

LE FARNETE

Our property, the **Tenuta Le Farnete** is located in the town of Carmignano, just to the north of Florence. Of our 45 hectares, 10 are dedicated to olive groves, 8.5 to vineyards and the rest to meadows and woodland. I took over the operation of the winery from my father in the early 1990's determined to increase the quality of our products and their presence in the marketplace. To this end we replanted vineyards with selected, low-yielding clones, and rows properly oriented towards the sun to maximize heat and sunlight.

Our vineyards now lie at an average altitude of 100 meters above sea level in soil of tufaceous clay and calcareous rock. The density varies from 5,500 to 6,250 vines per hectare. My personal philosophy of our production can be summed up by the motto that appears on our label in Italian: "*One bottle of wine per vine*".

Our most recent change in the vineyards is the decision to mechanically harvest our grapes. The state-of-the-art machine is very gentle with the grapes, and most importantly, machine harvesting is much faster, enabling us to gather more grapes at their optimal degree of ripeness than we ever could by hand. We also completely renovated the fermenting and aging cellars. For the wine-making process we have outfitted the cellar with low, squat stainless steel vats which control the temperature of fermentation, while maximizing the contact of grape-skins to the juice resulting in better extracted wines. All technical data during the fermentation of each vat is recorded by computers to increase our control of each step of the wine-making process.

In our olive groves all phases of work, from pruning branches to create inner ventilation to harvesting the olives is done by hand in compliance with the DOP (Denominazione d'Origine Protetta) rules. Leccino, Frantoio Moraiolo and Pendolino olive trees are planted 5 meters apart and the harvest begins in the first week of November. Olives are harvested and crushed quickly in a vacuum press to avoid oxidation. We also produce a number of exquisite food products, all of which can be seen on our web site: www.enricopierazuoli.com.

Enrico Pierazuoli

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Lying to the west of Florence on the eastern slopes of Mount Albano in Italy's wine-rich Tuscany, the Carmignano region has climatic and soil conditions ideally suited for the production of superior red wine.

The area is known to have had land under vine for over 3000 years, and the first documented reference to Carmignano wine can be found in the famous Datini Archives in Prato. There is a mention that on December 8, 1396, a notary named Lapo Mazzei purchased 15 loads of Carmignano wine, paying four times the prevailing price of other wines at that time. A good indication that even then, the wine of the region was something special.

But it took a bit longer for Carmignano wines to develop into their present distinctive form.

Around the year 1500, **Caterina de Medici**, whose family had ruled Florence and much of Tuscany for several hundred years, became Queen of France. Under the influence of this royal connection, Cabernet grapes were planted in the Carmignano area. Even now, it is locally referred to as Francesca.

Today, Carmignano wines are a blend of **Sangiovese**, **Canaiolo**, **Cabernet Sauvignon** grapes.

In 1716, **Cosimo III de Medici**, Grand Duke of Tuscany, instituted wine production regulations. He set forth production standards and established control over sales, the aim being to prevent fraud. He demarcated borders of areas under vine cultivation, and proclaimed Carmignano as one of the four best in Tuscany, along with Chianti, Val d'Arno di Pesa, and Pomino. Under this rule, if a wine was labeled a Carmignano, the grapes had to be grown and vinified within a specific area. Carmignano is justifiably proud to have received one of the first four **D.O.C** or **Denominazione di Origine Controllata** appellations.

The Carmignano zone is relatively small in area, and has more of olive groves than vineyards. Even so, its potential is great. The soil has a high lime content, the days are hot and nights cool. These factors combine with the comparatively low altitude of the hills, not more than 133 ft above sea level, wind from the Appenines and summer rain to ensure the correct ripening of the grapes.

In the 1930s, the ancient D.O.C. for Carmignano wines was taken over by D.O.C. Chianti Montalbano, but wine growers of the region, notably Ugo Contini Bonacossi, worked tirelessly to retrieve it. This was finally achieved in 1975, and in **1990, Carmignano won the higher D.O.G.C or Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita appellation.**

This tiny wine district produces D.O.Cs such as the **Barco Reale di Carmignano**, the **Carmignano Rosato** or the **Carmignano Rosso** as well as the **Carmignano Rosso di Riserva**. The Carmignano D.O.C is a great wine which can be drunk young or aged, while the Barco Reale takes its name from an old estate belonging to the Grand Dukes of Tuscany. The Vin Santo di Carmignano D.O.C, a highly prized desert wine, is made from white grapes, while the Vin Santo di Carmignano Occhio di Pernice comes from red grapes.

At the beginning of the nineties, 2000 hectolitres of Carmignano were produced, but by 2000 the production had gone up to almost 4000 hectolitres. These are small figures when compared to those of other wines, and there are only less than 20 active producer-bottlers.

Visit the web site <http://www.enricopierazuoli.com/indexen.htm> and specifically go to see "vineyards" under Farnete.

The Boschetti vineyard was planted in 1999 with a density of 6250 stumps per acre with a total area of 1 acre, piled entirely in wood at an altitude of 120 meters above sea level in a tufaceous land with a good percentage of clay and calcareous rock. The exposure to the southwest allows for an optimal maturation of the Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot which are the varieties present with the harvest that usually takes place in the first 10 days of October.

