



OVERVIEW

Like much of Tuscany, Carmignano's wine history dates back to the time of the Etruscans. It wasn't until 1716, when Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici designated the area as one of the four best regions for wine growing in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, thereby establishing Carmignano's place and reputation in history. It was at this time that rules for production and specific geographical boundaries were outlined, thereby making it one of the first recognized wine appellations in the world.

Named after the town of Carmignano, the sub-zone lies 12 miles west of Florence on the eastern slopes of Monte Albano. Originally part of the Chianti Montalbano zone, it gained its independence in large part due to the efforts of Count Ugo Contini Bonacossi, third generation patriarch of Tenuta di Capezzana. In 1975 Carmignano was awarded DOC status, followed by DOCG status in 1990 (retroactive to 1988).

Carmignano's primary grape is Sangiovese, but thanks to the DOC laws campaigned for by Count Ugo, the blend must also include up to 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. It is said that when Catherine de Medici was Queen of France, she had clippings of Cabernet Sauvignon sent to Carmignano from Bordeaux, thereby establishing a new varietal tradition in the region. Much of those plantings disappeared with the phylloxera epidemic, but Cabernet was replanted in the 1950s. In 1975 it became the first sanctioned DOC wine to include Cabernet Sauvignon in Tuscany.

With only 296 acres planted to vine, Carmignano is one of the smallest sub-zones in Tuscany, producing just over 30,000 cases from only 15 producers. (Tenuta di Capezzana produces 50% of the Carmignano DOCG.) Situated between the Apennines to the southeast and the Arno river to the west, the sub-zone experiences warm, sunny days and cool, breezy nights. The vineyard soils are diverse, often comprised of calcareous, clayey schists and sandstone. These factors, along with the region's long history, help create the classic, elegant wines of Carmignano which are known for their depth and great longevity.