





Today “grogue” is produced where the sugar cane grows on the achipelago: only five island on the eight (Santiago, São Vicente, São Nicolau, Fogo and Santo Antão) have conditions for agriculture because they have vulcanoes (extinct) and so they have some rivers and so vegetation. Sugar cane is everywhere in these islands and there are in total 340 alambics producing Grogue. Most important islands are Santo Antão and Santiago. When the Portuguese came to the shores of these islands in 1456, Cape Verde was uninhabited. The first settlement began in 1461 and the production of Grogue began immediately after. Grogue was initially made for sale to the British Royal Navy that frequented the island of Sao Vicente. As production on the islands became popular, the Portuguese authorities feared the impact it would have on the slave populace and later prohibited it. Production of grogue continued illicitly throughout Cape Verde but small distilleries continued to make small batches of moonshine. Today Grogue is starting to be known outside the islands and his enormous biodiversity and ancestral production is a great opportunity for all rum lovers.



THE HISTORY OF MONTENEGRO

In the mid-Sixties, the Portuguese who had businesses in the Cabo Verde colony were experiencing uncertain times in view of the colony's future independence.

So in 1966, the Portuguese Jose Antonio de Olivella decided to sell his property known as Montenegro, 1.775 hectares in the south-east of the island of Santiago, to Paulino Barbosa Vicente and Carlos Barbosa Amado, his cousin. The Barbosas were farmers/traders on the volcanic island of Fogo. Their fathers, who had emigrated to the United States, had returned at the end of World War with a good amount of disposable income. From the start they began to grow bananas and coconuts, which they also exported to Portugal.

In 1970 they installed the first animal-drawn sugar mill and the first still, and began to produce grogue.

Carlos, born in 1930, married Maria Filipa Regende Andrade, with whom he had eight children, in addition to four born of previous relationships. He died in 1983. Paulino, on the other hand, had 28 children and died in 1988. His children emigrated to the United States.

After studying agronomy in Brazil, Manuel Barbosa Amado, born in 1971, the sixth of Carlos and Maria Filipa's eight children, began to manage the family's property.





From 2001, he transformed the 35 hectares cultivated with bananas and sugar cane into organic agriculture.

The varieties of sugar cane cultivated are Gana de Nossa Terra Preta and Branca and Bourbon, grown on 9 hectares.

In the same year a wood fuelled direct fire 250 litre copper still was installed.

A second one was installed in 2006, and in 2014 two steam-fuelled 500 litre copper stills were added. In 2016, the two old direct fire stills were replaced by two 350 litre ones. Grogue production is currently between 15.000/20.000 litres per year. Vegetables and bananas are also cultivated. About thirty cows produce x litres of natural milk per day.

Manuel and his elder brother, Francisco, were members of the Republic of Cape Verde parliament.

In 1993, Nicolau 'Anteiro' Gomes arrived to manage the production of grogue.

In these years Montenegro grogue was not sold in bottles but in bulk at the Praia market.



AGRICULTURE

The 9 hectares of sugar cane are situated in the Ribeira de Mangue valley, a short distance from the black sand beach of the same name where turtles deposit their eggs in August and September.

The varieties of cultivated are Nossa Terra Preta, Nossa Terra Branca and Bourbon cane. The cane ripens after 15 months from planting, and the life cycle lasts 7/8 years.

Capo Verde's isolated position in the middle of the Atlantic, and the extremely dry climate are very favourable conditions for non-interventional agriculture. At Montenegro no fertilizers, not even natural ones, are used, and naturally no chemical products. Drip irrigation is carried out four times a week, unless it rains. Annual production of sugar cane depends on annual rainfall. The rainy season is between August and October, but it rarely rains more than twice a month, and in some years it does not rain at all, as in 2017. Average annual rainfall is 250 mm.

Production in this case is around x tons per hectare.

Harvesting takes place between mid-January and the end of June, and is done manually using machetes.





PRODUCTION

The cane is crushed in an electric mill which processes 3.000/3.500 kilos a day.

The fresh, natural sugar cane has a 16/18 Brix level.

The juice is put to ferment in 500 litre (9) and 1.000 litre (10) stainless steel tanks.

Fermentation starts with a 'piè de Cuba' of 200/250 litres of juice in 1.000 litre tanks.

On the second day a further 200 litres are added. The first fermentation lasts about 10 days, and subsequent ones an average of six days. No water is added. Distillation takes place in simple wood fuelled direct fire 350 litre copper stills, which are loaded with 300 litres of pomace. The "cook" takes 4/5 hours, and after the heads and tails have been cut, 45/50 litres of 45% ABU grogue is left.

The spirit is left to rest for a minimum of three months up to a year in stainless steel vats.

Historically, distillation provides for 6/7 barricas being aged for family consumption. A project was started in 2019 to increase stock being aged.

The first 10 formerly Caroni 10 casks arrived in March 2019.





THE PRODUCT

GROGUE BARBOSA \ 45% Vol.

REGION: Ilha de Santiago, Cabo Verde. Distant 15 km from Praia.

PRODUCER: Manuel Barbosa Amado.

FOUNDATION: 1970.

HA: tot. 35 (sugarcane, banana, mangue). 9 ha of sugarcane.

SUGARCANE VARIETY: Nossa Terra Preta, Nossa Terra Branca and Bourbon cane.

HARVEST: From January to July.

MILLING: The cane is crushed in an electric mill which processes 3000/3500 kilos a day.

FERMENTATION: Fermentation starts with a 'piè de Cuba' of 200/250 litres of juice in 1.000 litre tanks. The first fermentation lasts about 10 days, and subsequent ones an average of six days. No water is added.

DISTILLATION: Distillation takes place in simple wood fuelled direct fire 350 litre copper stills, which are loaded with 300 litres of pomace.

The "cook" takes 4/5 hours, and after the heads and tails have been cut, 45/50 litres of 45% ABU grogue is left.

The spirit is left to rest for a minimum of three months up to a year in stainless steel vats.

BOTTLING: Ilha de Santiago, Cabo Verde.

ANNUAL PRODUCTION: 30.000/33.000 bt.

TASTING NOTES

PROFILE: Sweet and fruity.

NOSE: Rich. Sugar cane, licorice, citrus.

MOUTH: Gourmand. Frangipane, brown sugar, lemon confit.

FINISH: Long. Hazelnut, heady flowers, sugar cane.