

Symington Family Estates

WITH THE COMBINED SALES OF THE FAMILY'S port companies making up over a third of all premium port sold throughout the world, Oporto, Portugal-based Symington Family Estates (www.symington.com) is the leading producer of premium quality ports. A family business since 1882, seven Symingtons work in the business, six from the 13th generation in the port trade via their great grandmother, Beatrice Atkinson. A member of the family is directly responsible for every bottle of port they produce, from managing the Douro vineyards through the wine-making, aging, and tasting processes. Symington Family Estates owns and operates several of the premium port houses in Oporto today, including such celebrated brands as W. & J. Graham, Dow, and Warre.

The company has long had a reputation for pioneering winemaking in the Douro. In 1964, Symington Family Estates was the first major producer to introduce auto-vinification at its Bomfim winery. In 1990, they developed a

special cooling system for the traditional stone lagares at Quinta do Vesuvio, and in 1996, they opened Quinta do Sol, one of the most advanced wine-making facilities in the Douro. In 1998, the family designed and introduced its revolutionary robotic lagar, a treading technology developed to mimic the human foot, which allows maximum color extraction by "walking" the length of a stainless steel lagar with four temperature controlled "feet" that exert an optimal amount of pressure on the fermenting must.

Symington Family Estates continues to be at the forefront of the wine industry, in terms of top quality and innovation, and *Wine Enthusiast* magazine recognized their accomplishments in 2007 when they named Symington Family Estates their "European Winery of the Year." ●

Harvest at Vesuvio (bottom left); Grapes pressed the old-fashioned way (center); Graham's Lodge Wine Bar (bottom right); Graham's 1997 Vintage Port (below)

