



TENUTA DELL'ORNELLAIA

Masseto 2005

IGT Toscana

Variety:
100% Merlot

Climate and Harvest:

The winter of 2005 was, with the exception of a few bitterly cold days between February and March that delayed budset by a few days, rather mild, and was followed by a spring that quickly became hot and sunny. As a result the vines bloomed about a week early, with the precocious varieties blossoming about May 20. Vegetative vigor and productive potential displayed perfect harmony from the beginning. As a result, the number of bunches pruned was within the norm. June and July behaved as expected: heat, sun, and just a few drops of rain... Perfect for the veraison to occur evenly. Finally, the grapes ripened steadily in August, under constant temperatures that never exceeded the seasonal average (32 °C). A few rains around August 15 contributed the optimal development of the bunches. At the end of August the preliminary analyses revealed extremely high polyphenolic potentials, which are indicative of a great vintage. September provided us with alternating beautiful sunny days and sudden showers. To allow the grapes to ripen fully and develop optimal concentrations, we harvested late, beginning with the lower part of the Masseto vineyard on September 14 and finishing up the central part on September 30.

Vinification and Ageing:

The grapes were hand-picked and put into 15-kg baskets. The grapes from the bunches that passed the careful vineyard selection were examined again on a double selection table, before and after destemming. After soft-pressing, the fermentation was carried out in part in steel tanks, and in part in upright oaken casks. The criterion used to determine the tank type was vineyard provenance: Every parcel of the Masseto vineyard is vinified separately. After a fermentation at 25-28 °C the wine macerated on the skins at 28 °C for 15-18 days. The malolactic fermentation took place in 100% new French barriques. The wine aged for a total of 24 months in Tenuta Dell'Ornellaia's temperature-controlled cellars. After the first 12 months the wine was assembled, and returned to the barriques for another 12 months. After bottling the wine was aged a final 12 months prior to release.

Winemaker's Notes:

The fruit of an especially late harvest, Masseto displays great aromatic maturity, with fruit and spice joining the usual balsamic and mentholated accents. Ample, rich, and full on the palate, the first impact reveals a tremendous tannic structure, which is so atypical for Merlot, but makes it easy to recognize this wine as the product of a unique terroir: Vigna Masseto. The complexity and length apparent upon sipping allow us to appreciate every characteristic of the wine, which will age long and well.