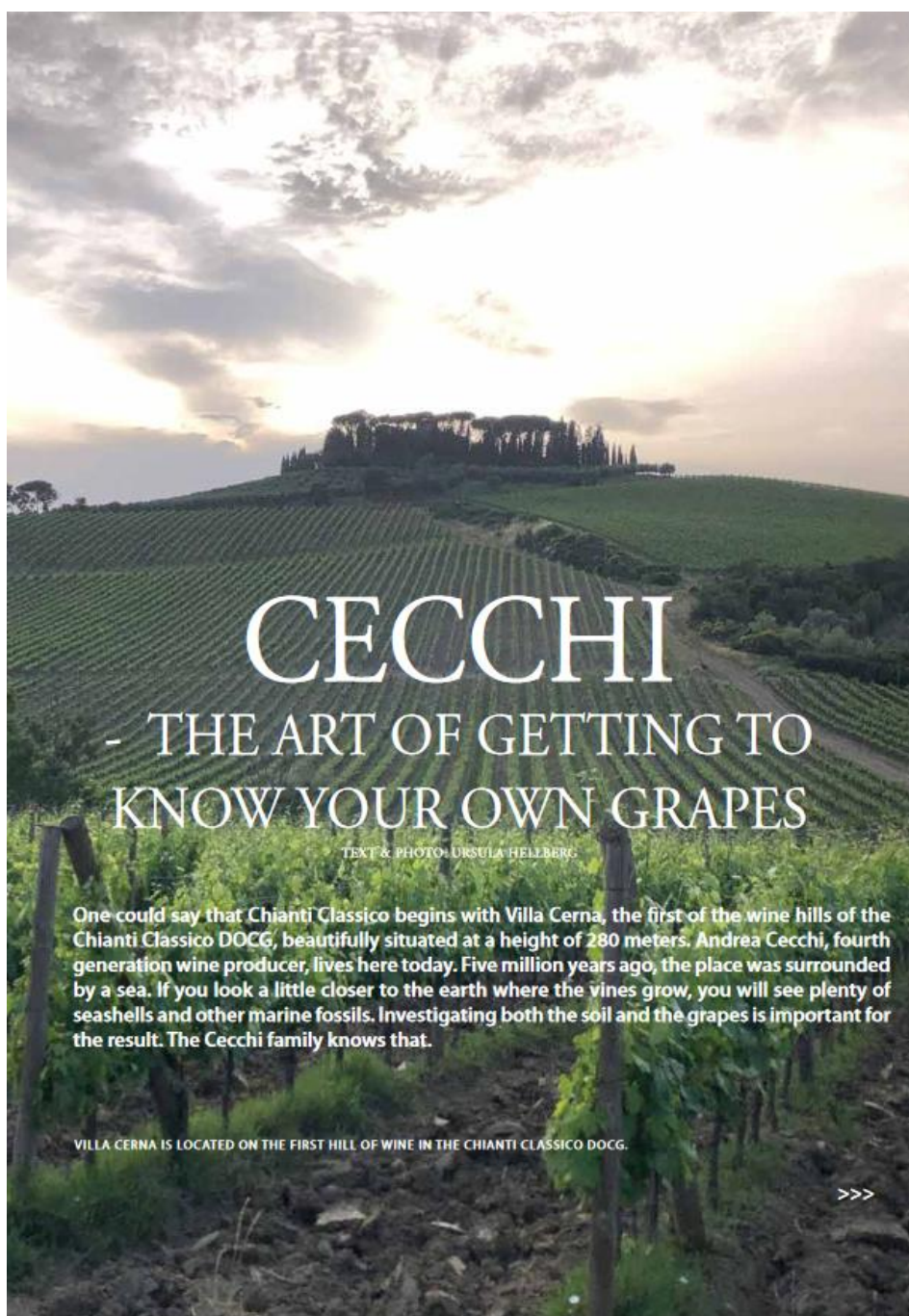


FAMIGLIA CECCHI

INSPIRATIONAL WINE KNOWLEDGE AND THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE DRINK

fine wine September
INTERNATIONAL 2019

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Last year, the Cecchi family celebrated its 125th anniversary. It can seem like a rather youthful age for a wine producer in Tuscany, an area with vineyard traditions for more than a millennium. But looking back has never been the Cecchi family's motto. Instead, people have always looked ahead and been receptive to development.

PROJECT CHIANTI CLASSICO 2000

So, it wasn't surprising when in 1987, they decided to join the "Chianti Classico 2000" project carried out by Consorzio del Chianti Classico in collaboration with Florence and the University of Siena. The main purpose of this project was to identify the

characteristics of the Sangiovese grape that is so important to Chianti. The information collected was extensive and came from soil, plants, weather stations and plant laboratories.

The experiences from Chianti Classico 2000 have been of great benefit to Cecchi. The new clones that have been obtained are now combined with the plant site that best suits them. The earth here is old and it has been an extensive work to go through its properties. To get a good vineyard, you need to have a balance between clones and soil - the right plant in the right soil! The locations of the plant sites and how they are exposed to sun and wind also mean different harvest times. The grapes are therefore harvested and vinified separately before the work in the cellar begins.

CLONE AFTER EVERY SOIL TYPE

Miria Bracali is the chief winemaker and one of the key people at Cecchi. She has worked there since 1998. Initially, she trained as a chemist, but an acquaintance got her interested in a different route. She does not work alone, rather together with a well-functioning team of agronomists and consultants. The biggest challenge for her is Chianti Classico. To get something you recognize.

"The sangiovese grapes are chameleons. When you separate the different parts, you get to know the different styles," she explains.

To the classic question of whether the greatest work is required in the winery or vineyards, she answers without hesitation:

"The vineyard requires the most work. It is still the quality of the



MARINE FOSSILS ARE ABUNDANT IN VILLA CERNA. WINE IS NOW GROWN WHERE THERE WAS A SEA MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO.

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MIRIA BRACALI IS THE CHIEF WINEMAKER FOR THE CECCHI FAMILY...



... TOGETHER WITH AGRONOMIST GIUSEPPE MEZZEDIMI THEY ARE A STRONG TEAM.

grapes that is crucial, in the first place. I work very closely with the agronomists and we keep track of the grapes. You can say that from August to September I live more or less in the vineyard," she says jokingly.

VILLA CERNA AND VILLA PINK VINEYARD WINES WITH IDENTITY

The newly acquired knowledge means that Cecchi focuses on producing vineyard wines. Chianti Classico wines that are easy to recognize and have identity. Both Primocolle Villa Cerna and Villa Cerna Riserva come

from Villa Cerna, and both are made using 95 percent Sangiovese. The rest is the colorful local grape Colorino. The name Primocolle means "first hill," and of course alludes to the vineyard's unique location.

Just about half an hour from Villa Cerna is their second property in Chianti Classico, Villa Rosa. It covers 126 hectares. Of these, 36 are vineyards and 15 are olive trees. There is also one of Europe's largest stocks of cypress trees. The oldest are as old as 1000 years.



ANDREA CECCHI POINTS OUT THE DIFFERENT PLANT SITES AT VILLA ROSA.

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GRAN SELEZIONE

Villa Rosa is located higher above the sea than Villa Cerna and consists of the Casetto vineyards, which are at most 425 meters high. Ribaldoni, Palagione and Villa are between 150 and 220 meters lower. They are currently replanting the vines over 50 years old.

It was the Villa Rosa grapes that Cecchi decided to produce his first Gran Selezione. The year was 2015, and the weather gods had been helpful,

meaning a cold winter, mild and humid spring, summer with good temperature and moderate rain. After fermentation in stainless steel tanks, a 15-month period in French oak barrels followed. Then, three months before bottling, the wine was allowed to rest in cement tanks that provide a natural oxidation. Two years after harvest, the wine was bottled, which was then allowed to rest for at least another year before it was released. 2015, is therefore the only vintage that is currently available on the market. Next year will be their Gran Selezione 2016.

The Cecchi family property in Chianti Classico has gradually been expanded with other interesting areas in Tuscany: Montaùto in San Gimignano, Val delle Rose in Maremma and the recent acquisition, Tenuta di Montalcino, which is next door to Sant'Antimo. Cecchi also owns Tenuta Alzatura property outside the town of Montefalco in Umbria. It will be interesting to follow the development.



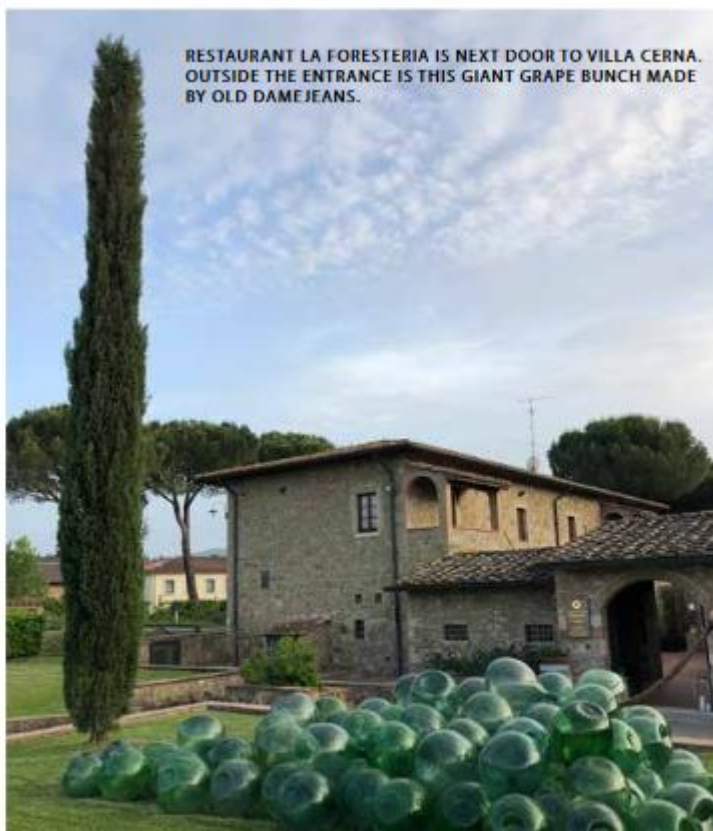
PHOTO TEXT: CESARE AND ANDREA ARE THE FOURTH-GENERATION WINEMAKERS IN THE CECCHI FAMILY.



RIBALDONI IS A WINE THAT IS WELL-SUITED TO ITALIAN CUISINE.



THE FIRST VINTAGES OF CECCHIS GRAN SELEZIONE. 2016 IS STILL IN STORAGE AND WILL ONLY BE RELEASED NEXT YEAR.



RESTAURANT LA FORESTERIA IS NEXT DOOR TO VILLA CERNA. OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE IS THIS GIANT GRAPE BUNCH MADE BY OLD DAME JEANS.