

Federica Burresti

Da: press@buy-wine.it per conto di nicoletta curradi via press <press@buy-wine.it>
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A Strong Tuscan Message In A Bottle From Small Consortiums

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Nicoletta Curradi attends the Florence previews of small consortiums and the Vino Chianti Consortium, and finds that small can be beautiful. She also previews the 2017 Chianti vintage.

With a prestigious attendee like Sting, who sang ‘Message in a bottle’, the week of the *anteprima* or previews of the releases of 16 Tuscan wine consortiums officially opened on 10th February in Florence. The inaugural event of the *anteprima* took place at the Fortezza da Basso. The first consortiums to present their wines were the so-called minor ones, the smaller ones, but they were certainly not inferior in quality.

It was possible to taste the best bottles of the new year of production of 11 Tuscan consortiums: Carmignano, Casole d’Elsa, Colline Lucchesi, Cortona, Elba, Maremma Tuscany, Montecarlo of Lucca, Montecucco, Pitigliano and Sovana, Val di Cornia and Valdarno di Sopra. An interesting guided tasting concerned the Sangiovese grape and its ever-growing popularity.

Among the wines tasted, these stood out:

Fattoria Il Poggio Otium

Red Montecarlo presents the hints of blackberry and pepper typical of Syrah.

Agricola del Nudo Nudo red DOC Maremma Toscana 2016 shows delicate tannins and hints of black pepper, as well as a remarkable persistence on the palate.

Acquabona Elba red 2015 contains 25% Merlot, and 75% Sangiovese and has floral and black fruit characteristics.

Cantina di Pitigliano Sovana Vignamurata Superiore 2016 DOC is a very young tannic wine, with well balanced acidity and is very fruity. Its terroir is volcanic from a high hill.

Leuta Solitario of Leuta Cortona 2011 is 100% Sangiovese. The terroir is characterised by sand and clay. The scent is extremely fruity: red and black fruits, vanilla and hints of undergrowth.

Caciorna Pietro, Macchie Terre di Casole 2014 DOC presents high acidity and aromas of strawberry and late tannins. It is the best of all these wines in my opinion.

Poggio al Gello Rosso del Gello Montecucco Sangiovese Riserva DOCG 2012 comes from high volcanic hills near the sea: it is spicy and smells of black fruits, violet and cedar wood.

Giomi Zannoni Val di Cornia Rosso 2015 has hints of red fruits and originates from ferrous soil.

Fattoria Ambra Carmignano Elzana Riserva 2013 DOCG has floral aromas of rose, fresh violet, currant, sweet tobacco and undergrowth.

Tenuta di Valgiano Colline Lucchesi Rosso DOC 2015 is perfumed with black fruits and oriental wood. It has many tannins and is very young.

Tenuta Setteponti Vigna Impero Valdarno di Sopra Sangiovese 2015 DOC has a bright colour and smells of dried flowers and spices.



Among the tasted wines, the following also impressed:

Cortona Wines Consortium

Bramasole Cortona 2012 (Syrah) de La Braccasca

Di Ego 2015 Cortona Syrah DOC by Roberta Pasini

Dardano Sangiovese 2014 (Syrah) by Az. Stefania Mezzetti

Consortium for the Protection of White DOC Wines of Pitigliano and Sovana

Raseno Bianco di Pitigliano Superior DOC (Trebiano, Chardonnay) of Cantina Vignaioli del Morellino di Scansano

Nel tufo Ciliegiole DOC Cantina Coop. di Pitigliano Sac

Consortium Vini Colline Lucchesi

Picchio Rosso DOC 2015 (Sangiovese, Merlot, Cabernet, Sauvignon), Colle di Bordocheo

Fattoria Sardi Rose 'IGT 2017 (Sangiovese, Ciliegiole, white grapes) of Fattoria Sardi Giustiniani

Consorzio Vini DOC. Montecarlo

Particular Brut Rose 'Spumante (Sangiovese and Syrah) of Tenuta del Buona icon. Really very good!

White Montecarlo (Trebiano, Sauvignon blanc, Vermentino, Roussanne) of Fattoria del Teso

White Montecarlo (Trebiano, Vermentino, Roussanne, Pinot Blanc)

from Fattoria Vigna del Greppo

Consorzio Tutela Vini Montecucco

Montecucco Sangiovese DOCG Riserva 2011 Cenere by Amiata

Montecucco Sangiovese DOCG Riserva 2013 Poggio Lombrone by Collemassari

Montecucco Sangiovese DOCG 2015 Podere Montale

On 11th February it was the turn of the Vino Chianti Consortium, which was open to a Chianti-loving public. Over 100 companies and 500 types of wine were tasted in the new edition of the anteprima

promoted by the Vino Chianti Consortium, which this year saw the debut of the participation of the Consortium for the Protection of Morellino di Scansano.

The wines to be mentioned among the 2017 anteprima are:

Antico Borgo La Torre

Dianella

Fattoria Casalbosco

Drive 1929

Seagull

Salcheto

Tenuta Il Corno



The presentation of the new Chianti Classico showed success despite the vagaries of the climate. There were 659 labels in the tasting and 59 barrel previews of the 2017 vintage.

“We arrive this year in Florence after a difficult season,” said Sergio Zingarelli, President of the Chianti Classico Wine Consortium, “but we managed it with the best weapons on which today’s modern winemaker can count: deep knowledge of their territory and the ability to know how to wait for the right moment. Thus, while on the one hand, we had to record a significant decrease in production in 2017... this year’s edition, the twenty-fifth, speaks of a great strengthening of the name: in addition to the economic numbers, participation by both members and the press and sector operators marks a record.”

The production of Chianti Classico 2017 was around 207,000 hectoliters with a 37% drop compared to the previous year, the lowest quantity for 40 years, due to a drought. Despite the drop in production, Chianti hit a new sales record with 37 million bottles sold in 140 countries worldwide. The USA is confirmed as the first market, absorbing 33% of total sales, up 1% compared to 2016. And growth was also recorded in the domestic market, where 23% of bottles are sold.

My stand out wines for the 2016 vintage were:

Antico Borgo di Sugame, Carpineto, Castello di Ama, Castello Vicchiomaggio San Jacopo, Fattoria San Giusto in Rentennano, Guidi 1929 San Giorgio allo Spadaio.

Stand out wines for the 2015 vintage were:

Borgo La Stella, Castello di Verrazzano, Fattoria Montecchio, Ormanni, and Antico Borgo di Sugame, Felsina and La Sala for their Reserve wines.