



AVIGNONESI

Cortona & Montepulciano in Tuscany

Owner: Virginie Saverys

Website: www.avignonesi.it

Winemaker: Paolo Trappolini

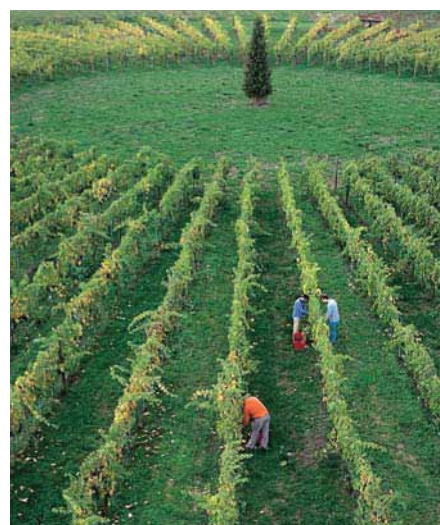
Winery Profile: It is not known exactly when Avignonesi's cellars were built, but they are doubtless among the oldest in Italy. Palazzo Avignonesi was designed by one of the 16th century's greatest architects, Jacopo Barozzi, and built in the late 1700s.

An investor since 2007, Virginie Saverys acquired the Avignonesi estate outright in 2009. This change did not affect the management system, but gave the company an important boost towards future growth and allowed for continued investment. The estate was purchased from the Falvo brothers who bought the property in 1974 and invested in viticulture (using local varieties such as Prugnolo and introducing new ones including Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot), creating a model for making premium Tuscan wines that is still followed today. Avignonesi's four wine-producing estates Le Capezzine, I Poggetti, La Selva and La Lombarda comprise over 250 acres of vineyards and 17 acres of olive groves.



Vineyards and Vinification: All four estates are nearly 1,000 feet above sea level. Le Capezzine includes a traditional vinsantaia (a Vin Santo production facility) and olive oil mill. The 135-acre I Poggetti, in Montepulciano on the Argiano hills, produces Vino Nobile. La Selva is dedicated to Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. The densely planted 50-acre La Lombarda vineyard, part of a 103-acre estate, is planted to Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Nero, and Merlot.

Avignonesi's experimental vineyard Vigna Tonda ("round vineyard") researches how a wine's quality is influenced by planting density and orientation. Land management here considers the various segments instead of the single row of vines, each uniformly differentiated by number of buds and production from the center to the periphery. Consequently, the harvest is carried out by segment and the vinification of the various beds is separately executed in small wooden vats.



Photos (top bar and above): Alberto Falvo and Virginie Saverys; Avignonesi vin santo caratelli; Fattoria Le Capezzine; Vigna Tonda.



Photos: New barriques; hand harvesting Vigna Tonda.

The Wines: AVIGNONESI

“Vino Nobile’s status as one of Italy’s great red wines is largely due to the Falvos, who re-launched it in the early ‘80s...their Vino Nobiles are excellent...as well as spectacular Vin Santos.”
Cernilli/Sabellico, The New Italy Wine Appreciation Guild, 2000

“In my opinion, this is the best producer of Vino Nobile in Tuscany.”
★★★★ Excellent Producer List (top rating) *- Robert Parker’s Wine Buyer’s Guide*

Sauvignon Blanc Cortona DOC: 85% Sauvignon Blanc, 15% Chardonnay, four months in stainless steel.

“Il Marzocco” Chardonnay DOC: Chardonnay with small amounts of Sauvignon Blanc, six months in barrique.

Rosso di Toscana: 40% Prugnolo Gentile, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, nine months in used barriques.

Rosso di Montepulciano DOC: 85% Prugnolo Gentile with 15% indigenous grapes, four months in Slavonian oak casks.

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG: 85% Prugnolo Gentile with 15% indigenous grapes, 18 months between used barriques and Slavonian oak casks.

“Grandi Annate” Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva DOCG: 85% Prugnolo Gentile with 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30 months in new French oak.

“Desiderio” Merlot DOC: 85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18 months in new French oak.

Vin Santo di Montepulciano DOC: Grechetto, Malvasia, Trebbiano, 10 years in caratelli.

“Occhio di Pernice” Vin Santo di Montepulciano DOC: 100% Prugnolo Gentile, 10 years in cartelli.

