

TERENZUOLA

The season that just finished confirmed the evolution that we pointed out during the presentation of the previous vintage.

Heavy rainfall in the springtime and in autumn and practically no rain during the summer, i.e. from flowering in June till ripening in September, are a consequence of global warming that causes heavy showers in a short period of time.

This is certainly positive for Vermentino, especially in coastal zones such as the areas in which our vineyards stand. In fact, in these zones, the vineyards benefit from sea breezes and from a good day-night temperature range.

The indigenous varieties such as **Canaiolo Nero** (i.e. the biotype “**Uva Merla**” grown at our estate) and **Vermentino Nero** performed very well. In the latter we immediately and naturally found a good balance between its taste and its aroma. This would have been very difficult to obtain a few decades ago as, apart from a type of viticulture that was less respectful for the environment, the climate was cooler and with persistent rain. In fact, as it was practically impossible to control disease, this variety was not grown any more.

At present, due to the change in temperature, as for Vermentino Bianco, the red varieties, that are typical of this zone, manage to ripen both from a technological and a phenologic point of view, without over-ripening. On the other hand, over-ripening is nowadays a problem for early varieties such as Merlot. This variety needs to reach very high alcohol strength (this year 16%) in order to obtain elegant tannins.

The excess of alcohol linked to a lack of balance, as in recent vintages, made us take the decision to graft the vineyards, from which we make our 100% Merlot wine **Rotonda dei Cipressi**, with Vermentino Nero.

The same will happen for a large part of the Colorino vines, as this variety showed a partial phenolic ripening, as for Sangiovese, due to the lack of a suitable continental climate. The grapes that will manage to ripen properly will not be utilised only for the production of “La Merla”, but, blended with a small percentage of Canaiolo and Merlot, they will be utilised for the making of a **Colorino Igt** wine.

A year ago we described the distinctive characteristics of “**La Merla**”; the following are three steps forwards that you will find in the next vintages, after the good results that we are obtaining:

- gradual reduction of the percentage of Colorino in the blend, in order to make more elegant, fine and mineral wines.
- Gradual change to maturing the wine in 20 Hectolitre casks in order to preserve the aroma of the variety.
- Light drawing off of the must, that besides increasing the concentration of the tannins from the grape skins, gives us a wine that is romantically called “one night rosé”. This is a new **Rosato** wine made with the classical technique of “saignée”, consisting of drawing off a variable quantity of must under the skins a few hours after crushing.

We have to dedicate a last paragraph to the white wines: the maceration with the skins for **Cinqueterre Bianco** is shorter in order to reduce tannins in favour of the increase of the mineral character as in Vermentino **Fosso di Corsano** of the Colli di Luni.

For **Montesagna** we took an important step: the loss of the name. Up to the present moment, all of our wines were made from a single vineyard or from a single zone, but after the estate expanded its vineyards in the best areas of the appellation, we deemed that, although the Montesagna vineyard will remain the main source, we had to take a step forward and represent within this **Vermentino Classico**, as in a puzzle, all the nuances due to the different altitudes and exposures, trying to tend towards a Vermentino that is typical of the whole territory, which includes soils that are gravelly, clayey and soils with a predominance of schist. The label is a part of a painting of Maria Tacchini, where the explosion of colours and the interaction of figures, as in our plots, move within a common context.

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