



Tignanello 2009

Classification

Toscana IGT

Vintage

2009

Climate

The season in the Chianti Classico production zone was characterized by a cold and rainy winter, with rainfalls guaranteeing a good supply of water for the following spring and summer, initially mild in temperature. As a consequence the budding of the vines, was quite regular and well within seasonal averages for the period. Both flowering and bud break were regular, even though the rains had a certain influence on the size of the berries and bunches which, in early summer, were ahead of their normal ripening schedule. The vines continued to vegetate in a notable way during the summer, with a month of August and an initial ten day period in September which were significantly warm and dry. The second half of September and early October were very favorable both in terms of daily sunlight and with significant temperature excursions from daytime and nighttime very beneficial for the balance of the wine and richness of aromatic compounds. Both Sangiovese and Cabernet needed many days to complete their maturation, to first fifteen days of October. The quality of the harvested crop brought to the winery was of very high quality indeed, both in terms of the healthiness of the grapes and, above all, of their quality, raising expectation of a vintage of true excellence. Total annual rainfall: 74 centimeters (29.5 inches) Total rainfall April 1st – October 31st: 29 centimeters (11.5 inches) Average daily temperatures April 1st – October 31st: 21.7 °centigrade (71 ° Fahrenheit)



Vinification

Vineyards underwent crop thinning and bunch selection during the growing season and the grapes were picked entirely by hand depending on the various parcels. The first grape variety to fully ripen was the Cabernet Franc, picked between September 27th and September 29th. In October Sangiovese harvest began and lasted for a total of twelve days. The Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, harvested between October 10th and October 14th were the last to be picked. Once in the cellars, the grapes were delicately destemmed and the individual berries selected on the sorting table; to insure that berries which were not completely ripe, a rarity in this vintage, were removed and only those which were fully ripe went into the fermenting tanks. During the fermentation and maceration in the conical fermenters the must was slowly transformed into wine, with maximum focus on trying to obtain freshness of aromas, extraction of color, and a handling of the tannins aimed to suppleness and finesse. These operations required great sensitivity and experience, particularly during the moment when the wine was ready to be run off its skins, a decision taken only after meticulous and constant tasting. Once the wine was separated from its skins it was put through a complete malolactic fermentation in small oak barrels. The aging then began in French and Hungarian oak barrels and lasted for approximately 16-18 months; during which time the various lots of wine, each fermented separately on the basis of their individual grape varieties and the characteristics of vineyard plot and cultivation practices, remained in barrel. The lots were then assembled a few months before bottling.

Historical Data

Tignanello is produced exclusively from the vineyard of the same name, a parcel of some 140 acres (57 hectares) with limestone-rich soils and a southwestern exposure at 1150-1325 feet (350-400 meters) above sea level at the Tignanello estate. It was the first Sangiovese wine to be aged in small oak barrels, the first modern red wine to use such non-traditional varieties as Cabernet in the blend, and among the first red wines from the Chianti Classico area to be produced without white grapes. The wine, originally called "Chianti Classico Riserva Vigneto Tignanello" (a Chianti Classico Riserva from the Tignanello vineyard), was produced for the first time from a single vineyard parcel in 1970, when the blend contained 20% of Canaiolo and 5% of Trebbiano and Malvasia, both white grapes, and the wine aged in small oak barrels. In 1971 it became a Tuscan red table wine rather than a Chianti Classico, and was called Tignanello. In the 1975 vintage the percentage of white grapes was definitively eliminated from the blend. Ever since 1982, the blend has been the one currently used. Tignanello is bottled only in favorable vintages, and was not produced in 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1984, 1992, and 2002.

Tasting Notes

A very intense ruby red in color with purple highlights, the wine is immediately and suavely convincing in its aromas and harmonious in its expression of the characteristics of Chianti Classico as a zone. The nose is redolent of licorice, violets, and cherries under spirits together with notes of vanilla, chocolate, and sweet toasty oak, all of excellent intensity and sweet elegance. Fresh and savory flavors on the persistent finish and aftertaste add length and a convincing finesse.