

RETROMARCIA



MONTE BERNARDI

Sowing the seed in 2003, Michael Schmelzer, who is American, moved to Italy with his family and purchased 10ha of organic vineyards, in the “belly button of Chianti Classico” at Monte Bernardi. When he planted in 2005 and began farming biodynamically, he did not yet know what it would entail or how difficult it would be, but he did know that conventional vineyards tend to spray when it rains, to help prevent the grapes from rotting, and that these chemicals simply wash off of the vines and into the soil. He decided that if he built from the roots—from the base up—then he would have healthy vines that were less frequently inundated with mold and pests.



And, since the biodynamic principles of Rudolf Steiner’s prescribed farming techniques are over 300 years old, Michael knew that he couldn’t go wrong. “These farming practices are so complete,” he said. “People were poor [when the practices were first initiated]. They didn’t spend time or energy on things that didn’t work, so what’s been passed through the generations is what works.

The Monte Bernardi estate extends over 53 hectares (130 acres), of which 9.5 hectares (23.5 acres) are vineyards of an average age of over 40 years. The vineyards are situated in the hilly, southern most region of Panzano, an area that has been acknowledged as one of the Grand Cru of Chianti Classico, and is considered capable of making wines that can compete with the best in the world. The vines are planted on a soil of a high rock content mixture, which dependent on the vineyard consists of shale (Galestro), marl and limestone (Alberese). The vineyards are perfectly situated - standing at an altitude of 350 meters above sea level, surrounded by forests and enjoying a southern exposure, with the river Pesa flowing just a few hundred meters to the south. These factors contribute to the unique micro-climate of Monte Bernardi.

Varietal/Blend: 100% Sangiovese

Farming: practicing biodynamic

Soil: shale (Galestro), limestone (Alberese) & marl-sandstone (Pietraforte)

Exposure: S

Ave Year Vines Planted: 2005-2010

Yeast: native

Fermentation: fermentation and maceration on skins in a combination of concrete and stainless steel vats over an average of 23 days / natural malolactic fermentation in oak

Aging: 18 months maturation in 2nd and 3rd year Barriques and Tonneaux / at least 3 months in bottle

Alcohol: 13-13.5%

Fined: no

Filtered: no

Production #s: 30,000-40,000 bottles

This wine is a deep ruby red with hints of purple; aromas of black berry, cherry and red plums, anise and spice and orange peel. On the palate it is fresh and fruity, medium-bodied, well balanced with a nice structure, juicy acidity and a long finish.

Country: Italy

Region: Tuscany

Sub Region: Chianti Classico (Panzano in Chianti)

Vineyard: Prime vineyards in the Conca D’Oro

Vineyard Size: 10ha. / 4,000 kilos per ha.