

Cellole, Province of Caserta

Established: 1960's

Owners: Maria Ida & Salvatore Avallone

Winemakers: Fabio Gennarelli & Riccardo Cotarella

Production: 700,000 bottles

Hectares under vine: 120

Viticulture: Conventional



Over 3000 years ago, on the lavic, mineral rich slopes near Mount Massico and the volcano of Roccamonfina, Greek settlers reinvented viticulture, adjusting cultivation methods to the climate and soil of their adoptive home. Where vine shoots had originally lain directly on the ground, it was in northwestern Campania that they were first supported by wooden poles (falanga). The resulting wine was to become the "immortal Falerno" sung by the great poets of ancient Rome. In the 1950s, following decades of neglect, Francesco Paolo Avallone set out on a mission: bringing this favourite wine of emperors back to life.

In synergy with the University of Naples, his research team found the best surviving vines and patiently grafted cuttings onto new rootstock, working with 20 original clones of Falanghina, Aglianico and Piediroso. Since the estate's first official vintage, in 1976, these exclusive Villa Matilde clones have produced both a red and white Falerno del Massico, direct descendants of those celebrated by Virgil and Horace. Today, Villa Matilde is run by the founder's son and daughter, Salvatore and Maria Ida Avallone, and is divided into four estates. Riccardo Cotarella, southern Italian specialist, is the consulting oenologist.

Tenuta di San Castrese and Parco Nuovo: both located near the coast and within the Falerno DOC zone, Parco Nuovo is mostly sandy soil and particularly suited to Falanghina. San Castrese is a little further inland on volcanic soil rich in potassium and phosphorous.

Rocca dei Leoni: located in Benevento's inland area, on the slopes of Mount Taburno. Here, the old clones of Falanghina and Aglianico are different to the other estates and the quality potential is yet to be fully explored.

Tenuta Altavilla: in the province of Avellino, within the DOCG appellations of Greco di Tufo and Fiano di Avellino, on predominantly tufaceous soil with a high percentage of clay and excellent exposure.

Falanghina IGT

From Rocca dei Leoni. Oak-free, this is elegant, fruity and floral with distinct notes of grapefruit, peach, rose and sage leaves. The palate is fresh and well balanced with a lingering almond finish.

Falerno del Massico Bianco DOC

From San Castrese. Falerno Bianco, Villa Matilde's flagship wine, was first released in 1975. The terrain is volcanic, with abundant phosphorus and potassium. Also oak-free, this shows greater depth and concentration with ripe fruit – pineapple, banana, pear and peach with the distinctive rose and sage notes. The palate is well balanced with loads of personality.

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Falerno del Massico Bianco DOC 'Caracci'

From San Castrese. This cru Falerno is a single vineyard selection from vines planted in 1968, fermented and aged in barriques for 4-5 months. Classic Falanghina notes with multilayered richness; ripe peach, apricot, vanilla, salted caramel and nuts, the palate is round and full with creamed honey notes. Outstanding cellar life of 10+ years.

Aglianico IGT

From Rocca dei Leoni. This is 100% Aglianico, grown in volcanic soil on the steep slopes of Mount Taburno. Fermented solely in stainless steel, the fruit is dark, rich and spicy with velvety tannins.

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