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Climate

The weather in autumn 2004 was quite mild with much heavier rain than in recent years. The unusually cold winter caused a delay in foliage development while the period around flowering was mild and quite dry, resulting in good fruit-setting. In July maximum temperatures reached 35° C which accelerated veraison, while a mild August with frequent but light rain-showers resulted in slow, steady ripening. The Pinot Nero grapes were harvested in mid-September in perfect condition thanks to the almost total absence of rain in August. The grapes showed an excellent balance of sugars and polyphenolic substances.

Vinification

The grapes were harvested in vineyards at an altitude of 400m in the Castello della Sala estate near Orvieto, in Umbria. After destemming and partial crushing, the grapes were placed in stainless steel vats. Maceration lasted about a week, during which great care was taken to fully extract the colouring substances. Alcoholic fermentation was completed at 26° C in French oak barriques (Alliers, Tronçais), as well as malolactic fermentation. The wine aged in the barriques for 8 months, after which it was bottled. It was then aged in the bottles for 15 months in the historical cellars of Castello della Sala, before release.

Historical Data

The ten acres (four hectares) of Pinot Noir grapes at the Castello della Sala estate are situated at an altitude of over 1300 feet (400 meters) above sea level on calcareous soils rich in marine fossils which alternate with strata of sedimentary sands from the Pliocene epoch. The wine was first produced in 1990. Castello della Sala is a fortress erected in the 14th century located approximately ten miles (18 kilometers) from the city of Orvieto and was acquired by the Antinori family in 1940.



Tasting Notes

Hints of cherries and spices, balanced and elegant in Burgundy style.