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Climate

The climate of the 2016 vintage was characterized by a mild winter with regular rainfall followed by a spring season with cool temperatures which assisted a regular bud burst and flowering of the vines. A slight drop in temperatures occurred during the month of June, slowing down the growth and development cycle which came back into balance in July thanks to a warm summer with fine temperature swings from daytime heat to evening and nighttime coolness. This assisted in creating a wine with interesting aromatic notes. The picking of the Sauvignon Blanc crop for Conte della Vipera began towards the end of August, while the Sémillon, which normally reaches full ripeness fifteen days later, was picked during the second half of September.

Vinification

The vineyards utilized for Conte della Vipera are situated at altitudes which range from 750 to 1150 feet (230-350 meters) above sea level and consist in soils rich in marine fossils. The moments in which to pick the Sauvignon Blanc and the Sémillon were decided on the basis of the balance between the sugars accumulated during the growing season and the expression of the varietal aromas of the grapes. The crop, hand-picked, went immediately to the cellars where it was chilled on a conveyor belt to lower its temperature and best maintain varietal character. After a soft pressing, the must remained at 50° Fahrenheit (10° centigrade) to favor a natural static settling of the impurities. The must then went into stainless steel tanks where it fermented at temperatures held to a maximum of 61° Fahrenheit (16° centigrade). Once this operation was completed, the wine remained at 50° Fahrenheit to block the malolactic fermentation and conserve, as unaltered as possible, the characteristic aromas and flavors. The two varieties were then blended so that one could “complete” the other: fresh, bracing, lightly aromatic the Sauvignon, soft, tropical, and ample the Sémillon.

Historical Data

The vineyards selected to be utilized for the Conte della Vipera are located at an altitude between 825 and 1050 feet (250-350 meters) above sea level on soils rich in marine fossils. The wine takes its name from first proprietors of the Castello della Sala, and the label shows the 13th century Saint John’s Chapel (the Cappella d San Giovanni) situated on the estate. The first vintage of Conte della Vipera to be produced was the 1997.



Tasting Notes

A light straw yellow in color with greenish highlights, the floral and herbaceous notes first emerge to be followed by hints of white fruit complemented by pleasurable notes of citrus fruit and pineapples. The palate shows a fine balanced between structure and acidity along with a finish and aftertaste of much length and persistence.