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## Climate

The winter of 2009-2010 was rainy and cold. The bud burst of the vines took place around mid-April, and the rains during the flowering did not disturb bud set. A cool summer and a warm, dry September led to a slow and gradual ripening of the grapes and allowed the harvest to be delayed and to be carried out over an extended and carefully calculated period of time. Picking began in mid-September and concluded almost at the end of October. The careful and professional management of the vineyard and a favorable climate during the growing season gave grapes of excellent quality.

## Vinification

The grapes of the Santa Pia vineyard, one with a very important potential for high level Prugnolo Gentile due to its excellent soil and microclimate, were picked during the first ten days of October. After a rigorous selection of the finest bunches, the grapes were destemmed and given a soft pressing. The fermentation lasted approximately 20 days, after which the wine went into 60 and 80 gallon (225 and 300 liter) oak barrels, where it went through a complete malolactic fermentation and aged for 16 months. The wine was then bottled and given a further 20 months of bottle aging before commercial release.

## Historical Data

The La Braccese estate covers some 1255 acres (508 hectares) where once were located the holdings of the Bracci counts, who gave their name both to the property and its count of arms: an armor-clad arm holding a sword. The overall vineyard surface consists of 850 acres (340 hectares) and is divided into two blocks: the first, 575 acres (233 hectares) is situated on the border between Montepulciano and the neighboring township of Cortona. The second, instead, 255 acres (103 hectares) in size, arrives close to the city itself and includes three highly renowned sub-zones for the production of outstanding red wine: Cervognano, Santa Pia, and Gracciano. Santa Pia is produced from a 37 acre (15 hectare) vineyard situated in the site of the same name, located the terraces below the town of Montepulciano. Its unique soil, medium in texture and consistence, rich in stones and sand, have assisted the ambition to produce an elegant, but at the same time classic, example of Sangiovese, one capable of transmitting the a highly recognizable expression of this historic production zone. The first year of production of Santa Pia was the 2001.



## Tasting Notes

The 2010 Santa Pia reflects the character of its vintage, one which - thanks to the favorable climate of the growing season - assisted in the production of wines of great structure and elegance. The nose shows notes of tobacco and pepper along with ripe red fruit. The palate is sweet with velvety tannins, together with savory mineral notes that give further expressiveness to the wine's aromas, bringing back the red fruit together with tobacco and vanilla. The finish and the aftertaste are savory and long.

## Awards

**James Suckling** 92/100 USA