



# ORNELLAIA

## ORNELLAIA 1999

- BOLGHERI DOC SUPERIORE

65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc

The desire to nurture the Estate's exceptional qualities has shaped Ornellaia's philosophy since the beginning. Ornellaia is a *cuvée* of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc & Petit Verdot and the faithful expression of unique *terroir* developed in harmony with nature.



## THE 1999 GROWING SEASON

Winter this year was more severe than in 1998, with budbreak occurring one week later. Spring was within average parameters however, with normal levels of rain and temperatures, so that flowering and vegetative growth proceeded at a rate very close to the previous year. Optimal weather conditions during flowering ensured better-than-average fruit set and a larger-than-expected crop per vine. A hot, rainless summer brought an early 'veraison', one week earlier than in recent years, and the berries were of good quality and uniform size. In early July, cluster-thinning was carried out in Merlot, removing up to 50% of the clusters in some vineyards and 10% in others, while Cabernet lost about 10%. The Merlot harvest started during the first week in September and continued through the middle of the month. At that point, picking began in the Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, which concluded in the beginning of October. The fruit brought into the cellar was in outstanding condition and exhibited uniform ripeness. All the grapes were hand-picked into small, 15-kg boxes. It is noteworthy that this year's Cabernet Sauvignon is of particularly fine quality.



## VINIFICATION AND AGEING

On harvesting, the grapes were destemmed and crushed before being introduced partially in wooden fermentors and partially in stainless steel tanks where alcoholic fermentation took place at a temperature not exceeding 30°C. Maceration continued for a period of 20-25 days after which the wine was transferred into new French oak barriques (60% new and 40% once-used) where it completed its malolactic fermentation. Each single variety and each vineyard lot was aged separately. The wine remained in barriques in the temperature controlled cellars at Tenuta dell'Ornellaia for a period of 18 months. After the first 12 months the master blend was made and the wine was reintroduced into the barriques for the remaining 6 months period and then bottled. A further refinement period of 12 months in the bottle followed, prior to release.