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Climate

The 2020 growing season will be remembered for dry weather conditions. Winter saw virtually no rainfall and temperatures were never too extreme nor severe. Spring arrived slightly later than in previous years and was dominated by mild daytime weather and temperatures above seasonal averages, except for several cool spells at the beginning of April. From June to Ferragosto (August 15th), hot, dry conditions brought the grapes to full maturity earlier than usual. The right time to harvest was a decision carefully made, based on obtaining the finest expression of varietal aromas. Harvesting began with Sauvignon Blanc in the last half of August and was completed with Sémillon mid-September.

Vinification

Grape clusters were hand harvested and immediately brought to the cellar where they were cooled down on a refrigerated conveyor system lowering the temperature of the berries before pressing therefore preserving characteristic varietal aromas. Each grape variety was pressed and fermented separately. After a gentle pressing, the musts were kept at a controlled temperature of 10 °C (50 °F) for several hours to facilitate natural clarification, then transferred to stainless steel tanks where alcoholic fermentation took place at a temperature that did not exceed 16 °C (61 °F). Once this phase was complete, the wine was kept at a controlled temperature of 10 °C (50 °F) to prevent malolactic fermentation and perfectly preserve organoleptic qualities. Fresh, vertical and slightly aromatic Sauvignon was blended with soft, tropical Sémillon, one grape variety completing the other.

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

Conte della Vipera 2020 is straw yellow with light greenish and golden hues. Its nose opens with intense notes of lychees, pineapple and passion fruit that merge with pleasant sensations of grapefruit. On the palate it's fresh, vibrant and savory with nuances of citron peel and pineapple.