



Located in the hills east of Florence, Chianti Rufina is a very small appellation of just 600 hectares (for comparison, Chianti Classico covers a vast 7,000 hectares – virtually the entire zone between Florence and Siena). By reputation the wines are both more refined and more backward than other Chiantis – presumably a function of Rufina’s mix of galestro, limestone and clay soils, higher altitude, proximity to the inland Apennines, and cooler microclimate combining to produce later ripening fruit with higher acidity. For decades Selvapiana’s wines have been as elegant and restrained as any in Chianti, with a great reputation for longevity. No estate in Chianti Rufina is more highly regarded.

The ancient Selvapiana estate covers 245 hectares – 54 hectares of vines surrounded by olive groves and spectacular deciduous forest. The vineyards are situated between 150 – 200 metres above sea level. The older vines are over 40 years old (surprisingly, this is quite old for Tuscany, where the oldest vines are around 70 years old) with a density of 3,200 per hectare; younger vines (from 7 to 22 years old) are planted much more densely – up to 6,200 per hectare.

The estate is owed by Francesco Giuntini and today is run by his adopted children Federico and Silvia Giuntini. The story of their adoption is quite remarkable; Francesco who had no heirs promised estate manager Franco Masseti (who ran the estate from 1953 to 1990) that he would adopt Franco’s children and they would inherit the estate. In 1997 this came into fruition when Federico and Silvia were officially adopted. The brother and sister team continue to work with long time enologist Franco Bernabei to produce brilliant wines from this legendary estate.

Selvapiana’s Chianti Rufina ‘normale’ is always one of Tuscany’s great bargains. It is so full of plums, cherries, leather, tobacco, and herbs that it is almost a caricature of sangiovese - in nothing but a very, very good way – and there is another dimension of ‘juicy minerality’ that takes it to a different level entirely. It is supremely age-worthy.

The Riserva Bucerchiale is a Tuscan classic – a sublime wine, silky and smooth, deep and rich at the same time. It is one of Italy’s great wines, and an almost unbelievable value.

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