

## Col d'Orcia at a glance

**Founded** 1958

**Size of estate** 540ha

**Area under vine**

140ha, 101ha of which are planted with Sangiovese for Brunello

**Annual production**

600,000–700,000

bottles, of which

200,000–250,000

are Brunello

**Flagship wine:**

Poggio al Vento

Brunello Riserva –

25,000 bottles,

produced, only in

the best years

**Other key wines**

as well as Brunello and

Rosso di Montalcino,

look for Banditella

and Olmaia

*'Large casks are fundamental to producing long-lived Brunellos, as barriques accelerate the ageing process'* **Francesco Marone Cinzano**

Francesco took over in 1991. 'The first thing I did was build new vinification and ageing cellars, updated with the best technology and equipped to handle double the capacity, since I had already planned on expanding production,' he says. Over the next decade, vineyards were increased from 70ha to 140ha, with 101ha growing Brunello. Francesco also stepped up the research and development started by his father. 'In the 1970s and 1980s there was little academic research into Sangiovese or its cultivation, and there were many inadequate clones and outdated vineyard management techniques across Tuscany and even here in Montalcino,' he says. In 2003 he planted a trial vineyard with nearly extinct Tuscan grape varieties.

### Painstaking research

Besides clonal research, the estate collaborates with Professor Attilio Scienza at the University of Milan on choosing the best spots for new vineyards and the best rootstocks for particular terrains. For years it has also been at the forefront of experimentation with training systems and vine density.

After Bandinelli's team had studied the vineyards, Col d'Orcia selected two clones from the Poggio al Vento vineyard. In 1997 it replanted several vineyards with these and saw a noticeable rise in quality. The clones were registered in 2011, making them accessible to all.

Col d'Orcia's winemaking team, led by Maurizio Castelli and winemaker Antonino Tranchida, who succeeded Pablo Harri in 2009, combine modern technology with time-honoured traditions. Picking is by hand and grapes are selected on a sorting table; the steel fermenting tanks are short and squat rather than tall and narrow, for greater skin ➤

## O'Keefe's five to try



**Poggio al Vento Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2004** 19pts/20 (96/100pts)

£90 **Vini Italiani, Wimbledon Wine Cellars**

The firm's flagship. Intense bouquet of violet, earth, truffle, pipe tobacco and leather. Rich cherry, spice and black tea palate. Impressive structure boasts firm but ripe tannins and vibrant acidity, creating a compelling combination of complexity and elegance. Will age beautifully. **Drink** 2014–2034 **Alc** 14.5%

**Brunello di Montalcino 2007** 18 (93)

£35 **I Camisa**

Enticing aromas of underbrush and wild cherry with hints of pine and eucalyptus. Succulent ripe cherry and spice flavours with chewy tannins and surprising freshness. **Drink** 2013–2017 **Alc** 14.5%

**Rosso di Montalcino 2010** 16.75 (89)

£17.95–£18.99 (2009) **I Camisa, Speck Deli,**

**Wimbledon Wine Cellars**

Classic fragrance of young Sangiovese: berry, cherry, citrus and underbrush, all of which carry over to the palate along with spicy notes. Succulent fruit but tannic structure. **Drink** 2013–2014 **Alc** 14.5%

**Banditella Rosso di Montalcino 2010** 16.5 (88)

£23.99–£25.50 (2009) **I Camisa, Speck Deli,**

**Wimbledon Wine Cellars**

International barrique-aged style. Espresso notes muffle delicate cherry and minerals. Sleek structure. **Drink** 2013–2015 **Alc** 14%



**Olmaia Sant'Antimo Cabernet 2009**

16.5 (88)

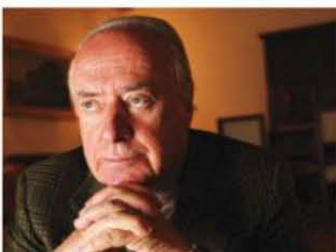
£44.99 (2005) **Wimbledon Wine Cellars**

First vintage after replanting. Aged in new barriques, this is loaded with coffee, espresso and wood sensations. Bell pepper and chocolate on the palate with soft, smooth tannins. Should improve as vines mature. **Drink** 2013–2016 **Alc** 14%

For details of all UK stockists, see p85

1977

Edoardo Virano becomes estate manager



1984

Col d'Orcia is one of the first in Montalcino to plant Cabernet Sauvignon



1982

First vintage of Poggio al Vento Brunello Riserva, one of the first single-vineyard Brunellos



1988

Start of Sangiovese clonal research with Dr Bandinelli, University of Florence's Sangiovese specialist. Maurizio Castelli (pictured) starts work ➤