

ON THE WINE TRAIL with Rick Homer and Mary Homer . . . in Chianti, Italy

April 2018, Part 3

We continue our drive through the Chianti region, to the third winery we visit:



AZIENDA AGRICOLA ALTIERO

Via San Cresci 58 – Loc.

Montefioralle

50022 Greve, Chianti Italy

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E-mail: info@altieroinchianti.it

Website: www.altieroinchianti.it

Altiero in Chianti is another smaller family-run winery. Paolo Baldini is the owner and with his wife, Samuela, they run both the agricultural and commercial part of the farm. They are a young couple with two small children. Paolo's parents live across the street and assist with the winery and, from time to time, babysitting!

Altiero is the place where “old” meets “new” . . . meaning that the new generation of this family has returned to the land that belonged to numerous generations before them.

Paolo, after graduating in Agriculture, decided to spend all his passion and energy to produce Chianti Classico using the land that long ago gave his grandparents one of the best wines of the Chianti Classico area. At that time, Paolo was the youngest “vigneron” in Europe.

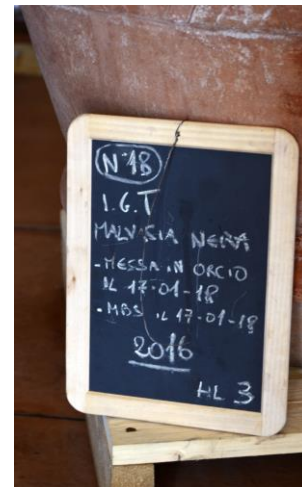
In recent years, Paolo started an experiment . . . reproducing Malvasia Nera, a typical old Tuscan grape that has become very rare. But, according to Paolo, it is one of the flavors of Tuscany that should not be forgotten.

Paolo is in the fields when we arrive, but Samuela happily gives us a tour of their place; explaining the history, the production, the winemaking, and shows us that they are aging wine in terracotta containers. This is the first we have seen on this trip.

The wine in the terracotta containers is Malvasia Nera. They decided they would try something “outside of the box” for these grapes. Samuela, when showing us the terracotta containers themselves had us smell the exterior walls of the terracotta containers . . . the aroma was similar to that of a honeycomb. This aroma is the result from the wine making contact with the terracotta containers.



Amphora (Anfora)





Following our tour, we are invited to enjoy a tasting on their outdoor deck, overlooking the valley. The view is magnificent!

Samuela goes above and beyond anything we have ever experienced with regard to hosting our tasting.

Not only is she generous with the wines but she provides us with platters of fennel salami, boar salami, deer prosciutto, slices of sheep cheese, bread with their own olive oil, and a variety of 8 jams to taste (all handmade by Samuela), bruschetta with tomatoes as well as her bruschetta with pork and stracchino cheese, and, of course, the wines:

A. Altiero Rosé 2017 Price: E 8

Nose: Floral

Palate: Washington Cherry; nice intensity for food

Finish: Medium in length; some complexity; inviting

We both agreed it is worthy of a Bronze Medal

B. Chianti Classico 2015 Price: E 10

Nose: Forest floor, black pepper, well-integrated and complex

Palate: Nose carries to the palate; good body; well-structured tannins

Finish: Medium in length, some complexity, tannic finish invites food

We both agreed it is worthy of a Silver Medal

C. Chianti Classico Riserva 2015 Price: E 20

Nose: Leather, spice, complex, well integrated

Flavour: Nose carries to the palate; ripe mature tannins but needs more time to soften

Finish: Has nice intensity, medium in length, some complexity but tannins tend to dominate

We both agreed it is worthy of a Silver Medal

D. Malvasia Nera 2016 Price: E 50

This wine was in an amphora for 6 months;

Nose: Earthy nose is dominant;

Palate: Good body, smooth on palate; fruit shows on palate;

Finish: Medium to long finish; inviting intensity of fruit balanced with well-structured tannins

Note: Due to our lack of knowledge with this varietal we were unable to assign a medal rating to this wine . . . although we did find it most enjoyable and inviting. A new experience for us!



We were still enjoying ourselves on the deck when Paolo joined us after he finished in the fields for the day. We chat together about wine, Italy, Canada, hunting, etc. We finally tore ourselves away to return to our apartment in Siena.

If you can purchase these wines (or their delicious olive oil) or participate in a tasting of their products, we recommend you do so.

Should you have the opportunity to visit this winery, I am confident it will be memorable!

Grazie mille a Samuela e Paolo per la meravigliosa esperienza e i bei ricordi. Arrivederci!