



TENUTA DELL'ORNELLAIA

Ornellaia 1997

Bolgheri DOC Superiore

Variety:

65% Cabernet Sauvignon

30% Merlot

5% Cabernet Franc

Climate and Harvest:

The start of Spring saw above average temperatures which resulted in an early budding of the vines. The vegetative cycle slowed down somewhat following an unexpected frost in mid April and subsequent rainfall until the end of the month.

From May onwards, the weather became very warm and dry and the summer months were particularly hot, reaching temperatures at times as high as 35°C. The grapes ripened earlier than usual and harvesting was carried out under ideal conditions during the first part of September.

The vintage was exceptional in terms of quality (with grapes that had matured perfectly with good concentration and well matured tannins), while quantities were somewhat lower than average due to the small dimensions of the grapes resulting from the dry summer conditions.

Vinification and Ageing:

On harvesting, the grapes were destemmed and crushed before being introduced partially in wooden fermentors of medium capacity, and partially in stainless steel tanks where alcoholic fermentation took place at a temperature not exceeding 30°C. Maceration continued for a period of 20-25 days after which the wine was introduced into new french oak barriques (50%) and second passage barriques (50%) where it completed its malolactic fermentation. Each grape variety and each vineyard 'lot' was aged separately. The wine remained in barriques in the temperature controlled cellars at Tenuta dell'Ornellaia for a period of 18 months after which time the wine was then blended and bottled. A further refinement period of 12 months in the bottle followed, prior to release.

The Tenuta dell'Ornellaia decided to carry out an even more rigorous selection of the 1997 vintage (in what was already a truly great vintage in terms of quality!).

This resulted in a production of about 20% less than the previous vintage.