



TENUTA
DELLE
TERRE NERE

The 2012 Vintage

The good news: the traditional approach in production, with a separate vinification for each vineyard, has allowed us to create wines of great elegance and balance

The bad news: after a perfect vintage like 2011, a “tough” year with limited production (up to - 50%)

Picking started: whites: September, 21st – Reds: September, 29th

Promising areas/contradas/grapes: the extremely hot weather this year may suggest that the most attractive districts, as was the case in 2011, might be those located in the higher altitudes. In fact, it was the case, even though the differences found in the districts were not as significant as in other hot years, precisely because of the extreme weather that has flattened the quality of the grapes

Challenging areas/contradas/grapes: the grapes of the lower districts in 2012 were characterized by a balance sugar / acidity in favor of the first, with a consequent risk of loss of freshness and harmony of the wines. The choice of picking has definitely made the difference in such a “tough” year as 2012

Analysis: not even the elderly that have experienced more than 50 vintages can recall a vintage as strange as 2012! Straight from the winter, the vintage occurred dry, with low rainfalls and mild temperatures even in the coldest months of the year.

Budding consequently anticipated a few days compared to the average and this phenological advance kept on until the harvest. Spring was hot with some rain between late April and early May, which gave a boost to vegetation. From the second week of May, a long drought has characterized the growing season. Temperatures during the summer have been very high, with peaks above 40 °C in July. The condition of drought together with a high thermal regime determined a limited growth of plants and a lower number of bunches per plant than normal. The perpetuation of these weather conditions even after veraison resulted in a poor growth of the grapes and a low average weight of the bunches.

Limited production (with peaks of 60% less!!) and the scarcity of water in the soil resulted in a high accumulation of sugars and a high degradation in acidity, especially linked to the tartaric acid, which led to an advance in the technological maturity (linked to the ratio sugar /acid) and an incomplete phenolic ripeness of the Nerello mascalese. When harvested, the grapes resulting with

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potentially very high alcohol (15-16%), with low values of total acidity between 4.8 and 5.3 g/l. The limited presence of pulp in the grapes gave ratios peel/juice very high, resulting in higher extraction of anthocyanins and tannins.

Particular attention was paid in the cellar to the timing and the mode of maceration, which was delicate and short in order to extract only the necessary tannins from the skins and avoid extracting hard and green tannins from grape seeds. The wines of 2012 are certainly different from wines of more normal vintages, nonetheless maintaining great balance and elegance, thanks to a careful harvesting operation and customized vinification for each lot of grapes. This is the great strength of Tenuta delle Terre Nere, fully benefitting from the artisanal approach to wine.

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