



CASTELLO DI CACCHIANO FONTEMERLANO

Classification: Chianti Classico D.O.C.G.

Vintage: 2021

Grape variety: 100% Merlot

CLIMATE

The 2021 growing season in Gaiole in Chianti is regarded as a truly outstanding vintage. Winter began with temperatures within seasonal averages and rainfall that lasted up until the end of March. Budbreak was early and favorable temperatures during the spring months accelerated vine growth and development. April saw cool dry weather that offset the vines' initial head start in the season. Consistent normal temperatures and well-distributed rain showers during the months of May and June led to excellent flowering and ideal fruit set.

Summer ushered in hot and notably dry weather, especially in August, but at the end of the month occasional rainfall revitalized the vineyards creating perfect conditions for the final ripening phase.

The most critical months, September and October, presented ideal climatic conditions that ensured optimal maturity: sunny skies, no extreme heat events, gentle breezes together with ideal temperature swings between day and night. The grape harvest began mid-September.



VINIFICATION AND AGING

Fontemerlano is made from a careful selection of the best Merlot berries from the eponymous vineyard, one of estate's finest vineyard parcels. Grape clusters were hand harvested in small crates, hand sorted once again on sorting tables, destemmed, then gently crushed. Fermentation took place in small stainless-steel vats at a controlled temperature of 30° C (86° F) to enhance aromatic intensity and allow an intense

extraction while preserving supple tannins and the grape variety's complexity. Maceration on the skins lasted for a period of about two weeks and was managed with delicate délestage and pump overs. Once malolactic fermentation was completed in stainless-steel vats, the wine was transferred into 300-liter French oak barriques for about 18 months. The wine was bottled in March 2024.

ALCOHOL CONTENT 14,5% by Vol.

TASTING NOTES

Fontemerlano is deep ruby red in color. The nose offers intense notes of red and dark fruit, especially plums, liqueur cherries, and blackberry preserves that meet sublime notes of peppercorns and aromatic herbs. Entry on the palate is rich and

mouth filling: soft silky tannins accompany a fresh and savory mouthfeel.

The lengthy finish echoes aromas perceived on the nose highlighted by a pleasant hint of toasted tobacco.

HISTORICAL DATA

The Castello di Cacchiano, historically owned by Giovanni Ricasoli-Firidolfi, a descendent of the family who made history in the territory and in the appellation. For over a millennium, the castle has been located in a dominant position, overlooking the hillsides of the eponymous area in the province of Siena, right in the heart of Chianti Classico's wine producing region.

The estate extends over an area of 200 hectares (494 acres); 36 hectares (89 acres) are planted with vines in the midst of fields, woodlands, olive groves and vineyards forming an area of incredible natural biodiversity. The vineyards sit on the Monti in Chianti plateau at an altitude of 340-490 meters above sea level (1,115-1,608 feet) with a predominantly southern exposure. Grape varieties grown on the estate include the historic varieties that Bettino Ricasoli, Giovanni's great-grandfather, originally re-

commended; Sangiovese, Colorino, Malvasia Nera, Bianca and Canaiolo, but also Merlot.

The soils are composed of silt and clay with marly limestone and calcareous sandstone that give the wines produced here freshness, elegance, an excellent tannic structure and extraordinary complexity and longevity. Cacchiano Castle is located within the U.G.A. (Additional Geographical Unit) of Gaiole in Chianti: an area well respected for the production of red wines and traditional Vin Santo.

Insight that Tuscany and the Chianti Classico region could also be the perfect territory for excellent Merlots led to Fontemerlano, an inviting and fascinating expression of this grape variety. In Castello di Cacchiano's unique terroir, Merlot captures the essence of Chianti.

