

## **For Immediate Release**

Media Contact: Michelle Keene  
Calhoun & Company Communications  
(415) 346-2929, [michelle@calhounwine.com](mailto:michelle@calhounwine.com)

### **Symington Family Estates Announce First Consecutive Vintage Port Declaration in Family History**

*Leading premium Port producer unveils “remarkable” 2017 Vintage resulting from earliest harvest on record with low yields limiting en primeur quantities to one third less than 2016.*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA April 9, 2019 – Symington Family Estates is pleased to announce 2017 as a Vintage Port year, making this its first ever “back-to-back” general declaration since Andrew James Symington arrived in Porto in 1882.

The announcement concludes a period of intense speculation within the wine trade as to whether 2017 would warrant a full declaration, given the quality of the critically acclaimed 2016 vintage and the rarity of Vintage Port declarations. (This is the sixth declaration since 2000.) The first ever consecutive declaration for the Symington family is a milestone in their long history and reflects two very different but extremely high-quality years for Port in the Douro.

The 2017 wines are a result of an advanced growing cycle which led to the earliest harvest ever recorded in the Symington family’s 137-year history as winemakers and Port producers. Warmer and drier conditions than usual induced small, compact bunches of grapes in excellent condition, with yields amongst the lowest of the century so far, 20% below the 10-year average. Despite the harvest beginning in August, the maturations were perfectly balanced, resulting in wines characterised by extraordinary intensity, concentration and structure, combined with stunning aromas and freshness.

The distinctive conditions experienced throughout 2017 bear striking resemblance to the rainfall and temperature patterns of 1945, which is widely considered to be one of the greatest Vintage Ports. Both years experienced advanced growing cycles with low rainfalls balanced by less extreme summer heat, leading to early harvests with extremely low yields.

Hailing from across its flagship Douro estates, Symington Family Estates 2017 Vintage Ports will be offering limited quantities (by allocation en primeur) of Graham’s, Dow’s, Warre’s, Cockburn’s, Quinta do Vesuvio, Graham’s “The Stone Terraces” and Capela da Quinta do Vesuvio. The latter two are only made in truly exceptional years; 2017 is their fourth release. Given the very low-yielding year, the 2017 Vintage Port is the smallest Symington declaration of the 21st century, with en primeur volumes approximately a third less than in 2016.

Symington Family Estates will be presenting its 2017 Vintage Ports at a launch event in Portugal on April 11, 2019 followed by events in the UK and the US in May, and other countries during the course of the year.

*“In my 25 years as a winemaker in our family vineyards, I have never seen a year like 2017. The yields were extremely low, but the concentration and structure took my breath away. We have made some really remarkable wines.”* Charles Symington, Head Winemaker at Symington Family Estates

*“This historic decision to declare Vintage Ports from two consecutive years, 2016 and 2017, was well considered. Only a handful of wine regions in the world restrict vintage releases with such integrity as we do in the Douro. These two exceptional harvests yielded wines of such compelling quality that we are confident in making this momentous decision.”* Rupert Symington, Chief Executive Officer, Symington Family Estates

Visit the [2017 Declaration video announcement](#)

For detailed information on each wine visit [The Vintage Port Site](#)

**About Symington Family Estates** The Symingtons of Scottish, English and Portuguese descent have been Port producers in northern Portugal since 1882. For five generations they have combined their passion for producing premium Ports and wines with a deep commitment to the region’s land and people. Today 10 Symingtons work across their four famous Port houses – Graham’s, Cockburn’s, Dow’s and Warre’s – as well as their Douro wine projects – Quinta do Vesuvio, Quinta do Ataíde, Altano and Prats & Symington (of Chryseia fame) – and a new venture, Quinta da Fonte Souto in the Alto Alentejo.

Symington Family Estates is a leading premium Port producer and the family is the leading vineyard owners in the Douro Valley, with 26 Quintas covering 2,240 ha and 1,024 ha of vineyard. Their vineyards are managed under sustainable viticulture practices and 112 ha are organically farmed, the largest area of organic vineyard in the Douro. Symington Family Estates is unique amongst the major Port companies in that each working family member farms their own vineyard, alongside those under the family’s joint company ownership.