

**Donatella Cinelli Colombini**  
**Brunello di Montalcino DOCG**  
**Tenuta del Casato Prime Donne**  
**2017**

There is a famous phrase by Winston Churchill (statesman and Nobel Prize for Literature 1874-1965) that corresponds to the feeling of the Brunello winemakers in 2017 << not always to change is equivalent to improving, but to improve you have to change>>. In truth, Montalcino is among the wine districts most benefited by climate change and, even in 2017, it was spared from frosts and other climatic disturbances that affected other areas.

However, summer 2017 was scorching also in Brunello land. While the oak woods turned orange in the middle of summer, the grape growers at Casato Prime Donne in Montalcino looked after the Sangiovese vineyards with the hoe helping them to overcome stress. In the end, the organic cultivation, which made the soil softer and more alive, as well as the reduction of the bunches and the management of the canopy to shade, have borne their fruit. Few grapes but very good.

The harvest was a painstaking work. The grapes were harvested by hand dividing the bunches of the two sides of the espaliers. Something slow, artisanal and very demanding both from an organizational and an economic point of view.

But <<to improve you have to change>> and maybe change means going back to the grandparents' systems and recuperating from your memory the old vineyard practices. And here, as in the past, the winemakers first picked the less good grapes and then returned to the same vineyards to take the ones destined for Brunello. The winemakers Barbara Magnani has baptized this system << reverse harvest>>.

The result is an extremely satisfying "Mediterranean" Brunello, with more alcohol and extracts than usual, but with a surprising freshness, an excellent pleasantness and a good persistence.

It will perhaps give its best in the first 10-15 years of life.

In 2017, Brunello Riserva was not produced and the Prime Donne selection was reduced to half of the normal amount. This has allowed us to raise the quality of the classic Brunello di Montalcino.

Casato Prime Donne is a 40-hectare estate on the northern slope of Montalcino. The 17 hectares of Sangiovese vineyards are organically cultivated and certified since 2018. The soil is of Pliocene origin consisting mainly of clays and sea sands.

It is therefore a "cold" soil, which together with the position of the vineyards on the north side, allows slow and gradual ripening of the grapes. The family of the current owner, Donatella Cinelli Colombini, has been cultivating the land at Casato Prime Donne for 400 years.

**TYPE:** dry red.

**PRODUCTION AREA:** Tuscany, Montalcino, Casato Prime Donne

**CLIMATE:** arid winter and spring. Frost at the end of April that just touched the buds but reduced the production of grapes. Hot summer with 10 days in August over 40°C. The first rain came on August 10<sup>TH</sup>. In September the temperatures dropped allowing a gradual ripening of the grapes

**GRAPE VARIETY:** 100% Sangiovese

**GRAPE HARVEST:** From 4th to 14th September, the grapes were harvested by hand with an extreme selection of the bunches. The size of the clusters and berries was very small.

**VINIFICATION:** very delicate vinification of 15 days in truncated cone shaped vats made of bare cement and with the use of yeasts selected at Casato Prime Donne. The maceration has been shortened, compared to usual, for the excellent concentration of extracts already present in the wine.

**MATURATION IN WOOD:** in large barrels and French 5-7hl oak tonneau produced by small artisan workshops, with wood aged for over two years.

**QUANTITY PRODUCED:** 38.000 bottles

**COLOUR:** bright ruby red.

**BOUQUET:** Fine, complex in the precise aromas of flowers, red fruits and especially ripe strawberries together with exotic references such as cedar and sandalwood.

**TASTE:** soft with silky tannins and a nice long finish. The beautiful freshness and structure are perfectly balanced by the richness in taste.

**ANALYSIS:** alcohol 14.50% Vol.; Tot. Ac. 5,4 g/l; Vol. Ac 0,76 mg/l; Extract 33,2 g/l; SO<sup>2</sup> Tot 43 mg/l

**MATCHING DISHES:** very versatile, magnificently

**FOOD PAIRING:** wine for important lunches or dinners, it should be matched with aged cheeses, tasty meats and intense but not fatty foods.

**TABLE SERVICE:** Room temperature (18°C). White crystal goblets with wide cup. It is better to uncork an hour before the service and to decant

**CELLARING:** 15-20 years and over. Replace the cork at our cellars when the level of the wine drops on the shoulder of the bottle. Lay the bottles down in a dark and cold place.



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