Marchesi
ANTINORI
26 GENERAZIONI

Tignanello 2011

Classification
Toscana IGT

Vintage
2011

Climate
The autumn and winter seasons of 2010-2011 were characterized by very cold and rainy weather; the last days of 2010, marked by abundant snowfall, were then followed by an intensely cold period. The first months of the year, instead, were rather dry, and early spring quite mild in its temperatures, relieving worries of a return of cold weather; early April could even be termed warm, leading to an early bud burst, ten days ahead of normal seasonal averages. The growing season, with little rainfall and mild temperatures, was very favorable up until July, almost cool in its weather, and the various phases of the growth and development of the vines by then had fallen into place. After August 10th, however, temperatures climbed significantly, leading to a climate which was almost desert-like, with severe drought and high heat. These climatic conditions did not change until mid-September and even beyond, and the vines suffered from this prolonged wave of torrid temperatures, which slowed the ripening of the grape; the successive change in the climate after September 20th, however, was of great benefit, and the important temperature swings from daytime warmth to evening and nighttime coolness allowed the crop to evolve optimally towards complete ripeness. The harvest of the Sangiovese, the principal and dominant variety in the Tignanello vineyard, began on September 27th and terminated during the first ten days of October. The Cabernet Franc had an excellent development and the grapes ripened quite regularly; thanks to the excellent climatic conditions, the grapes were picked between September 20th and 26th. The harvest of the Cabernet Sauvignon, finally, took place essentially during the first ten days of October, beginning with the earliest-ripening vineyard parcels and finishing in the highest zones, where ripening was more regular and uniform. Total annual rainfall: 21 inches (52 centimeters) Average daily temperatures April 1st-October 31st: 67.5° Fahrenheit (19.75 ° centigrade) Total rainfall April 1st-Ocotber 31st: 10 inches (25.3 centimeters)

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Vinification

The hot and dry growing season required a careful and attentive selection during all the salient moments of harvesting operations; during the picking it was essential to select the grape bunches well, with particular attention to exposure to the sun and the integrity of the berries. The picking, carried out entirely by hand, took the different grape varieties into consideration, but also the exposure and the altitude of the various parcels of the Tignanello vineyard; the plots were harvested one by one to enable the grapes to be fermented on the basis of the special characteristics, the particular expressions, of the their terroir. Once in the cellars, the grapes were destemmed and then went to the manual sorting tables; in this phase the attention to detail was at maximum levels, the objective was that of excluding that small percentage of shriveled or overripe berries in order to bring only grapes of perfect integrity to the fermenting tanks. During the fermentation and the period of skin contact in the conical fermenting tanks, the must was gradually transformed into wine, and extreme care was given to the aromas, to the extraction of color, and to a handling of tannins aimed at sweetness and elegance; all of this required great sensitivity, a profound knowledge of the grapes, and a constant attention to the wine, which was run off its skins only after regular daily tastings. After its separation from the skins, the wine was put through complete malolactic fermentation – in barrel – to add additional finesse and drinking pleasure. A 12-14 month aging in French and Hungarian oak barrels, some new, some already used once, then began; during this period, the various lots, fermented and aged separately by variety and by vineyard variability, matured in the oak and were then blended a few months before bottling.

Historical Data

Tignanello is produced exclusively from the vineyard of the same name, a parcel of some 190 acres (77 hectares) with limestone-rich soils and a southwestern exposure at 1150-1325 feets (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

The 2011 Tignanello is an intense ruby red in color with purple highlights. The wine is ripe on the nose with notes of dark fruit and with much underlying freshness on the aromatic finish; plum fruit dominates the aromatic gamut along with cherries, and the aromas evolve with vigor and balance towards sensations of mint and liquorice. On the palate, though still young, the wine is ready and inviting, rich and harmonious; excellent the balance of the flavors thanks to the tonic acidity and the solidity and suppleness of the tannins. The finish and aftertaste are rich and savory and are characterized by a sweet persistence and length.