



VARIAZIONI IN ROSSO DELL'ORNELLAIA 2018

- TOSCANA IGT ROSSO

Every harvest is different, and with every harvest the orchestra of grapes grown at Ornellaia plays a different symphony. Accentuating the unique features of every vintage and embracing the natural harmony, Variazioni in Rosso dell'Ornellaia is served exclusively to guests visiting the estate, like a private concert in a bottle.

TASTING NOTES

42% Merlot, 32% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc, 12% Petit Verdot Alc. : 14% vol.

In 2018, the Merlot stood out in a dazzling expression, distinguishing the Variazioni in Rosso dell'Ornellaia blend and lending silkiness and softness to the palate. Red fruit features on the nose with elegant vanilla, tobacco and pepper nuances which convey a balanced harvest of cool nights that intensified the signature aromas of wines from this vintage. Silky, rounded tannins ensure an enticing tasting experience.

THE 2018 GROWING SEASON

After several years in which winter seemed to be little more than a memory, 2018 brought a return to normal climatic conditions, with temperatures spending enough time below zero for the vines to begin their well-deserved winter rest. The spring will be remembered as one of the wettest in history, with three times the seasonal average rainfall and high temperatures in April. Despite late budbreak, the weather conditions and rapid growth of the shoots enabled the vines to catch up and bloom a week earlier than anticipated. For the entire month of May and – to a lesser extent – June, rainfall remained above average and it was only in July that we received some respite, with a warm and dry month. *Veraison* took place between the 22nd and 25th of July, and August was as hot as it had been the previous year, but slightly wetter. The sugars and acidity developed slowly, while the berries grew to larger dimensions thanks to the high level of water present in the soil. September was warm and dry. Temperatures were higher than the seasonal average, but cooler nights enabled the vines to recover and preserve the aromas and acidity. The red grape harvest began on the 31st of August with the Merlot and ended on the 8th of October with the later-ripening varieties.

VINIFICATION AND AGEING

The grapes were handpicked into 15 kg baskets; the bunches were graded and selected by hand on a double sorting table, before and after destemming, and finally soft-pressed. Each varietal and single vineyard block was vinified separately. The primary fermentation took place in stainless steel vats at temperatures below 25°C for a week, followed by maceration for about 10-15 days. The malolactic fermentation, which began in the steel tanks, was completed after the wine was racked into barriques (25% new and 75% a year old). The wine remained in barriques in Ornellaia's temperature-controlled cellars for about 15 months. After the first 12 months the wine was assembled, and then returned to the barriques for an additional 3 months of aging. After bottling, the wine aged a further 6 months prior to release.