



Media release

Santa Margherita Gruppo Vinicolo's Tuscan wine network

Santa Margherita Gruppo Vinicolo has always shown a desire to innovate throughout its first eighty years of existence, becoming a genuine wine mosaic with group-owned cellars and vineyards in some of Italy's finest wine territories: Eastern Veneto, the hills of Conegliano-Valdobbiadene, Alto Adige, Franciacorta in Lombardy, Chianti Classico and Maremma in Tuscany, and Sicily. An ability to innovate, managerial organisation, technological development and quality with environmental and social sustainability are the distinguishing features of a daily renewed effort that concentrates on vineyards and people.

Santa Margherita Gruppo Vinicolo has been active in Tuscany for several decades. The Group's first acquisition dates from 1993 with Lamole di Lamole in Chianti Classico - 177 hectares, 57 under vine and four under olives - which was flanked in 2002 by Sassoregale in Maremma, a 38-hectare estate with 30 hectares planted to vine.

Since the Nineties, investment in Tuscany has been ongoing to restore the vineyards, conserve the countryside and develop farming protocols that from 2017 will flaunt organic certification. Attention has focused on safeguarding biodiversity and water resources while applying all the techniques that exclude chemicals from the vineyard and make wine an extremely healthful product.

The decision to go organic was encouraged by the isolated position of the vineyards at Lamole, where the vines stand among woods in a high, well-ventilated location. Implicit in the choice is a conscious commitment to the sustainability of resources and to the future. Santa Margherita Gruppo Vinicolo has always put both at the centre of its operations.

One number more than any other underlines Santa Margherita's presence, confirming how deeply the Group believes in its Tuscan soul: €13 million in investments from 2011 to 2015.

Greti

The new facility at Greti in the municipality of Greve in Chianti was inaugurated in mid June 2015 and today is Santa Margherita Gruppo Vinicolo's operational and logistical powerhouse in Tuscany. The most important stages in winemaking have been concentrated and rationalised here in a single winemaking centre equipped with cutting-edge technology.

The new, up-to-the-minute bottling and storage line, maturation in wood and steel, an experimental area dedicated to maturation in cement and in glass - for a minimum of six up to a maximum of twelve months - for Riserva and Gran Selezione wines are only some of the key features of Santa Margherita Tenimenti Toscani.

The opening of the new wine shop and adjoining restaurant where all the Group's wines are available makes Greti a showcase, meeting place and hospitality centre, further reinforcing the Group's bond with the territory.

Santa Margherita Gruppo Vinicolo believes that to eat well is to live well and that the quality of your life depends on the quality of your table. That is why Greti offers an emotionally charged matching experience to promote the culture of Italian food and wine.



Lamole di Lamole

The Estate

Tenuta Lamole di Lamole is located in the municipality of Greve in Chianti. The estate stands on a natural terrace overlooking the valley of the Greve stream, a gently sloping southwest-facing plateau sheltered to the north-east by Mount San Michele from the cold northerly winds and partially exposed to warm westerly breezes blowing off the Tyrrhenian Sea. The estate has a total area of 177 hectares of woodlands, vineyards and olive groves of which 57 hectares are planted to vine at elevations of 380-600 metres with southerly and westerly aspects.

The wines

Lamole di Lamole wines come from a unique territory and display both elegance and the depth that only this combination of soil, climate, vine and grower can create.

The 9.5-hectare Vigneto di Campolungo vineyard just below the village of Lamole faces south-west at altitudes that vary from 400 to 550 metres. This is the cru and signature vineyard of Tenuta Lamole di Lamole. Superbly aspected with the elevation and pale-coloured, pebble-rich soil to ensure a significant day-night heat exchange, conditions bode extremely well for the future of the sangiovese-based wine that is sourced here, even in growing years when power and plushness gain the upper hand over typicality and elegance. It is interesting to note that some of the oldest vines in the vineyard are the cabernet sauvignon plants used for Riserva Gran Selezione, Campolungo's latest jewel, to impart even more elegance and depth of flavour to the wine.

Other vineyards located around this plot have taken names that are often used in these Greve hills: Il Prato, Le Masse, Il Piano, Rinaldi (Lamole area) and Tordela, Crespine, Paladino and Mazzoli (Salcetino).

Special site growing conditions are the high altitude and a degree of drought in summer, which force us to use heat-retaining vine training systems as well as rootstocks and clones that are resistant to any absence of precipitation.

Careful management in these extreme conditions enables us to obtain wines of outstanding elegance and finesse with complex aromatics and the sensory characteristics imparted by areas where grape growing faces difficult challenges and a context of controlled stress.

Enhanced consistency of grape quality is promoted by focusing special attention on key stages of the vine's vegetative and productive life cycle, from pruning the plant to tilling the soil and harvesting the fruit, which is strictly by hand. Meticulous plant management aims to coax the best out of the territory and the vintage, preserving, yet also creatively interpreting, the intrinsic sensory profiles of sangiovese and the other varieties grown.

Tradition is constantly renewed and interpreted dynamically, in the sense of in-depth knowledge and awareness of the growing context. Our aim is to capture the wine's natural expression through applied research and experimentation.



The cellar's history

Originally the storehouse of the castle of Lamole, the cellar dates from the 15th century and even today has a gravity-flow winemaking system with press.

Today, it is used as a maturation area. The upper floor houses the medium-sized and large (30 hl) wine ageing barrels, notably those maturing the latest vintage of Vigneto di Campolungo, and the egg-shaped barrel.

On the lower floor of the original cellar are the barriques used mainly for Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and some of the Sangiovese.

This is also where the winery's historic bottles are kept. The oldest label bearing the name Lamole di Lamole dates from 1966 and the earliest vintage of Vigneto di Campolungo is the 1985.

The egg-shaped barrel with a capacity of 22 hl has two special characteristics: its oval shape to take full advantage of convective motion and the absence of rings. Wine that has undergone alcoholic fermentation is sealed inside, where it completes malolactic fermentation. The special shape - broader at the base and in the middle, and narrower at the top - and the heat generated by fermentation warm the wine at the bottom, causing it to rise to the top, where it cools as it meets the colder wine and starts to go back down, a cycle that repeats itself over and over again. This means that wine inside the barrel is constantly in motion as heat is transported (convective motion), producing a more homogeneous transfer of substances in the wood.

Lamole di Lamole estate - key features

- Altitude (380-600 m.a.s.l.) and vineyard aspect (south-west)
- Galestro and Macigno del Chianti (Alberese) soil
- Distinctive topoclimate with temperature swings in the final stage of ripening (late September -early October)
- Terracing to protect the landscape and enhance heat exchange for the vines
- Meticulous canopy management to achieve optimal vine vegetative balance - conversion to organic growing, using copper-based products, is of great assistance to this end
- Pruning and thinning specifically to reduce yields per hectare
- Selective multiple-pass picking depending on the grapes' phenolic and aromatic ripeness (Delayed vinification for Riserva wines)
- Maturation in high-quality medium-sized/large barrels.

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