

# SWE PIEDMONT vs TUSCANY BACKGROUNDER

## ITALY

Italy is a spirited, thriving, ancient enigma that unveils, yet hides, many faces. Invading Phoenicians, Greeks, Cathaginians, as well as native Etruscans and Romans left their imprints as did the Saracens, Visigoths, Normans, Austrian and Germans who succeeded them.

As one of the world's top industrial nations, Italy offers a unique marriage of past and present, tradition blended with modern technology -- as exemplified by the Banfi winery and vineyard estate in Montalcino.

Italy is 760 miles long and approximately 100 miles wide (150 at its widest point), an area of 116,303 square miles -- the combined area of Georgia and Florida. It is subdivided into 20 regions, and inhabited by more than 60 million people.

Italy's climate is temperate, as it is surrounded on three sides by the sea, and protected from icy northern winds by the majestic sweep of alpine ranges. Winters are fairly mild, and summers are pleasant and enjoyable.



### NORTHWESTERN ITALY

The northwest sector of Italy includes the greater part of the arc of the Alps and Apennines, from which the land slopes toward the Po River. The area is divided into five regions: Valle d'Aosta, Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna. Like the topography, soil and climate, the types of wine produced in these areas vary considerably from one region to another. This part of Italy is extremely prosperous, since it includes the so-called industrial triangle, made up of the cities of Milan, Turin and Genoa, as well as the rich

agricultural lands of the Po River and its tributaries.

### NORTHEASTERN ITALY

The three regions of the northeast known as Tre Venezie, or simply Le Venezie, hold top place in Italy in terms of the quality wines. Of the three regions, Veneto is the largest producer of DOC wines, while Trentino-AltoAdige has the highest percentage of DOC in comparison with total output. Friuli Venezia Giulia, the third region, known for well-structured red and white wines, is now being discovered.



### CENTRAL ITALY

Because they benefit from ample sunshine and moderate temperature, the band of hills and mountains occupying the center of the Italian peninsula represents an ideal environment for the production of quality. The six regions of central Italy -- Tuscany, the Marches, Umbria, Latium, the Abruzzi and Molise -- account for one-quarter of wine output.

## SOUTHERN ITALY

The sun-drenched vineyards of the six regions of the south -- Campania, Apulia, Calabria, Basilicata, Sicily and Sardinia -- were the cradle of Italian enology. Winemaking there benefited from the contributions of Greek colonists, who introduced new varieties and advanced techniques of cultivation, spreading from the island and the south to the rest of the peninsula.

When they took over the area, the Romans showed great capacity for exploiting the heritage of such wines as Falerno, Cecubo, Ciro' and Mamertino, which were important in respect to the inspiration they provided such poets as Virgil and Horace. The techniques used in the area for growing grapes and making wines were carefully studied and commented on by such authors as Pliny the Elder and Columella.

Despite their noble origins and the attention devoted to them over the centuries, the wines suffered numerous setbacks, one of the most serious of which was the order of the Emperor Domitian, who, concerned by the excess production of wine in every part of the Roman Empire, uprooted numerous vineyards.



## THE REGIONS



### PIEDMONT

A panorama of dramatic peaks and sloping hills is the backdrop for the breathtaking beauty of Italy's westernmost region.

Piedmont, which literally translates as "foot of the mountain," borders Switzerland to the north and France to the west. It is a confined region with an evident French background, a land of hearty wines and foods, heady truffles and stout souls, hard workers who possess such non-Italian traits as punctuality, precision and fastidiousness.

The agricultural heart of Piedmont lies in the Po valley to the southeast.

The fertile Langhe and Monferrato hills of rocky volcanic soil contribute to the character of the intense red wines born there.

Piedmont is famous for her rich, warm red wines -- among the most notable produced with the noble Nebbiolo grape are Barolo, Barbaresco, Gattinara, Ghemme, Carema and Spanna (the local name for the Nebbiolo grape variety.) Nebbiolo, the predominant red grape variety in these wines derives its name from "nebbia" or "fog" which envelops the vineyards at harvest time. Other illustrious reds include Grignolino, Dolcetto and Barbera, the most widely cultivated red grape in Piedmont.

World class whites are also found here -- among them the elegant, crisp, dry Cortese di Gavi, the well-balanced, dry Erbaluce di Caluso (either still or sparkling) and its rich, unctuous "passito" version, the soft, aromatic Moscato and the fragrant Asti Spumante. Piedmont ranks with the leading producers of sparkling wines, both sweet and dry.

Another important economic product of Piedmont is Vermouth. Strictly speaking, it is not a wine -- but to be labeled Vermouth it must contain at least 70 percent wine by volume. This base is then flavored with roots, herbs, spices and woods, etc.

According to the Consorzio di Tutela Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe e Dogliani a system of geographic definitions has been created in Piedmont, they say "The idea behind Additional Geographical Definitions (Menzioni Geografiche Aggiuntive) is to allow wines to be defined according to their exact place of origin, thereby adding the names of smaller, more personal zones within the Denomination. For various reasons (historical, political and geographical), it has never proved possible to define these differences using a French-style 'cru' system. However, over time, various 'names' have come to the fore, indicating quality of terroir, techniques in the both the vineyard and winery and, not least, the producer's ability to 'make a name' for himself. These 'Additional Geographical Definitions' have long been present on the best labels but the lack of a system to prevent exploitation of their usage led the Ministry of Agriculture (through the ICQ Institute for Quality Control) to request that the exact position of these zones -- with measurements of boundaries and number of hectares involved -- be defined. In this way, production from these named areas would be traceable via the Harvest Declaration. This mammoth task was undertaken by the Consortium together with local municipalities and the Province of Cuneo.

The work has taken years to complete (it was finally concluded in 2010): often, boundaries were historically unclear, more than one person made claims for ownership, or the area seemed to expand and contract according to who was listened to. The same task was completed for Barbaresco, a smaller area, in 2007. The third wine to boast 'Additional Geographical Names' is Dolcetto di Diano d'Alba: the work on this wine actually began way back in the 1980s, taking the dialectal word 'sori' as an indication of a particularly favourable vineyard."

The Consorzio continues, "Work will, however, continue to include other Doc and Docg wines in the area. The 'Additions' list is not the exclusive territory of wine, either: in fact, if other agricultural products are cultivated in the same area, they can benefit from the special name. The Barolo zone includes 181 such 'names' (including 11 municipal) approved by the new Disciplinary Regulations of 2010. The use of such a term is not to be confused with the name of a particular vineyard ('Vigna'), which requires even more stringent application of yield reductions in order to be applied to a Doc or Docg wine. This was originally intended as an attempt to create an Italian 'cru' system, but it has not been widely adopted."

## **THE DOCG's of PIEDMONT**

### **BAROLO**

Defined by many to be the "king of wines and the wine of kings," because of its regal characteristics and majestic reputation, this splendid Piemontese red is one of the standard-bearers of Italian enology.

Barolo is born, nurtured and matured in the province of Cuneo and in the communities of Barolo, Castiglione Falletto, Serralunga d'Alba, Novello, La Morra, Verduno, Grinzane Cavour, Diano d'Alba, Cherasco and Roddi.

Produced with 100 percent Nebbiolo grapes (sub varieties Michet, Lampia and Rose') Barolo is an intense, dry, robust but velvety garnet-colored (tending toward orange with age) red wine. It requires a minimum ageing period of three years (at least two in cask) In order to be called Riserva the wine must be aged for a minimum of five years. Ageing for the wines begins 1 January of the year following the harvest. Barolo was named a DOCG in 1980.

## **BARBARESCO**

If Barolo is called the "king of wines" then there must be a "prince" somewhere nearby - that young royal is Barbaresco. Barbaresco, following in the footsteps of its older brother Barolo, is also produced with 100 percent Nebbiolo grapes. The Barbaresco zone of production also lies in the province of Cuneo, in the communities of Barbaresco, Neive, Treiso and parts of San Rocco Senodervio d'Alba.

This is a wine of extremely ancient origin and even mentioned by Livy in his monumental "History of Rome." According to an old tradition, the Gauls were attracted to Italy and descended into the peninsula because of the goodness of the wine of "Barbaritium," from which the words "Barbariscum" and later "Barbaresco" were derived.

It is garnet red in color with orange reflections and has a characteristic perfume of tar and faded roses. Barbaresco is dry, full, robust, austere but velvety in taste.

Barbaresco requires a minimum ageing period of two years (at least one in cask.) Riservas demand ageing of no less than four years. Ageing begins 1 January following the harvest. DOCG status was granted to Barbaresco in 1980.

## **GATTINARA**

Gattinara which takes its name from the town around where the grapes are grown, is made with a preponderance of Nebbiolo (locally known as Spanna), 90% minimum, with the addition of Bonarda and/or Vespolina, 10% maximum, to soften the wine.

Locally, the Nebbiolo is known as Spanna. The name is derived from "span," a measuring unit -- the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger when the hand is fully extended. It is the average length of the fully developed clusters of Nebbiolo grapes.

Gattinara is garnet tending to orange in color. It offers a fine perfume that hints of violets and roses which becomes spicy with extended ageing. The wine is dry and well-balanced with a characteristic bitterish finish. By law Gattinara must age at least three years, one in oak or chestnut casks. Riserva's must be aged four years, at least two in wood. Ageing begins 1 December of the year of harvest.

## **GHEMME**

Ghemme, which is made primarily from Nebbiolo grapes, is produced in the Colli Novaresi and Vercellesi viticultural area. The wine boasts extremely ancient origins. Recent excavations near Ghemme provide archeological confirmation that vines were cultivated in the district at least as early as the beginning of the Christian era. The Romans owned some vineyards in the district that were veritable models of up-to-date agricultural practice and where scientific rules were followed in every phase of winemaking.

Ghemme is garnet red in color and a perfume that hints of color. The wine is dry, tends to be tannic but harmonious. By law the wine can be produced with 75% Nebbiolo and a maximum of 25% Uva Rara and/or Vespolina used alone or together. The wine requires at least three years of ageing, at least 20 months in oak. Ageing period begins 1 November following the harvest.

## **GAVI or CORTESE di GAVI**

Gavi is produced with Cortese grapes grown in the Alto Monferrato, a vitivinicultural zone situated in the southern part of the province of Alessandria. A total of 59 communes are involved in its production in a district that is predominantly hilly. Acqui, Ovada, Gavi and Novi Ligure are the best-known communities in its production zone.

Although the variety is extremely ancient, documentary evidence of its existence goes back only several centuries. The first fairly detailed account of the Cortese variety is provided in an account written in 1798 suggesting that this variety makes "good wine in substantial quantity and it keeps well."

Gavi is pale straw in color with greenish reflections with a delicate perfume that hints of fresh fruit. It is dry and appealing. It may be produced in still, frizzante or sparkling versions.

## **MOSCATO d'ASTI/ASTI**

The Moscato varietal has been cultivated in the Asti area since extremely ancient times. The grape was cited in the Statutes of the Commune of Canelli as long ago as the 13th century.

According to an old legend of the Asti district, the grape's origins date back to the time of the Stanzianelli, who founded the community.

Giovan Battista Croce, a Milanese jeweler who moved to Turin at the end of the 16th century, is regarded as the "father" of Moscato d'Asti. A noted goldsmith and jeweler to Duke Carl Emmanuel I of Savoy, Croce was also the owner of a vineyard between Montevicchio and Candia in the Turin hills where he conducted experiments with various training systems in order to improve quality. In his cellar, he perfected the techniques of making sweet, aromatic wines with low alcohol levels. In 1606, he published his finds and conclusions in small book with the title, "Of the Excellence and Diversity of Wines That Are Made on the Mountain of Turin and How to Make Them."

In producing Moscato d'Asti, the grapes are separated from the stalks immediately before pressing and the must obtained is vinified off the skins. The first filtration is carried out and the process is repeated regularly so that the wine remains sweet. The product thus obtained is known as sweet filtrate. Natural Moscato can be consumed as it is or it can be turned into a sparkling wine, Asti. (With its elevation to DOCG, the term "spumante" need not be used on the Asti label. Producers {and the government, alike} felt that consumers the world over, know Asti as a fully sparkling wine, therefore, the term "Spumante" as a modifier was redundant.)

Asti may now be produced as a dry (secco wine).

## **BRACHETTO d'ACQUI or ACQUI**

A superb Piemontese dessert wine, Brachetto d'Acqui is produced in only extremely limited quantities. According to popular tradition, the wine was greatly appreciated by, and was the preferred beverage of, one of the most famous characters of the Italian comedy in masks, Gioan d'laduja or Giovanni of the jug. The figure is said to have drawn inspiration for his bubbly high spirits from this fizzy red wine with a fragrant foam.

Brachetto's origin is much disputed. According to the most reasonable hypothesis, the variety originated in the hillsides around Asti.

The wine is produced with the Brachetto grape with a maximum addition of no more than 10% Aleatico or Moscato Nero. The wine must have a minimum alcohol of 6% (5 for the non-spumante) and can be still, lightly frizzante or sparkling. Brachetto may now be produced in a dry version but the DOCG is simply Acqui not Brachetto d'Acqui.

## **ROERO ARNEIS and NEBBIOLO**

To the left of the Tanaro riverbank in Piedmont lies the Roero district where the white Arneis and red Nebbiolo share vineyard space. The white Arneis may be still or sparkling and is produced with 100% Arneis and there is no mandatory ageing requirement. The wine is straw yellow in color.

In the case of Roero Nebbiolo, the wine is produced with 95% Nebbiolo up to 3% non-aromatic red grape varieties and up to 2% white Arneis. The Roero Nebbiolo which is ruby to garnet in color must age for a minimum of 20 months (beginning 1 November) at least six in wood. Roero Nebbiolo Riserva must age for a minimum of 32 months (beginning 1 November) and also spend at least six months in wood.

## **DOLCETTO di DOGLIANI SUPERIORE and DOGLIANI**

A delightful red produced in and around the commune of Dogliani with Dolcetto grapes. This wine is deep ruby with violet reflections and well balanced with a moderate acidity.

The wine must be aged at least one year (as of 15 October of the year of harvest) and cannot be sold until 1 November of the year following the harvest.

## **BARBERA d'ASTI**

Barbera d'Asti is born of at least 85% Barbera grown in and around the town of Asti. Up to 15% Freisa, Grignolino and/or Dolcetto may be blended. The wine must age until 1 March of the year following the harvest.

Barbera d'Asti can be designated Superiore if it is aged for at least one year with a minimum six months in wood and achieves an alcohol of 12.5%. This ageing begins as of 1 January following the harvest. Barbera d'Asti Superiore with the designations Tinella or Colli Astiani must age a minimum of 24 months beginning 1 October.

The wine is brilliant ruby red with garnet reflections as the wine ages. The wine is dry, fruity with a harmonious taste.

#### **BARBERA del MONFERRATO SUPERIORE**

A delicious red born from at least 85% Barbera grapes born in and around the Monferrato hills. Up to 15% of Freisa, Grignolino and/or Dolcetto may be included. The Superiore must age for a minimum of one year (at least six months in wood) to be entitled to the designation superiore.

The wine is ruby red and with a medium body and vivacious character.

#### **DOLCETTO di OVADA SUPERIORE or OVADA**

A lovely red produced with Dolcetto grapes grown in and around the town of Ovada. In order to be called superiore the wine must achieve an alcohol of at least 12.5% and age for a minimum of one year beginning November 1 of the year of the harvest. If a vineyard designation is used, the wine must age for a minimum of 20 months beginning 1 November. If the term Riserva is used the wine must age at least 24 months (minimum 6 in wood).

The wine is intense ruby in color with hints of almonds in the finish.

#### **ERBALUCE di CALUSO**

A luscious white produced with 100% Erbaluce. The wine may be produced as still or sparkling. A luscious white produced with 100% Erbaluce. The wine may be produced as still or sparkling or passito versions. Passito must be aged for 36 months beginning 1 November following the harvest. A Passito Riserva version requires a minimum of 48 months of ageing. Erbaluce may be dry, fresh and fruity with a mineral character or rich, sweet and unctuous when produced with partially dried grapes in the passito style.

#### **RUCHE' di CASTAGNOLE MONFERRATO**

The delightful red is produced with a minimum of 90% Ruche with the addition of no more than 10% Barbera and/or Brachetto. Ruche' is usually medium bodied with hints of flowers, wild berries and a touch of pepper. The wine usually has a nice vein of acidity and soft tannins

#### **DOLCETTO di DIANO d'ALBA**

Lovely red produced with 100% Dolcetto grown in the delimited Diano d'Alba zone. The wine has bright fruit with a hint of almond in the finish. The wine must age until 1 November of the year following the harvest.

#### **ALTA LANGA**

Alta Langa is an incredible red, white or rose sparkler that is produced with Pinot Nero and/or Chardonnay 90% and no more than 10% other local non aromatic varietals. The wine is required to age for a minimum of 30 months.

**NIZZA** "Nizza" a subzone in the Barbera d'Asti zone now has its own DOCG. Grapes must be grown in the Nizza zone and the wine must be 100% Barbera. The wine must age for a minimum of 12 months (beginning 1 January following the harvest) and spend at least six months in wood. The wine may be labeled with a particular vineyard designation. Riserva must age for a minimum of 30 months, at least 12 months in wood.

#### **CANELLI/MOSCATO CANELLI**

With the 2020 vintage, made with 100% Moscato Bianco. The wine is pale straw to intense gold (with age) with the haunting fragrance of Moscato. The wine has Riserva, Vigna and Vigna Riserva designations.

## MARCHESI DI BAROLO



Celebrating 90 years and counting! (1929 – 2019) The Marchesi di Barolo estate encompasses approximately 430 acres of vineyards in the Langhe, some of the finest in Piedmont, including the prestigious Cannubi cru. The cellars are located in the village of Barolo, overlooking the Renaissance castle of the Marchesi Falletti di Barolo. Barolo as we know it today was first made in the early 19th century by the Marchese Carlo Tancredi Falletti di Barolo and his wife, Giulia. The wine from their estate soon became known as “the wine from Barolo”, served at important diplomatic and royal functions. The Marchesi had no children and following the death of the couple, the Marchesi

di Barolo dynasty was left without an heir. Per the wishes of Marchesa Giulia, a great philanthropist, the family assets were donated to charity and a non-profit foundation was created in their name, “Opera Pia Barolo”, helping the most needy of nearby Torino. The sales of wine from their Barolo vineyards continue to fund the charity, which still exists today. In 1929, local winemaker, Pietro Abbona purchased the cellars formerly owned by the Marchesi and eventually acquired all their vineyard holdings as well.

Today, Marchesi di Barolo remains a family business. Since 2006, the estate has been under the direction of Pietro's great-grandson and fifth-generation winemaker, Ernesto Abbona and his wife Anna, who have inherited a longstanding winemaking tradition and a love of the vineyards and its wines.

“You would expect some pretty special examples of Barolo with this name, and the winery delivers; especially noteworthy are the Cannubi and the Coste di Rose, as well as the Sarmassa in most years. Somewhat modern in their approach, the Barolos here also pay tribute to the winemaking heritage of this territory; the wines offer excellent ripeness and harmony.” — Forbes.com, ‘The 25 Best Producers of Barolo’, November, 2018

**Marchesi di Barolo, Barolo** Garnet-red in color with ruby reflections. An intense odor with clean scents of roses, vanilla, roasted hazelnuts, licorice and spices. Full, elegant, full-bodied and austere flavor with recurring hints of the olfactory sensations. Pleasant touch of tar and oaky notes in perfect equilibrium.

**Technical Details** **Appellation:** Barolo DOCG **Varietal:** Nebbiolo

**Winemaker:** Flavio Fenocchio **Sustainability:** Sustainable Practices

**Soil:** Sand

**Alcohol:** 14.5% **Ttl Acidity:** 5.9g/l **Residual Sugar:** 2.5g/l

**Sizes Available:** 750ml **UPC Code:** 0 89744-75980 1

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## PRINCIPESSA GAVIA ESTATE



About 15 miles east of Strevi, outside the city of Gavi, is the Mariani vineyard, estate and boutique winery named Principessa Gavia.

It is here that Cortese vinifera grapes, grown on 90 acres of Banfi vineyards, are pressed and vinified according to the most modern technology, using the most advanced equipment. The finished wine, called Principessa Gavi, is then bottled at Banfi's estate in Strevi.

The vineyards, scientifically planned, are exposed to the sun in amphitheater fashion to maximize the beneficial effects of heat in this northern climate. Drainage is excellent. The soil is calcareous with clay and marl.

Cortese is a productive grape variety, resistant to cold weather and favors a southern exposure.

First reference to this variety appeared in the late 1700's in the writings of the Agricultural Society of Turin. More was written in the mid 1800s. It seems that the grape is a native of the area that surrounds Tortona and Novi Ligure, where the town of Gavi is located and where Cortese is widely planted. Cortese is also planted sporadically in Lombardy, Liguria and Veneto.

Some growers still blend it with Dolcetto and Barbera to add softness and fruit and to lessen the austerity of those wines. Others make a sparkling wine with it or vinify it semi-dry. The majority, however, use it to make Gavi, one of the most appreciated dry whites in Italy.

According to DOCG law, the Cortese grapes have to grant the wine minimum natural total alcohol content of 9.5% for the still wine and 9% for the sparkling. Vinification must take place in the area of production.

There are about 380 growers of Cortese in the Gavi district. Some make and bottle their wines, other just sell the bulk wine they produce.

Principessa Gavia is a fully automated (three people run it during non-harvest times), ultra-modern winery situated at the base of the hillside vineyards. 90 acres of Cortese grapes, planted on hills with a 45degree inclination, surround it.

Upon reaching the winery, the Cortese is quickly crushed and gently pressed. The must is then rushed to temperature controlled stainless steel storage tanks where it rests for 24 hours at a temperature of 32 degrees F which blocks fermentation. During this time it sheds, by natural sedimentation, many of the solid particles it contains. If these particles were retained in the fermenting must, they would tend to lessen the wine's charm and delicacy. An important rule in winemaking has it that the cleaner the must, the better, more flavorful, more delicate, more perfect the wine.

After 24 hours, the must is filtered to free it from any particles not sedimented out. It is then channeled into other stainless steel tanks. There specially selected yeast is added and fermentation begins at a low temperature of about 55 degrees F. Fermentation is slow, lasting about 20 to 22 days, twice as long as normal. Just like the gentle simmering of a sauce or soup extracts the flavor, perfume, essence and character of the ingredients used, so does slow fermentation extract the aromatic flavor components of the grape.

The wine is then transferred to other stainless steel storage tanks where it "rests" at 32 degrees F for a three or four month period. The temperature of the room in which the tanks are located is also set at 32 degrees F.

Afterwards, our Gavi is brought to Banfi, Strevi for bottling. Two styles of Gavi are produced. Principessa Gavi is an elegant, dry white wine, perfectly balanced, showing a deliciously distinct style, crisp, but not brittle; fragrant with a certain amount of austerity. Unlike most other white wines, it does not tire the palate as one sips it. Rather it develops its personality more and more and, at the end of the meal, it emerges as the aristocrat it is.

Principessa Perlante also produced with 100% Cortese grapes (which remain on the vines for a slightly longer period of time thus imbuing the wine with added richness) is vinified to allow for a small amount of



natural CO<sub>2</sub> (stars...or Perlante) to remain in the wine. Perlante is delicately fragrant, soft and delightful with just a tease of sparkle in the mouth. Perlante is not sold in the USA.

Some drinkers with an arteriosclerotic view of wine may find fault with it, as it is young, fresh, unencumbered and not laden with the buttery richness and oaky vanillin taste of wood-aged white wines they are accustomed to sipping.

There is a charming legend about the origins of the name "Gavi." It is said that in the Dark Ages there was a golden-haired princess, the daughter of Clodimir, King of France. Her name was Gavia. She chose to marry a young man who worked in her father's court. Her father, of course, objected. Very much in love, the young couple eloped across the Alps to Lombardy. Finding the climate there inclement, they headed south towards Liguria and the Italian riviera. On the way there, they stopped at a small village where they found the wine to be exceptional and decided to remain there.

A local innkeeper befriended them, they confided their predicament to him and, as it happens, he did not keep the secret. The king was informed and sent his knight to bring back the hapless lovers. The story ends happily as King Clodimir, upon seeing his daughter, forgave her and, as a gesture of love, bequeathed to her the town where she was found, naming it Gavi.

**Principessa Gavia Gavi, DOCG** - Principessa Gavi is produced with 100% Cortese grapes fermented at low temperatures in stainless steel. The wine is pale straw in color with an intense fresh and fruity bouquet that hints of pineapple and apple. Principessa Gavi has a fresh, well balanced with a light vein of bitterness.



Strevi, in the province of Alessandria, in southeastern Piedmont, is a quaint village of about 1,200 people. It is located a short distance from Acqui Terme, a spa much frequented by the ancient Romans since 173 BC, and whose popularity has remained undiminished to our days.

In 1979, Banfi acquired controlling interest in the Bruzzone winery, established in the mid-1800's, renowned not only in Italy but also throughout Europe for making sparkling wine of excellent quality in the classic method champenoise, fermentation in the bottle.

The winery has been completely rebuilt without altering its 19th century charm. Today it is rated among the most modern. Here, the latest techniques and equipment are used to make and bottle both still and sparkling wines. Extensive use is made of stainless steel for temperature controlled fermentation and cold storage of wine and must. Bottling is done under nitrogen to lengthen the wine's youth and vibrancy.

The total bottling capacity is about 50,000 cases per month.

Banfi's winery vinifies and bottles world class wines and some select high quality wines of broad appeal. They are Banfi Brut Metodo Tradizionale Classico, Brachetto d'Acqui and Argusto Dolcetto d'Acqui. In addition, Principessa Gavi and Principessa Perlante are bottled there along with Cuvee Aurora Rose Alta Langa and LaLus.

The history of Alta Langa wine began in 1990. Alta Langa is known for its breathtaking views. The most important activities of the area are sheep farms, where excellent varieties of cheese are produced, and winemaking. To work with the steep slopes that characterize the area, vineyards are planted on terraced land and supported by stone ramparts.

In the past few decades, local winemakers have gradually discovered that their soil is ideal for cultivating Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Years of research and experimentation have led to the creation of the Alta Langa DOC appellation, the first in Piedmont that calls for the fermentation of sparkling wine in bottles.

Varieties: Pinot Nero and/or Chardonnay, 90-100%; other local non-aromatic varieties, up to 10%.

The experimental stage lasted until 1996 when the last planted experimental vines came into production, bringing the total experimental surface area to over 48 hectares. In 1999, with a total of 50 hectares in full

production, steps were taken to apply for D.O.C. status...obtained with a Ministerial Decree dated 31st October 2002. The year 2001 saw the constitution of the Consortium for the Protection of the "Alta Langa." Banfi's Aurora Cuvee Rose is produced under the Alta Langa designation.

LaLus is another extraordinary wine born at Banfi Piemonte, the result of the "Albarossa" project. Albarossa is an amazing red grape created from the union of Barbera and Nebbiolo. The grape was conceived in 1938 by Professor Dalmaso during some experiments with typical Piedmontese varieties. In 2001, four wineries, among the most important in Piedmont, including Banfi decided to invest in and research this unique variety. In 2006, the first vintage of Albarossa was vinified.

Banfi Piemonte's La Lus which translates to "the light" (the new dawn) has an intense ruby red color with soft tannins, yet offers the potential for extended ageing. The wine matures in French oak barrels for 12 months followed by an additional 8 in the bottle.

The winery also houses an enoteca and wine museum, reputed to be the foremost in northern Italy. In it are exhibited wine presses, rudimentary bottling equipment, corking machines, a variety of painstakingly restored wine accessories and ancient hand-blown wine bottles. Many of these artifacts have been in use at the old winery in the 19th century.

**L'Ardi Dolcetto d'Acqui, DOC** – L'Ardi is a delightful Dolcetto from Piedmont. Select Dolcetto grapes are vinified to create an delicious wine with an intense ruby-red color and fruity bouquet that hints of summer wild berries and finishes with a soft, spicy taste. The word L'Ardi in Piedmontese dialect refers to a handsome young man who is bright and brave.

**L'Altra Anima Barbera d'Asti, DOCG** - L'Altra anima, translates to "the other soul" featuring Barbera, the favored grape variety of the Piedmont region. Barbera is iconic and created in many styles. Our L'Altra anima takes the form of a captivating wine as represented by the beautiful woman on our label. Her dress recalls the rolling hills, forming its identity and strength while the wine is as fresh, lively and animated as our stylish lady! After a short cold maceration, fermentation with the skins follows for 5-7 days with delicate pumping to enhance the fruity aromas. During fermentation two "delestage" take place. The malolactic fermentation follows, partly in barriques (new oak) and partly in steel. The wine is deep ruby, fresh, fruity and complex, with notes of blackberry and plum, It is full-bodied, well balanced and dry with sweet tannins and fresh acidity, typical of the grape.



## TUSCANY

From time immemorial, Tuscany, located on Italy's geographic center and bounded by Liguria, Emilia-Romagna, the Marches, Umbria, Latium and, along the whole its western edge, the Tyrrhenian Sea, has been recognized as one of the country's premier agricultural regions. Ninety percent of Tuscan territory is either under cultivation or in forest. Only 8% is infertile and non-productive.

Tuscany takes its name from the Latin word "Tuscia," which referred to region and to the Etruscans who were known to the Romans as the "Tusci."

It is, and for thousands of years has been, one of the leading winemaking regions of the Italian peninsula. The region's enologic traditions date at least to the Etruscan period. The principal vineyard areas are the hills of Montalcino in Southwestern Tuscany, Chianti in central Tuscany, the Mugello area to the north and the Chiana valley to the south, Montepulciano to the east, San Gimignano to the West and a strip along the coast known as the Maremma.

The most widely cultivated varieties are prevalently indigenous, although they are now well diffused in the other regions. They include Sangiovese, Canaiolo, Trebbiano Toscano, Malvasia Toscana or del Chianti, Vernaccia and Vermentino.

The reputation of Tuscany's DOCG and DOC wines is well established both in Italy and abroad. Chianti was one of the first wines to be shipped beyond the national borders, having been exported since the 18th century in the famous "fiasco" (straw-wrapped, round-bottom bottles).

The whites (mostly dry, well-balanced and full of taste range from Vernaccia di San Gimignano to Bianco di Pitigliano, Vermentino, Montecarlo Bianco, Galestro, and others, such as Moscadello di Montalcino, with its lush, yet reserved sweetness. Another intriguing wine is Vin Santo, a typical product of Tuscany.

Vin Santo can be either sweet or dry. The sweet is more prized. It is made with partially dried grapes, whose juice is fermented and aged in small oak barrels for a period of three to five years. During that time, the wine is subjected to extremes of heat in the summer and cold in the winter.

Ideally, after extended ageing, you find a warm, deliciously sweet but not syrupy wine. It is called Vin Santo (holy wine) because, as one of the legends tells us, it was given to hospital patients during the pestilence of the 1300's, and it was said to have "resurrected the dead."

Tuscany has also pioneered the growing of noble grape varieties not traditionally planted in the region. Today, we find Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Grigio sharing a place in the Tuscan sun with Sangiovese, Canaiolo, Mammolo, Syrah, Malvasia, Trebbiano and others. The results are wines that are winning the appreciation of consumers the world over.

## THE DOCG's of TUSCANY

### BRUNELLO di MONTALCINO

Today, this is one of Italy's most acclaimed wines - yet it was scarcely known 30 years ago. Brunello was first produced in the 1860's by the Biondi-Santi family.

Brunello di Montalcino is produced with 100% Sangiovese locally known as Brunello. In order to be called Brunello di Montalcino, the wine must age for at least two years (since 1995 vintage) in oak or chestnut followed by at least two years in the bottle. Riservas require no less than five years of age. Ageing begins 1 January following the harvest.

Brunello di Montalcino is deep ruby red and tends toward garnet with age. Its bouquet is rich and sometimes hints of violets and/or chestnuts. It is dry, well-balanced, tannic when young, but becomes round and harmonious with age.

### CHIANTI

#### Chianti Zones

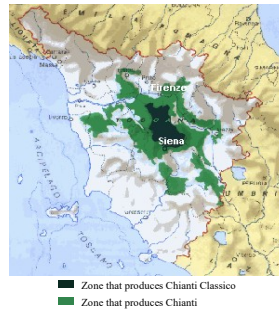
Montespertoli -  
Colline Pisane - (Pisa Hills)  
Colli Fiorentini - (Florentine Hills)  
Colli Aretini - (Arezzo Hills)  
Rufina -  
Montalbano -  
Colli Senesi - (Siena Hills)  
Classico

2 DOCG's for Chianti (Chianti - 7 zones) &  
(Classico)

Superiore - Lower yields, Additional aging, Higher Alcohol, can only come from the 7 zones and not from Classico.

#### Alcohol Contents (cannot be below)

Chianti - 11.5%  
Superiore / Classico - 12%  
Classico Riserva - 12.5%



The name Chianti is traced to the Latin "clangor" meaning the shrill cry of birds or the screeching of trumpets. Legend has it that the black rooster (the Etruscan symbol used by the "Classico" consortium) was the dawn bird whose shrill cry would chase away the evil spirits of the night.

Chianti's zone of production is bounded on the north by Florence, the south by Siena, the west by Pisa and the east by Arezzo. It consists of seven areas: Colli Aretini, Colli Fiorentini, Colli Senesi, Colline Pisane, Montalbano, Rufina and Montespertoli.

All Chianti (including that from the separate DOCG for Chianti Classico) can now be produced from 100% Sangiovese. However, the composition for Chianti is as follows, Sangiovese 75 to 100% and Canaiolo Nero up to 10% with two white grapes, Malvasia and Trebbiano up to 10%. An addition of no more than 15% percent other red varieties authorized in the zone is also allowed for the wine simply called Chianti. Chianti with subzones listed or that uses Superiore is allowed up to 20% other red grapes of the zone but may not include more than 10% of any single variety.

Chianti, Chianti Colli Aretini, Chianti Colli Senesi, Chianti Montalbano and Chianti Colline Pisane may be sold as of the succeeding March 1<sup>st</sup>. Chianti Montespertoli may not be released until 1 June. Chianti Colli Fiorentini, Chianti Rufina and that labeled Superiore must age until 1 September of the year following harvest. Riserva wines will now be aged also two years including three months in the bottle before release,

but they must achieve an alcohol of at least 12%. Those riservas that also the subzones Colli Aretini, Colli Senesi, Colline Pisane, Montalbano and Montespertoli require an alcohol of 12.5%. Ageing for the riservas begins as of 1 January of the year following the harvest. Chianti is brilliant, ruby red with garnet tinges when aged. The bouquet is vinous and hints of violets. It is dry and balanced. Chianti that has undergone "governo" is more lively and round.

## **CHIANTI CLASSICO**

Producers of Chianti Classico have received an independent DOCG with a new set of rules to distinguish their wines from those of the seven other zones of Chianti.

As with Chianti, it is now legitimate to produce Chianti Classico from Sangiovese alone. The use of red Canaiolo and white grapes are no longer obligatory in any Chianti zone. However, producers do still have the option of using those complementary white and red varieties. The composition can be as follows for Chianti Classico. Sangiovese (80 to 100% and up to 20% other red grapes. While prior to the 2006 vintage up to 6% white grapes were allowed, it is no longer possible to use white grapes in Chianti Classico.

Wine without the Riserva distinction cannot be sold until October following the harvest. Chianti Classico must have a minimum of 12% alcohol while the Riserva requires a minimum 12.5%. Chianti Classico must age until 1 October of the year following harvest, while the Riserva must age a minimum of 24 months (at least three in the bottle). Ageing begins as of 1 January following the harvest.

The Classico zone between Florence and Siena, where wines called Chianti were first made in the late Middle Ages, rates distinction from other districts created later as demand for Chianti grew. Yet Chianti Classico producers insist that their separate DOCG isn't intended to express superiority but rather to enable them to improve quality further by following methods in step with modern times. Winemakers in the other Chianti zones would be free to re-interpret rules in their own ways.

Chianti Classico is bright, ruby to garnet with orange to rust reflections when aged. The bouquet is vinous and hints of violets. It is dry and balanced. Chianti that has undergone "governo" is more lively and round.

Gran Selezione. Is now the wine at the summit of the pyramid of the Chianti Classico designation, presented on the market only after a minimum 30-month maturation and a mandatory period in the bottle. All grapes must be estate grown.

## **VINO NOBILE di MONTEPULCIANO**



Vino Nobile di Montepulciano not to be confused with Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, is a compendium of grape varieties. Grown on the slopes of the town of Montepulciano, the grape varieties of Prugnolo Gentile (local name for Sangiovese) – minimum 70% with the addition of no more than 20% Canaiolo and/or other reds of the zone with no more than 10% non aromatic whites (with the exception of Malvasia del Chianti) make a wine suitable to its noble name.

Vino Nobile has been produced for centuries by the aristocracy or noble families of Montepulciano. The wine may have been produced first by the Jesuits when they settled in Montepulciano during the 13th century. The wine was used for the Holy Mass and soon became a favorite of Pope Paul III and was exported by the "noble" families to many markets beginning in the 14th century.

The wine requires a minimum of two years ageing. It may be two years of wood ageing or 18 months in wood followed by the rest in other containers or it may be a minimum of 12 months in wood plus at least six months in the bottle (prior to bottle ageing it would be required at least 6 months in other containers). In the case of the last two (the ageing in wood may not begin until 30 April. A wine with at least three years of ageing (at least six in the bottle) may be classified "Riserva". Ageing begins 1 January.

Vino Nobile is garnet in color and tends to brick with age. The nose is delicate with a bouquet reminiscent of violets. Its taste is dry, slightly tannic but rounds out with age.

## **CARMIGNANO**

The first citations of a Carmignano wine go back to the 14th century. A document drawn up in 1369 shows that Carmignano cost four times as much as any other in wine in commerce in that period.

In 1716 Tuscan Grand Duke Cosimo de Medici issued a decree in which he established production standards for Carmignano. Those same terms were reapplied in setting the boundaries of the new Carmignano in 1975.

Carmignano is produced with Sangiovese (minimum 50%), Canaiolo Nero (maximum 20%), Cabernet Franc and/or Cabernet Sauvignon (10-20%) and Trebbiano Toscano, Canaiolo Bianco and Malvasia del Chianti alone or together (10%). A maximum of 10% other red varieties of the zone may also be added. Carmignano must age until 1 June of the second year following the harvest with a minimum of 8 months in wood. Carmignano Riserva may not be released until 29 September (Feast of St. Michael and Carmignano) in the third year following the harvest and must age at least 12 months in wood.

The wine has a lively ruby-red color tending to garnet with age. Its perfume is vinous and intense with hints of violets and its taste is dry, balanced and velvety. The wine may be produced in a Red, Rose' or Vin Santo version but only the Rosso has been accorded DOCG status.

## **VERNACCIA di SAN GIMIGNANO**

Many hypotheses have been advanced to explain the origin of the word Vernaccia. Some experts have argued that the name is derived from the Latin word vernaculus, meaning a place or locale. Others say it is derived from the name of a Ligurian town in the area of Cinque Terre, Vernazza.

Vernaccia has been highly appreciated for hundreds of years. Today its production is restricted to the hilly territory of the commune of the same name in the province of Siena. The wine is produced with at least 90% Vernaccia grapes grown solely within the DOC zone; up to 10% other non aromatic whites may be included.

When the wine is aged for no less than one year (beginning 1 January following harvest) it is entitled to the designation Riserva.





## **MORELLINO di SCANSANO**



Morellino di Scansano is a wonderful red wine whose name is said to come from the wild “morellini” stallions which once roamed the hillsides of Scansano. The stallions and the wine are said to be so named for the deep, dark almost Rhone color of their skins and the wines the grapes produce.

The wine is made with a minimum of 85% Sangiovese and maximum of 15% other local red grapes. Morellino is deep ruby in color with garnet reflections with a vinous character. The wine must age for a minimum of six months beginning January 1 after harvest. Wines designated Riserva must age a minimum of 2

years at least one in wood with an alcohol of 13%.

## **ELBA ALEATICO PASSITO**

Elba Aleatico is produced with the Aleatico grape grown on the island of Elba part of the region of Tuscany. Following harvest, the grapes are dried for a period of 10 days or more. Elba Aleatico Passito may now be sold before 1 March of the year following the harvest. The wine is deep ruby in color with an intense nose and sweet, rich body.

## **MONTECUCCO SANGIOVESE**

Montecucco Sangiovese is intense ruby red with characteristic red fruits in the nose. The Taste is dry, harmonious and lightly tannin. The wine is produced with a minimum of 90% Sangiovese with a maximum of 10% other local red grapes with the exclusion of Malvasia Nera and Aleatico. The wine must age for a minimum of 12 months in wood and may be released 1 April of the second year after the harvest. Riserva may also be produced. It must age at least 30 months, 24 of which must be in wood. It may not be released until 1 September, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> year following the harvest.

## **SUVERETO**

Suvereto is produced with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot may be used alone or together up to 100%. An addition of 15% other local red varieties (non aromatic) may also be included. Suvereto Sangiovese must contain a minimum of 85% Sangiovese with a maximum of other non aromatic local red grapes. The wines must age until 1 June of the second year after harvest. Suvereto Sangiovese Riserva must age until 1 January of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year following the harvest. The riserva must spend 18 months in wood and at least six in the bottle. The wines are ruby, with a delicate perfume, dry and velvety on the palate.

## **VAL di CORNIA ROSSO**

Val di Cornia Rosso is a red with a minimum of 40% Sangiovese with the addition of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot (alone or combined) to a maximum of 60%. Other local red grapes may be added up to 20%. The wine may not be consumed prior to 1 May of the second year following harvest. Riserva must age until 1 January of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year following harvest and at least 18 months of that ageing must be in wood and



six months in the bottle. The wines are ruby red with a delicate vinous nose, dry and velvety on the palate, with great body.

## CASTELLO BANFI



In 1978, Banfi became a winemaker by acquiring a former feudal domain in the area of Montalcino. It is located in San'Angelo Scalo, a sleepy, whistle-stop, spaghetti-western type town, about three miles from Montalcino's 14th century fortress.

The estate has 7,100 acres, about 11 square miles. However, only 2,400 acres are currently planted to the vine.

The climate is typically Mediterranean, eminently suited to the growth of the vine and the olive tree, both plants being gifted with enough strength to withstand prolonged droughts, such as those that occur in the summer and

that warrant irrigation in July. The plants send their roots deep into the ground where they find the moisture needed for survival.

The soil, excessively rocky, poor, and unyielding, offers no promise of generous crops. It is rich, however, with nutrients vital to the health and complexity of the fruit concentrated there when the area was under water four million years ago. Evidence of this are the fossilized sea shells that blanket the vineyards. The main components of the soil are limestone, sandstone and layers of clay. When combined with humidity, this clay forms a hard shield that impedes the burrowing of the vine's root so it has to be removed, not an easy task. Huge rocks and boulders with which the soil is constellated have also to be painstakingly removed.

The days are hot, but the nights are breezy and cool, so the fruit does not "cook" but reaches a gradual, complete maturation.

The first massive undertaking that faced the Marianis' and then, director, Ezio Rivella, who has since retired, was the clearing of the trees and preparation of the soil in an area where the vine had never been planted. An army of bulldozers, caterpillars and backhoes recontoured the land into huge amphitheaters scraping away miles of hard clay surface and replacing it with rich topsoil. For irrigation -- just once in July (for a few of the non-DOCG vineyards) -- artificial lakes, drainage ditches and pumping stations were built.

Grape varieties planted at the estate are Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Pinot Noir, Vernaccia, Moscadello, Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon. Castello Banfi pioneered the planting of noble French grape varieties in the area, and research continues to pair the various microclimates on the estate to ideal grape varieties.

But Banfi's most intensive undertaking was on behalf of the zone's native Sangiovese for Brunello. Castello Banfi agronomists initially identified 650 clones of Sangiovese in Tuscany and sub-divided them into five fundamental types. From that basis the selection was narrowed to 180 "presumed" clones from which were isolated 15, which represent the greater part of the grapes inherent variables. Today, we have definitive results on these clones and are planting our vineyards accordingly to produce the best wines possible. The extraordinary Poggio alle Mura 1997, produced with five year old vines from three of these special clones, debuted to spectacular reviews, including a 96 score from *Wine Spectator*. The editors of *Wine Spectator* have ranked Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino #3 of the top 100 wines of the world, while readers declared it "Wine of the Year" in an online poll. Wine Spectator has also christened the Mariani family as "Builders of Brunello."

Looming over the estate from atop a rugged hill which affords it a commanding view of two craggy valleys, carved by rivers Ombrone and Orcia, is Castello Poggio alle Mura (the walled hilltop) nicknamed Castello Banfi. This gothic fortification with its medieval walls, grilled windows and battlements can trace its history to the ancient Etruscans and then in the 700's to the Longobards, an ancient tribe of Scandinavian origin, so called for the long flowing beards they sported.

They had crossed the Alps in the late 500's to partake in the bounties of the fertile Po valley and luxuriate in the "Italian experience." They settled in Milano, Verona, Pavia, which became their capital, Cremona and, eventually, continued southward to Florence and beyond, posing a threat to the security of the papal states in the south.

The demise of the Longobards came in the person of Charlemagne, King of the Franks, the greatest of all medieval kings, who was asked to stop them by Pope Hadrian II in the 700's. This was Charlemagne's first of 18 campaigns throughout Europe on behalf of the papacy against its enemies. He was rewarded for his efforts with the crown of the Holy Roman Empire on Christmas day 800.

Closely tied to the most dramatic history of the Middle Ages, Castello Banfi later became the property of the Aldobrandeschi family, Lords of nearby Mount Amiata and of Florence, loyal to the Guelphs, who supported the papacy.

The Castello changed hands after an especially bloody battle, at Monteperti in 1260, when, as Dante recalls in his Divine Comedy, the Arbia river reddened with Guelph blood drawn by the swords of the Ghibellines, their arch rivals, loyal to the aristocratic party and to Siena. Placido Placidi, who distinguished himself in the battle was given the castle in appreciation for his heroism. Shortly afterwards the castle underwent extensive restoration.

After the Middle Ages, Castello Banfi played a major strategic role as part of Siena's defensive system of fortifications. Major threats to Siena's independence came from Florentine expansionary moves and from raids by rapacious mercenary and foreign armies (French, Spanish, Germans) on their way to reach the Maremma, marshy lowland, rich with cattle and game, and the gateway to the Tyrrhenian Sea. The area capitulated to Florence in the mid 1500's, after the fall of the Republic of Siena, following a four year siege of the fortress of Montalcino. It was the last bastion of republicanism in Tuscany.

Prisoners of these wars were confined in a dungeon, now the castle's wine cellar. Two human skulls, obviously deemed unfit for Christian burial rest in an alcove off the cellar's dark winding stairwell to serve as a reminder of those perilous days, so do swords, pikes, helmets and breastplates that have decorated the castles' walls since the 15th century when they were replaced by newer weapons, guns and cannons. Four vintage cannons still guard the terra-cotta-tiled reception court.

Other wine cellar appointments are ancient grape and olive presses and Etruscan tools, bowls and vases whose inscriptions in that long, extinct language continue to defy translation.

Castello Banfi, long recognized for excellence in winemaking and hospitality, has added another jewel to



its crown with the spring 2007 opening of "Castello Banfi – Il Borgo" luxury accommodations.

The 14-room Borgo takes its name from the cluster of 18<sup>th</sup> century homes built alongside the fortified castle once it became safe to live beyond the thick walls and gates, but still prudently close to the protective community. Guests will be nurtured as part of this wine and food community, in a private, cloistered setting complete with exclusive access to the swimming pool, spa services, reading room, exercise area and other amenities. A cozy dining room serves Continental and Full Tuscan breakfast, and a cloistered pergola garden provides space for quiet contemplation. Wine tastings by regional experts and cooking lessons under the auspices of Italy's leading chefs are planned, in addition to jazz and classical music concerts. Concierge services will liaise for a range of tours, sports and other activities around the region, including car service.

Rooms, varying in size, location and décor, are all individually designed with careful attention to detail by Italy's leading interior designer, Federico Forquet. Each offers a King-sized bed, while the five designated suites are additionally furnished with a Queen-sized sofa bed in a separate room. Luxuriant amenities include flat screen satellite television and stereo, high-speed internet, and a generously stocked mini bar that includes a selection of estate wines and appropriate accompaniments. Each spacious room is painted and furnished in a different color scheme and appointed with eclectic themed artwork; several include a separate dressing area, writing desk and breakfast table. Oversized bathrooms are stocked with bath foam, shampoo, conditioner and body lotion made from Sangiovese grapes grown in the surrounding vineyards. Special attention is paid to individual guest needs and desires in an elegantly personalized form of hospitality.



Castello Banfi is the first wine estate in the world to be internationally recognized for exceptional environmental, ethical and social responsibility (ISO 14001 and SA8000) as well as customer satisfaction (ISO 9001:2000). What this means is that its entire production process is in compliance with UNI EN 9002 standards. These are standards that define production procedures guaranteeing consumers that what they purchase has been rigorously controlled at every stage of production; from the moment the grapes arrive at the winery until the bottles are shipped. In addition, the vineyards have been certified as environmentally sound and friendly under ISO 14001. A very important and proud accomplishment.

The American-owned estate has been declared “International Winery of the Year” an unprecedented five times at VinItaly’s International Enological Concourse, which also named Castello Banfi “Italy’s Best Wine Estate” eleven times. *Wine Enthusiast Magazine* declared the estate its “Winery of the Year,” and editors of *Wine Spectator* ranked Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino and the Riserva Poggio all’Oro in their top 10 wines of the year twice in three years, while their readers declared it “Wine of the Year” in an online poll.



The winery, originally completed in the fall of 1984, is an efficient, computerized operation that blends the latest technology with tradition in the shadow of medieval fortresses and undulating hills. It measures 207,000 square feet and the cellars below encompass another 77,000 square feet. They are lined with over 3,000 small French oak barriques used to age Tavernelle Cabernet Sauvignon and Fontanelle Chardonnay, among others.

For this aging, Banfi worked with coopers to customize their barrels. They made them slightly larger than the normal barrique to allow a greater ratio between surface area of wood and volume of wine; assembled the barrel using a lower flame for a longer period of time in order to avoid charred flavors in the wine, and even brought the wood staves to the estate for seasoning under close supervision in the ideal environment.

But the most impressive section of the cellars is a cathedral-like vault housing large 1,600 to 3,200 gallon oak barrels required for ageing Brunello. An additional temperature controlled barrel chais (ageing room) has been created and can house over 10,000 barriques.

A walk through the facility, covering more than five acres, takes better than an hour and reveals, giant gleaming thermo-controlled stainless steel tanks, refrigeration and filtration equipment of the latest design and a vast array of computerized control panels whose blinking lights mesmerize the uninitiated.

The latest accomplishment at Castello Banfi is the Horizon Winemaking Area that has opened its doors. Banfi has, again, written a new and unique chapter in the worldwide winemaking evolution history. Horizon is not only a new vinification area but a pioneering production system, from the vineyard to the bottle, which required the full dedication for years of our technical team for its definition, first, and implementation, after. A system deeply based on the link between wine and territory, focused on the constant research to understand, capture, close in the bottle the unique aromatic and tasting profiles of our constellation of single vineyards, dedicated to the ultimate quality improvement. From the care of our vineyards to the intimate selection of our grape, berry by berry!



For fermenting wine, Banfi winemakers appreciated the flavor and aeration imparted by oak, but coveted the advantages of stainless steel for temperature control and hygiene. So in an unprecedented move, they brought together steel smith and cooper – previously considered fierce competitors – to make a hybrid fermenter that would combine the best elements of both materials. One of the greatest challenges was to bind wood to steel, which reacts to temperature fluctuations at a different pace, but the Banfi team developed a special flange to resolve that issue. The new tanks, patented by Banfi, have a base and head of temperature-controlled stainless steel for easy access and cleaning, and a body of wood staves that can be removed, scraped down, and replaced periodically to extend the life and effectiveness of the unit. Banfi even developed a permanent ceiling-based crane to install and move the new tanks as needed.

Twenty-four of the hybrid fermenters were put in place in 2007 in a section of the winery dedicated to the micro-vinification of single vineyard, mono-varietal and “super Tuscan” cuvée estate wines. The fermenters sit on a mezzanine alongside dual crushers and grape sorting tables that accommodate the

hand-harvested grapes, and are mounted atop load-bearing stainless steel storage tanks. The structure allows for gravity feed transfer throughout the entire winemaking process.

Castello Banfi also includes a museum of wine and founder the company founder, Giovanni F. Mariani. reflects the alternate periods of darkness and making from the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to present day.



glass dedicated to  
The museum  
richness of glass



Taverna Banfi is a casual setting in the vaulted cellars of the Castello where oversized wooden casks of the area's traditional Brunello di Montalcino once rested. Private events also take place in beautifully appointed rooms.



An impressive balsameria also finds a home here. Castello Banfi's balsameria resembles a wine cellar in miniature where our prized *Salsa Balsamica Etrusca* is blended and aged in a modified solera system.



**Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino, DOCG** - Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino is produced with 100% select Brunello grapes which are vinified with long maceration (12-15 days) followed by ageing for a minimum of 2 two years in French oak(80% cask and 20% barrique) Prior to release also spends 8-12 months in the bottle, Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino is a wine of robust character. It possesses a rich garnet color, and a depth, complexity and opulence that is softened by an elegant, lingering aftertaste that recalls licorice and spices. The wine was unfiltered after the 1998 vintage

Bolgheri, famous for its prestigious wines and its exceptional territory, has become the stage of a new, extraordinary Banfi Tuscany adventure.

**ASKA**, in etruscan means container. The Etruscans used it as a vessel to store wine and olive oil and to collect perfumes and nectars. However, not only: as the legend goes, this was a treasure chest to protect hopes, dreams, happiness and joy, entrusted to Etruscan gods Cuatha and Sernla (Sun and Moon), represented by the two bright spheres which mark day and night.

**La Pettegola Vermentino, IGT** –is produced with the Vermentino grape. The wine is pale yellow in color, crisp and delightfully fresh with an intense fruit-forward bouquet of exotic fruit and spices typical of the Mediterranean coast..

**Banfi Chianti Classico, DOCG** – produced with predominantly Sangiovese grapes from the original and perhaps the finest Chianti zone, the wine offerings inviting floral and fruit aromas, it's elegant and complex and sports some of the trademark earth and leather notes characteristic of the zone.