



OVERVIEW

When the first Super Tuscans such as Ornellaia and Sassicaia were created, they were acknowledged as world-class wines, but they were officially outcasts because the wines used nontraditional grape varieties or in other ways deviated from the established norms. Once the dust settled, officials realized that instead of shunning them for being nontraditional, these wines should be seen as representing a new tradition for Tuscany, and a denomination was designed around these Super Tuscans: Bolgheri DOC, taking its name from the tiny village nearest the original innovators. Today, Bolgheri is a hotbed of luxe wines that compete with similar wines from around the world, as opposed to the majority of Italian wines that compete on the basis of being different from wines of anywhere else. High standards of viticulture and winemaking are the rule. Most Bolgheri red wines are made from the Bordeaux grape varieties Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc. However, they may also contain the Rhône variety Syrah (maximum 50%) or, for those who want to put an Italian spin on their wines, Sangiovese (maximum 50%). Wines must age for almost a year before release, but those labeled as Superiore require a minimum of 2 years, including 1 year in barrel. While red wines are customary, Bolgheri DOC also makes room for rosato and white wines. The most exciting whites are made from Vermentino, but Sauvignon Blanc is also allowed to keep up the Bordeaux analogy.