TUSCANY

COSTANTI

Vineyard surface: 25 acres (10 hectares)
Owner: Andrea Costanti
Winemaker: Vittorio Fiore
Established: 1555
Location: Montalcino
Province: Siena

THE HISTORY

The noble Costanti family goes back a long way – at least to Renaissance times. One of several famous counts, Costanti – Tito – was both a lawyer and a winemaker, and anticipated the present DOCG and DOC denominations. Not only was he one of the very first to use the name Brunello for Montalcino red wines, but the methods he employed were strikingly similar to those used for Brunello and Rosso di Montalcino today.

Costanti Brunellos, however, were jealously guarded wines until the early 1960s, circulating solely among the owners’ friends and family. This changed with count Emilio Costanti, physician and grape-grower, who first put the family name on the wine map. Dr. Costanti had no children. After maximizing the winery’s potential and releasing the first “public” vintages, Emilio Costanti traced the sole living descendant of the ancient Sienese family, Andrea Costanti, a fresh graduate in geology at the University of Siena with no background in wine.

Andrea was appointed as the legendary count’s heir and successor in 1983 and immediately proved himself well worthy of Emilio’s trust. He not only coped with his new responsibilities but enhanced the family’s reputation for making great Brunello. Andrea achieved this by relying on his excellent instincts for wine, and an in-depth knowledge of the terrain’s geological components. In time, these natural skills were perfected, so that he eventually styled the range together with the winemaker, Vittorio Fiore.

THE TERROIR

The range has the unmistakable imprint of the Matrichese cru, yielding Brunellos of unparalleled elegance and complexity, with luscious, focused berry fruit, remarkable structure, and exquisite balance. Today, the Matrichese terroir remains the heart of the estate and covers 25 acres of high-rising vines, at an altitude of 1,312-1,476 feet above sea level. A 10-acre vineyard flanks it located in Montosoli at 1,181 feet above sea level.

At Costanti the harvest takes place between the first and second week of October. After 14 to 21 days’ temperature-controlled fermentation on the skins in stainless steel vats of max. 50-hl. capacity, the wine undergoes the mandatory élevage in oak, then six months’ minimum maturation in bottle. The result is a sumptuously full-bodied, rich, complex wine with deep, opulent fruit, and sturdy sustaining acidity and tannins, leading to grandeur and great longevity.

The vineyards are clayey/calcareous, with a density of 3,500 vines per acre, and the soil is poor in organic components. This ensures higher extract and concentration as well as ample, elegant aromas.
BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO DOCG: 100% Sangiovese. Fermentation takes place on the skins in temperature-controlled, stainless steel tanks, lasting approximately two to three weeks. The wine ages for 36 months in wood: 12 months in Allier medium toasted tonneaux (5.0 hl) and 24 months in Slovenian barrels (30 hl) followed at least 12 months in bottle. Brilliant ruby in color, the intense, ripe aromas of berry fruit prelude a lush and full-bodied palate, gorgeous tannins and nice structure, good longevity.

BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO RISERVA DOCG: 100% Sangiovese. Fermentation takes place on the skins in temperature-controlled, stainless steel tanks, lasting approximately two weeks. The wine ages for 36 months in wood: 12 months in Allier tonneaux (5.0 hl) and 24 months in Slovenian barrels (30 hl) followed by at least 24 months in bottle. Deep ruby red with aromas of plums, smoke, and coffee. Graceful tannins and a beautiful finish. This wine is complex and austere, and will undoubtedly benefit from further bottle age, peaking in 20-30 years' time. Top vintages will also have top longevity.

ROSSO DI MONTALCINO DOC: 100% Sangiovese from an estate-owned vineyard, 24.7 acres in size. The vineyard is located at an altitude of 1,312-1,475 feet above sea level and is composed of Tuscan galestro, a Schist based soil. Fermentation takes place on the skins in temperature-controlled, stainless steel tanks, lasting approximately three weeks. The wine ages for 12 months in wood: six months in French tonneaux (5-hl.) followed by six months in bottle. Bright crimson. Rich, round, full-bodied, with intense notes of beautiful red cherries, light and lively, well integrated oak and firm tannins, and clean finish.

ROSSO DI MONTALCINO “VERMIGLIO” DOC: 100% Sangiovese. Fermentation takes place on the skins in temperature-controlled, stainless steel tanks, lasting approximately two to three weeks. The wine ages ages 12 months in tonneaux and 12 months in Slavonian oak barrels. Bright and vibrant red, with intense notes of beautiful red cherries, licorice, tobacco and crushed flowers. Wonderful textural elegance and overall finesse.