

Premium Brands, Inc.

69-13 Fleet Street - Forest Hills, NY 11375-5165

tel.: (718)263-4094 - fax: (718)263-4409 - E-mail: PremiumB@aol.com

GIUSEPPE GABBAS

Gambero Rosso Editore

Slow Food Editore

“Italian Wines 2000”

Giuseppe Gabbas Tenuta (Nuoro Sardinia)

There have been some changes at this well-known estate at the foot of Supramonte in Barbagia. Some of the vineyards are about to be replanted and work has begun on a vinification cellar. The grapes will thus no longer be vinified by Censar in Villasor, but will be taken care of at home as soon as they're picked. Claudio Gori is still the estate oenologist and continues to use traditional methods such as very long maceration. Results seem to prove him right. The Lillové '98, from cannonau with small amounts of other indigenous grapes, sees no oak. The color is an intense, deep ruby and the very rich fruity bouquet is distinctly reminiscent of cherry and sour cherry. The palate is very fresh and notably full-bodied. The Dule '98, a blend of 50% cannonau with cabernet sauvignon, montepulciano and sangiovese, had a long maceration and, in part, six months of barriques-aging. It is a superb, rich, almost opulent yet well-balanced red with intense, clearly defined spicy scents. The attack on the palate is fresh and distinct, and although slightly rough tannins still need time to soften, the wine has remarkable body and structure.

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“Italian Wines 2001”

Giuseppe Gabbas

The hills between Oliena and Orgosolo, in the heart of the Barbagia district, have a slightly different profile as Giuseppe Gabbas' new cellars rise across their slopes. The decision to rebuild was not taken overnight but came as a result of increased demand for the wines, both abroad and at home. Gabbas always aims to produce great reds that maintain strong links with their origins and respect traditional Sardinian styling. Indeed, all his wines are based on cannonau. Working with his Tuscan oenologist, Giorgio Gori, Giuseppe also insists on extended maceration as part of the winemaking technique, sometimes protracting it for as long as 30 days. Some other winemakers on the island have turned their noses up at this but it is no more than a return to tradition, backed up by improved technical know-how, and it certainly helps to counter the recent invasion of reds rendered insipid and atypical by skimpy macerations. Gabbas' latest releases, while retaining good structure, may have suffered from the developments on the estate, as several vineyards have been in production for only a few years and are

not yet giving grapes at their full potential. Cannonau di Sardegna Lillove' '99 is still youthful. The aromas are fairly intense and persist reasonably well. The palate has marked tannins and acidity which will require time to gain balance. The Dule '99, from cannonau, sangiovese and montepulciano, is better. The bouquet is intense, with fresh fruit aromas that are echoed on the palate and there is also considerable body and structure that will allow it to age well. The Arbeskia '97 is the estate's new wine. It comes from 50 percent Cannonau, 40 percent cabernet sauvignon and 10 percent of other indigenous grapes, and is aged in barrique. It showed as well-styled and well-made but a little closed on the nose.

Steve Tanzer's International Wine Cellar - July/August 2001 - Issue 97
Gabbas - Sardinia's leading small estate owns excellent vineyards near Oliena, the finest spot of all for cannonau. - by Daniel Thomases

- 86 2000 Lillovè Cannonau di Sardegna DOC (\$13):** Medium garnet. Blackberry, white pepper and clove on the nose. Round, smooth, sweet flavors of blackberry and raspberry. A medium-weight, pleasurable warm wine, ideal for a trattoria.
- 88 2000 Dule IGT (\$18):** a blend of cannonau, sangiovese, cabernet and montepulciano): Dark garnet. Ample nose combines raspberry, plum, mint and pepper. Ripe and full; plummy with a touch of kirsch liqueur. Longer and more concentrated than Lillovè; larger-framed and with an alcoholic richness that increases the volume.
- 90 1999 Arbeskia IGT** (cannonau and cabernet): Black garnet color, with ruby highlights. Powerful and penetrating aromas of blackberry and cherry under spirits; fresh and warming at the same time. On the palate, menthol and thyme hints complement solid persistent flavors of blackcurrant and plum jam. Shows more substantial tannins than the Dule but without any roughness. Very persistent finish. An interesting compromise between the local and the international.

(Premium Brands, Forest Hills, NY)

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"Italian Wines 2002"

Giuseppe Gabbas

Giuseppe Gabbas is not the type to talk animatedly about his wines, as do so many producers. His products reflect the character of their origin and it would be fair to say that territory, wine and man all live in symbiosis. Of the 13 hectares under vine, practically all renovated, eight are planted to cannonau and one of these has vines of about 60 years of age, from a local cannonau clone. The remainder is used, in variable proportions, for Montepulciano, merlot, colorino, Sangiovese, cabernet and syrah. The wines showed very well in tasting. Clearly, the work of oenologist Gori is having its effect. Dule '00 stood out on particular. It has great intensity on the nose with

plentiful fruit and, the wine having been aged in new barriques, some vanilla. Youthful but not raw tannins are quite marked on the well-structured palate and the wine has great ageing potential. Arbeskia '99, from an unusual mix of cannonau, Sangiovese, merlot and cabernet, stayed in barrique for around a year. It has intense aromas of ripe wild berry fruits interwoven with tobacco and coffee. The palate is tannic, warm and well-sustained, and in fact this wine, too, has a structure that will happily allow it to age for some years. Cannonau di Sardegna Lillove' '00 is simpler and more immediate but nevertheless not lacking in substance. The latest arrival to the range, Avra, is a red dessert wine from grapes that are left to dry and concentrate on the vine. Aged in barriques for 18 months, it is warm and pervasive on the nose, with aromas of wild berries and walnutskins, and nicely full on the palate.

Giuseppe Gabbas – via Trieste, 65 – 08100 Nuoro

Dule '00	2 glasses
Arbeskia '99	2 glasses
Avra '99	2 glass
Cannonau di Sardegna Lillove' '00	1 glass