THE GENTLEMAN'S RETREAT

Port, and the passing of it

A short guide from the house.



The styles

Ruby:

young, fruity and bright.

Tawny:

aged in wood, nutty and amber, labelled 10, 20, 30 or 40 years old.

Late Bottled Vintage:

a single year, ready to drink.

Vintage port:

made only in the best years, kept for decades, and it throws a sediment.



The passing

After dinner the decanter goes round the table to the left, and each person pours for themselves before passing it on. It should never stop moving. If a guest holds on to it, the old hint is to ask him:

"Do you know the Bishop of Norwich?"



Serving and keeping

SERVING

Serve ruby and vintage port just below room temperature, and tawny lightly chilled. Stand a bottle of vintage port upright for a day, then decant it slowly so the sediment stays behind. Drink it within a day or two of opening.



KEEPING

A tawny will keep for some weeks.

The classic partner is a good Stilton.