes true gold and puts its best foot forward. With a couple of hours of air, it showed far more expressive fruit and became wonderfully complex, with some hints of game. It is classic Baga with a real backbone, intensity and acidity, but gorgeous balance as well. It is refined and accessible without sacrificing all of its structure or typical aromatics. It is the only one of the vertical that challenges the mature 2005 for expressive fruit; in other aspects (concentration, structure), it easily surpasses the 2005. For the regular Tinto at this price level, this is quite a statement and a huge bargain. Hopefully, this will be subject to the winery's re-release program in a couple of years. At least at the moment, this is the best of this issue's vertical; although when the 2011 gets its act together, there might be more competition. It should age beautifully, perhaps better than I think.

### Tinto 2009 - 90 Points

The 2009 Tinto is a Baga aged for 18 months in used barrels (80% French, 20% American). This has blossomed since I first saw it. Showing the best mid-palate weight of any of Vadio's Tintos this issue (although some are pretty close), this concentrated Baga is complex, mouth-coating and intense while retaining the finesse the wines always have. It takes the 2007 and adds just a bit more depth on opening (a function of relative youth, too), but I'm less sure it has the same precision and definition. The structure, while there and intense, is still civilized and refined for young Baga. The acidity and power are lurking, but its fruit is just wonderful, too, giving it a lusher feel than some in this vertical. Credit the vintage for that. Focused and persistent, but not forbidding, this Baga is a pretty good introduction to the grape for those who are wondering what it is all about.

### Tinto 2011 - 91 Points

The 2011 Tinto is a Baga aged for 18 months in used barrels (80% French, 20% American). This is a vintage where the winery decided to extend the maceration a bit. With a little time in the bottle, it has become far more expressive than it originally was. That said, this is still a rather intense Baga, at least in the context of this vertical where they generally show on the more civilized side. With fine structure and acidity, this quickly begins to show better balance with an hour or so of aeration. It also opened too oaky, but after 75 minutes or so of air, that moderated well. With its serious power on the finish, it is crisp and classic, likely to age very well. It's a beauty, gradually improving and likely to improve more if you give it some time in the cellar. It may well be the best of the group--although the 2007 may have something to say about that--but it just isn't showing everything it has. If you are a fan of old style Barbaresco, this is a can't-miss, no-brainer bargain. If you're looking for sweet and sappy, stay away.

### Tinto 2012 - 90 Points

The 2012 Tinto is a Baga aged for 12 months in used barrels (80% French, 20% American), followed by 12 months in French wood. This is the latest release in our vertical. Seen just a few months after bottling, it is remarkably solid for the vintage. Rather tight now, it is also elegant in the mid-palate. With a crisp finish, it seems likely to integrate its parts well in time, but it is a bit backward just now. Fresh and fine, it's another well-priced winner in this lineup. Give it a couple of years in the cellar, at least.