



ORNELLAIA

ORNELLAIA 2004

- BOLGHERI DOC SUPERIORE

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.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot

"2004 can be considered as one of the major expressions of Ornellaia and represents an excellent example of a classic vintage in Bolgheri. The ideal conditions during the growing season lead to a perfect combination of ripeness, flavour complexity and finesse. The velvety opulence of the Merlot is balanced out by the racy and elegant tannic structure of the Cabernets, which are further amplified by the small addition of Petit Verdot."

Axel Heinz

THE 2004 GROWING SEASON

The weather of the 2004 growing season could be described as textbook-perfect. Winter saw adequate rainfall, without excessive temperatures, and a sunny Spring was punctuated by brief showers. Budbreak took place between 30 March and 10 April. Flowering revealed a high fertility of the buds, (resulting from the warm conditions of the previous year). The potentially high yield was kept within desired quality limits by repeated and severe bunch-thinning. Early summer was mild with moderate temperatures followed by a hot, sunny August. These conditions were ideal in favouring a steady, physiological development of all the grape varieties. During the harvest period no rain interrupted the ripening, thus providing sufficient time to determine the perfect date for the harvest of each single vineyard block. The first Merlot grapes, sourced from the youngest vineyards, were harvested on 2 September, but the majority reached full ripeness between 15-25 September, directly followed by the Cabernet Franc. Harvesting of the Cabernet Sauvignon commenced on 25 September, and was concluded in the first week of October.

VINIFICATION AND AGEING

The bunches were hand-picked into 15 kg bins, and the fruit was carefully graded and selected on a double sorting table, before and after destemming. After a light crushing, each variety and vineyard block was vinified separately giving birth to a total of 51 different base wines each interpreting the considerable diversity of the Estate's terroirs. A week-long fermentation was carried out at 26-30°C in stainless steel, followed by a maceration of 18 days. Malolactic fermentation took place in oak barrels (70% new and 30% once used). The wine remained in barriques in the temperature controlled cellars of Tenuta dell'Ornellaia for a total period of 18 months. After the first 12 months the master blend was made. The wine was then re-introduced into barrique where it spent the remaining 6 months, followed by 12 months in the bottle prior to release.