

Olevano Romano, Province of Rome

Established: 2001

Owner: Ciolli family

Winemaker: Damiano & Letizia Ciolli

Production: 16,000 bottles

Hectares under vine: 6

Viticulture: Sustainable



There are two distinct types of Cesanese in Lazio. Cesanese Comune is the more widely grown 'work horse' variety that supplies much of Rome's *vino della casa*. The more superior Cesanese d'Affile is a distinct sub-variety regarded by many as the Pinot Noir of central Italy.

The Ciolli family have been growing Cesanese d'Affile for five generations on their estate, located 45 kilometres southeast of Rome. The young Damiano took over from his father at the age of 23, somewhat dismayed at the poor reputation of his region's wines, yet encouraged by their precious old vines.

The vineyards, some more than 60 years old, are planted at 600 metres on mostly volcanic soil and are sheltered on three sides by the surrounding hills. The warm climate, characterised by rainy winters and sunny summers, with daily breezes from the Tyrrhenian sea create near perfect growing conditions.

Together with partner Letizia Rocchi, they follow every step of production. Biodynamic principles are followed in the vineyard and in the cantina there are no additions apart from a little sulfur. These are beautiful, original wines that balance complexity and drinkability.

Botte Ventidue Vino Bianco

Letizia deserves the credit for creating Ciolli's first white wine, a blend of 70% Trebbiano Verde and 30% Ottonese. The wine is named ventidue (22) after the number of the botte that the wine is made in. Fermented and aged in this botte for 11 months, this is a fascinating white wine that renowned Italian grape expert Ian D'Agata says "is a new Italian star." Golden yellow with notes of honey, ripe yellow fruits and vanilla, this is full flavoured but never heavy, the palate bringing some salty freshness that complements the wine's power. Perhaps the best Italian wine you've never heard of.

Cesanese DOC 'Silene'

Silene, named after a wild flower that grows on the estate, is selected from the two youngest vineyards planted in 1981 and 2002. The grapes are fermented and aged in concrete, the various parcels kept separate until blending. The fruit here is beautifully perfumed with bright red berry, Turkish delight and dried roses, flavours that flow onto the palate with some spice and earthy notes. An original, charming and complex wine that will make you think twice about Cesanese.

Cesanese DOC 'Cirsium'

The name Cirsium is Latin for thistle, depicted on the label. From the oldest low yielding vines planted in 1953, it is aged eighteen months in old barrels followed by extended bottle age. Cirsium shows concentrated cherry liqueur fruit with dried roses, the palate full and rich with silky tannins and great balance.

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