Marchesi
ANTINORI
26 GENERAZIONI

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Climate

2018 was a, on the whole, a somewhat cool vintage, distinguished by precipitation which was capable of favoring the correct development of the vegetative cycle of the vine. January was mild in temperature and with little rainfall, while late February and early March were marked by cold air and snowfall, followed by above average rains which assisted in re-establishing reserves of ground water in the soil. Spring and early summer rainfall then slightly slowed the development of the grape berries. Warm weather and excellent temperature swings between daytime warmth and evening and nighttime coolness from mid-July up until and through the month of August favored a slow and steady ripening of the crop. Picking of the Sauvignon Blanc grapes began towards the end of August and concluded with the Sémillon harvest towards the middle of September. The grapes were healthy, ripe, and distinguished by a high level of aromatic expressiveness and an excellent fragrance of personality.

Vinification

The decision to pick the Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon grapes was taken on the basis of the balance between the sugar concentration and the maximum expression of the aromatic varietal aromas of the crop. The berries, harvested manually, went immediately to the cellar where they were chilled by means of a refrigerated conveyor belt which, lowering the temperature level before pressing, helped to preserve intense varietal aromas. After this soft pressing, the must, kept for several hours at a temperature of 50° Fahrenheit (10° centigrade) to assist a natural settling of the impurities, went into stainless steel fermentation tanks where it fermented at a temperature held to a maximum of 61° Fahrenheit (16° centigrade). After this operation, the wine was conserved at a temperature of 50° Fahrenheit to block a successive malolactic fermentation and maintain, unchanged, the wine's flavor and aroma. The two grape varieties were then blended together to enable the one part of "complete" the other. Fresh, savory, vital, and lightly aromatic the Sauvignon, supple and tropical the Sémillon.

Historical Data

The vineyards selected to be utilized for the Conte della Vipera are located at an altitude between 825 and 1050 feet (250-350 meters) above sea level on soils rich in marine fossils. The wine takes its name from first proprietors of the Castello della Sala, and the label shows the 13th century Saint John's Chapel (the Cappella d San Giovanni) situated on the estate. The first vintage of Conte della Vipera to be produced was the 1997.

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Tasting Notes

The 2018 Conte della Vipera shows a straw yellow color with greenish highlights. The nose is distinguished by citric fruit notes, much grapefruit, well balanced by hints of aromatic herbs and anisette (sambuca) flowers. On the palate, the fruity aromas and the delicate mineral impressions unite in balance and harmony. Decisive and persistent the finish and aftertaste.

Awards

Wine Advocate 90/100 USA