


whole of Georgia, waiting lists for qvevris can be in excess of a year. Juan Padilla is rumoured to be considering retirement. New amphora producers have sprung up in Tuscany, Spain and of course Asia, but as orders flood in – not just in the ones and twos, but in the hundreds – production is inevitably under stress.

Is there a danger that the hype will fizzle out, that the amphora boom will bust? Could clay seem as outdated as 200% new oak in a decade from now?

Gernot Heinrich doesn't think so: 'It's just a better way to produce wine. That's it.' 

## Sierra de Toloño, Camino de Santa Cruz, Rioja, Spain 2016 93

£35.50 Lea & Sandeman

Serious Rioja doesn't just have to mean vanilla and toasted oak. This single-vineyard Alavesa offering from winemaker Sandra Bravo was fermented in amphora before being aged in used barrels. On the palate it's thrillingly spicy and tannic, but so pure-fruited. The herbal character reminds me of Georgia's traditional qvevri reds.

**Drink** 2020-2031 **Alc** 13%

## Herdade de São Miguel, Art.Terra Amphora Tinto, Alentejo, Portugal 2017 89

£17.95-£20.99 Corks, Handford, Roberts & Speight,

St Andrews Wine Co, Wadebridge Wines

Aragonês and Trincadeira with 10% Moreto, fermented in large talhas, with a very long skin maceration of two months, then aged further in smaller clay vessels. The fruit is lightly spicy, full of depth and concentration but without the distraction of oak. Already soft and accessible.

**Drink** 2019-2025 **Alc** 13.5%



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DENOMINAZIONE DI ORIGINE CONTROLLATA E GARANTITA  
RISERVA

*Enticing layers of black cherry, dark chocolate and liquorice underpinned by finely interwoven tannins, a glossy texture and a velvety, fruit-driven finish. Very long taste with a great freshness running throughout.*

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