

LILLIANO

With its origins dating back to at least the 13th century, the magnificent 1,140-acre Lilliano Estate in the commune of Castellina, north of Siena in the Chianti Classico zone of Tuscany, is not only a source of several excellent Chianti Classico wines, but also of some sensational olive oils and other agricultural products.

In 1920 this property, which includes a villa, farm, underground wine cellars and the church of Santa Cristina (a legacy of medieval times, when the Lilliano Estate formed part of the holdings of an ecclesiastical order) was bought by the wealthy and aristocratic Berlingieri family. The first to recognize the estate's winemaking potential was Princess Eleonora Ruspoli Berlingieri, who set about marketing Lilliano wines in 1958. Her work is continued today by her son, Prince Giulio Ruspoli, who shares ownership of the property with his brother, Pietro. (Lilliano bottle labels feature the combined coats of arms of the Ruspoli and Berlingieri families.)

127 acres at Lilliano are planted with vines, of which 123 acres are devoted exclusively to grapes, with the remaining 4 acres planted with vines interspersed with olive trees. No less than 9,000 olive trees flourish on the estate. Lilliano owns a very active **AGRITURISMO** made of 14 apartments/houses with 90 beds.

An architect with wide-ranging agrarian expertise (including overseeing irrigation projects in Africa), Giulio Ruspoli takes a hands-on approach at Lilliano, where he was assisted for several years by consulting winemaker Giulio Gambelli, a legendary name in Tuscan winemaking circles. Now, Lorenzo Landi is in charge of the wine making. In addition to his activities at Lilliano, Ruspoli is a Board member of the Consortium of Chianti Classico estates. Working in conjunction with the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Ruspoli is also deeply involved in the research and development of experimental viticultural techniques covering 14 different estates throughout the Chianti region.

The coat of arms on the front labels belongs to the two branches of the family: the Ruspoli and the Berlingieri.

In the picture, Prince Giulio Ruspoli and the former winemaker Giulio Gambelli.

