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## Climate

After a mild and dry autumn, the winter of 2012 in Chianti Classico was characterized by cold temperatures and normal rainfall, above all in the months of January and February. Spring began with rather cool and dry weather, causing a slight delay in bud burst and flowering compared to previous years. The months of April and May were marked by ample precipitation, a fundamental factor in enabling the vines to confront the lengthy rainless period which began in June and lasted all the way to the end of August, conditioning the development of vines both in terms of the growth of the canopy and the size and weight of the berries. The rain which fell during the very last days of August brought the vineyard back into balance, assisting the different grape varieties to proceed with regularity towards fully ripening, while the months of September and October, both mild in their temperatures and with normal rainfall, enabled the grapes to ripen properly both in terms of the accumulation of sugars and the physiological maturity of the skins. The harvesting of the grapes was concentrated in the period between September 20th and October 10th, beginning with the Cabernet Franc and Sangiovese and terminating with the Cabernet Sauvignon.

## Vinification

The climate of the growing season, particularly that of the summer months, forced an intense and rigorous selection of the grapes both in the vineyard and in the cellar. This careful selection aided in raising the quality level of the grapes utilized for Tignanello which - already unique in themselves both in terms of their typical character and of their quality potential - produced wines of outstanding character and structure. The must, during its fermentation and maceration in the cellar's conical fermenting tanks, was treated with a maximum care and attention to the freshness of the aromas, the extraction of the color, and the management of the tannins, aiming for elegance and suppleness as the primary characteristics to be achieved. After the wine had been run off its skins, it went into 60 gallon barrels in order to go through a complete malolactic fermentation in oak and bring out, to the maximum possible extent, the finesse and fragrance of the aromas. The aging period then began and lasted - in French and Hungarian oak barrels, partly new and partly used once previously - approximately twelve to fourteen months. During this period, the various lots, fermented and aged separately, variety by variety, took on their definitive character and were blended a few months before being bottled.

## Historical Data

Tignanello is produced exclusively from the vineyard of the same name, a parcel of some 140 acres (57 hectares) with limestone-rich soils and a southwestern exposure at 1150-1325 feet (350-400 meters) above sea level at the Tignanello estate. It was the first Sangiovese wine to be aged in small oak barrels, the first modern red wine to use such non-traditional varieties as Cabernet in the blend, and among the first red wines from the Chianti Classico area to be produced without white grapes. The wine, originally called "Chianti Classico Riserva Vigneto Tignanello" (a Chianti Classico Riserva from the Tignanello vineyard), was produced for the first time from a single vineyard parcel in 1970, when the blend contained 20% of Canaiolo and 5% of Trebbiano and Malvasia, both white grapes, and the wine aged in small oak barrels. In 1971 it became a Tuscan red table wine rather than a Chianti Classico, and was called Tignanello. In the 1975 vintage the percentage of white grapes was definitively eliminated from the blend. Ever since 1982, the blend has been the one currently used. Tignanello is bottled only in favorable vintages, and was not produced in 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1984, 1992, and 2002.



## Tasting Notes

The 2012 Tignanello is an intense ruby red in color with purple highlights. The wine is potent and complex on the nose with spicy notes which mingle with aromas of red fruit, smoke, and balsamic sensations; cherries, plums, liquorice, and rosemary are additionally felt. The flavors are mouth-filling and elegant with much volume and an excellent balance in the texture, and the oak is perfectly fused in the spicy and fruity finish and aftertaste.

## Awards

**James Suckling** 96/100