

C O O N A W A R R A

Australia's *Other* Red Centre

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COONAWARRA CABERNET MASTERCLASS

“Il Viale dei Cipressi”

Celebrating the Outstanding 2006 Cabernet Vintages
of Coonawarra and Bolgheri



at Rymill Coonawarra
Saturday 17th October 2009

Contents

Welcome	1
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Biographies

David Le Mire	2
Bruce Gregory	3

Vintage Summary

2006 Bolgheri Vintage Summary	4
2006 Coonawarra Vintage Summary	5
Climatic Comparisons – Bolgheri & Coonawarra 2005-06	6
Climatic graphs	7-9

Tasting Notes	10 ~ 15
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BOLGHERI WINES

Campo Alla Sughera Arnione 2006	16
Colle Massari Grattamacco Rosso 2006	17
Tenuta di Biserno Il Pino di Biserno 2006	18
Tenuta dell’Ornellaia Ornellaia 2006	19
Podere Sapaio.99 Sapaio 2006	20
Tenuta San Guido Sassicaia 2006	21

COONAWARRA WINES

Balnaves “The Tally” Cabernet Sauvignon 2006	22
Brands Laira “The Patron” Cabernet Sauvignon 2006	23
Leconfield Cabernet Sauvignon 2006	24
Lindemans Pyrus Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot Cab. Franc 2006	25
Majella Cabernet Sauvignon 2006	26
Yalumba “The Menzies” Cabernet Sauvignon 2006	27

Notes

Welcome

Welcome to the Coonawarra Vignerons Masterclass for 2009.

Bolgheri is the home of several of the “Super-Tuscans” and, in a short period of time, has forged for itself an enviable international reputation as a great site for Cabernet Sauvignon and blends.

The 2006 vintage has been recognised as outstanding in both Bolgheri and Coonawarra. We have selected six wines from different houses of Bolgheri and these are highlighted alongside of six Coonawarra wines selected as being amongst the finest for the vintage.

Our panel includes David Le Mire MW who has extensive experience in international wines and Bruce Gregory who brings many years experience as a Coonawarra Winemaker. Pete Bissell, Balnaves Winemaker, is your panel host for the 2009 Masterclass.

Masterclass Committee

Pete Bissell, Matt Caldersmith & Peter Gambetta

Biographies



David LeMire

David LeMire is a wine industry professional with more than 15 years experience in a number of areas, including retail, domestic distribution, export market management, import purchasing, brand management, and education.

Following a two year stint in the UK in 1994 and 1995, spent working in retail, wine writing, and successfully undertaking the WSET Diploma in Wines and Spirits, LeMire returned to Australia and began a sales role with Negotiants Australia based in Melbourne.

In July 2000 the opportunity arose to take on management of Negotiants Australia's prestigious and wide-ranging portfolio of imported wines, which includes some of the world's most regarded fine wine producers.

David's role also involved running the Negotiants Australia Working with Wine programme, which provides fine wine education to the retail and on-premise trade in Australia.

Between 2003 and 2007, in addition to his work at Negotiants, he studied for the Master of Wine qualification, and in September 2007 became a member of the Institute of Masters of Wine.

In July 2007, LeMire started his own business, Pronto Vino, providing brand management advice and services to winery clients, and wine education services to the trade and the public. He is also a regular contributor to the Australian Wine Business Magazine, and a wine show judge.



Cabernet Sauvignon 2006

2006 Vintage

The 2005-06 growing season at Coonawarra was very favourable with good rains filling the soils during winter and weather conditions allowing the vines to set a low to moderate crop of grapes. The lack of any heat spikes in February, combined with cool nights meant that the vines, under no stress, accumulated sugars quickly while retaining natural acid. Although low crops were set and the harvest early, Vintage 2006 has provided ripe grapes with full colour, lots of flavour and tannin balance.

Menzies is made by small lot winemaking maintaining the integrity of each harvest parcel throughout vinification and maturation. The grapes are crushed to small static fermenters and the liberation of colour and tannin is controlled either by plunging the skins, irrigating the fermented wine over the cap or draining all the wine from the skins then flooding it back. Selected parcels were given extended skin contact before pressing. The majority of the oak the wine is matured in are French oak barriques although for this year some well seasoned new American oak hogheads were included. Once the bottling blend was finalised, the wine was given a further six months in oak to harmonise.

Grapes

Cabernet Sauvignon 100%.

Region

Coonawarra

Technical

14.8% ALC, 6.7 g/L TA, 3.44 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note

The colour displays deep red with crimson shades as the glass is tilted. The nose is powerful cool-climate Cabernet Sauvignon with notes of dark cherry, violets with a hint of sea-spray. The Menzies displays savoury nuances of pimento, cedar and briar which will evolve as this wine matures. The early fruit flavours and sweetness are quickly joined with substantial grainy tannins giving this wine length and presence. This Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon is a pleasure to drink now though it has been made for the long haul and will cellar excellently.



Cabernet Sauvignon 2006

2006 Vintage Coonawarra experienced an excellent vintage in 2006, with cool nights, warm days and no rain though the harvest period.

When selecting fruit for the Majella Cabernet, we want ripe, physiologically mature fruit, with parcels coming from vineyards planted between the years 1971 to 1989. These vineyards include some cloned vines but the majority are selected cuttings from better producing vineyards within Coonawarra.

The Majella 55 hectare vineyard is situated on the eastern side of Coonawarra on soils of 'terra rossa' over limestone and transitional soil over limestone, giving a picking advantage of gradual maturity. All vineyards have a single wire trellis system and are mechanically hedge pruned and harvested. Rows run both north south and east west with supplementary drip irrigation given. The ability to reach maturity 7 to 10 days earlier on varying soil types can be an advantage in cooler years.

Grapes Cabernet Sauvignon 100%.

Region Coonawarra

Technical 14.5% ALC, 3.49 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note Dark red - almost black in colour, the nose leaps out exhibiting a very complex nose with hints of black fruits, blue fruits and violets. This complexity carries over to the palate, rich, juicy and ribena-like, with plums and fruitcake characters showing through. The finish is long and lingering with wonderful 'soft grain' tannins.



Bruce Gregory

Bruce's passion for Coonawarra has seen him residing in the district for more than twenty years. For the past ten years he has been the winemaker for Majella Wines and developed the cellar style that has made Majella Wines so successful. Through Bruce's meticulous and careful winemaking, Majella has had an unprecedented run of wine show success, winning both national and international acclaim, trophies and awards, including Best Australian Red Wine at the International Wine Challenge in London 2008.

Prior to his appointment at Majella, Bruce was a winemaker for Brands Laira Wines where in 1991 the first Majella vintage was made. Before moving to Coonawarra, Bruce originated from the Barossa Valley where his career within the wine industry commenced at Peter Lehmann Wines, then Woodley Wines and Penfolds Wines working in various capacities within the wineries. He then went on to further his craft at Kies Estate as Assistant Winemaker.

Bruce is a keen supporter of the wine show system and has judged at Barossa, Rutherglen & Limestone Coast Wine Shows and has been on the Winestate tasting panel on numerous occasions. He was a founding committee member of the Limestone Coast Wine Show and has been involved in the Coonawarra Cabernet Celebration Barrel Series for a number of years.

2006 Bolgheri Vintage Summary

2006 is without doubt a fascinating vintage for Bolgheri. There are several notable aspects:

- Firstly, it was a vintage of drought, in which the vines had to cope through summer with virtually no rain at all.
- Secondly, despite it being dry, it was not excessively hot.
- Thirdly, a big fall of rain in mid-September refreshed the Cabernets in particular, and relieved the stress of the vines.

One of the effects of these conditions is the small size of the crop. The dry conditions meant that bunch and berry sizes were down, concentration was up, and the skin to juice ratio was high. This meant that careful management of the musts was crucial, to achieve balance, and avoid over-extraction. Another interesting outcome is that, like Bordeaux in 2005, it was a vintage of drought but not excessive heat (in contrast to 2003, where heat was excessive). The 'drought but not heat' conditions allowed ripening to progress without the vines shutting down, and also preserved aromatics and freshness of flavour. It is also important to note that the winter of 2006 in Bolgheri was cold and wet, and this also meant the vineyards were better placed to handle the extended dry period. One of the interesting aspects of a vintage with the potential for high tannin levels that could overwhelm the fruit, is that the winemakers of Tuscany are particularly adept at handling extraction, for reasons that I will elaborate on in the seminar. This makes this tasting of these 2006 wines from Bolgheri particularly interesting.

David LeMire MW
pronto vino pty ltd



Pyrus 2006

2006 Vintage	Dry winter with warm temperatures in spring and early summer resulted in favourable flowering conditions. Warm summer temperatures and low yields resulted in the earliest start to vintage ever and a compact vintage.
Grapes	Cabernet Sauvignon 71%, Cabernet Franc 16%, Merlot 13%.
Region	Coonawarra
Technical	14.2% ALC, 6.5 g/L TA, 3.57 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note	Deep red colour. A complex nose of blackberry, tobacco, mint and earthiness. The palate has intense juicy blackberry fruit in a medium to full bodied style, with spicy earthy characters coming from the varietal mix. The wine is framed by sweet, supple, chocolaty tannins which persist with the berry fruit on the long finish.
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Cabernet Sauvignon 2006

2006 Vintage	<p>2006 was another excellent vintage for Coonawarra with great consistency across all varieties. A late autumn break was followed by a warm spring, resulting in early budburst, flowering, veraison and harvest. Small berry size produced below average yields but heightened the intense fruit characters and flavours combined with ripe soft tannins. A year that will be remembered as slightly earlier than the long term average, compact and trouble-free.</p> <p>Harvest occurred over a relatively short period from the 28th March to the 10th April. The yields from 2006 vintage were quite low with an average of 5 tonnes/ha. Extended skin maceration on the majority of this wine contributed to the structure. Maturation in a blend of new and used hogsheads with several workings was used to soften the tannins and fill-out the flavour.</p>
Grapes	Cabernet Sauvignon 96%, Cabernet Franc 4%.
Region	Coonawarra
Technical	14.8% ALC, 6.79 g/L TA, 3.47 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note	<p>Colour: Full rich dense red.</p> <p>Bouquet: Full and ripe, the 2006 displays everything that a classic Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon should display - intense cassis fruit, augmented with fine cedar and cinnamon nuances from predominantly French oak.</p> <p>Palate: The palate displays an excellent depth of rich dark berry fruit with ripe, long tannins that stand to mature the wine well into the next decade.</p>
Food Matching	This wine will best match full flavoured meals, such as tender beef, or full flavoured game.

2006 Coonawarra Vintage Summary

2006 was another excellent vintage for Coonawarra with great consistency across all varieties. Although it was an early start to vintage, conditions were favourable throughout producing wines with deep colours and great varietal intensity.

A late autumn break was followed by average winter rainfall and a warm spring, resulting in early budburst and excellent shoot growth. The frost season was uneventful due to earlier flowering however cooler conditions towards the end of flowering did inhibit fruit set in some vineyards. Small berry size produced below average yields but heightened the intense fruit characters and flavours combined with soft ripe tannins. A warm to hot summer with favourable rainfall events throughout encouraged steady vine growth and balance, resulting in early ripening. Disease conditions were kept minimal with little impact.

Cabernet Sauvignon was of exceptional quality with solid tannin structure and pH and acidity balance near ideal. Merlot enjoyed the seasonal conditions and the modest cropping levels resulted in soft perfume flavours and generous ripe tannins, albeit with slightly higher alcohols than normally expected. Shiraz also performed well with generous ripe tannins underlying spicy elements that are achieved in high quality fruit.

A very pleasing vintage with deep colours and great varietal intensity.

Climatic Comparisons

– Bolgheri & Coonawarra 2005/06

The over arching message from both regions was the warmth of the growing season with low to average rainfall during the main part of the season and then articulated by a large rainfall event near the end of the season and a cooler finish that extended the cabernet ripening in both regions.

Coonawarra's season began with average maximums and warmer than normal minimums. This combined with the good soil moisture from average winter rains led to an even budburst and strong early shoot development. Coonawarra's summer was warmer than normal with maximum up by an average of 1-2°C through November, December and January. The temperatures dropped in February with a large rainfall event pre harvest giving the vines a good lift. Harvest was brought forward by the mild weather and a warmer than average March (3°C up) starting on the 20th March for the Merlot and then the 27th for the Cabernet. The cool weather at the end of March and start of April lead to a long slow finish for the Cabernet wrapping up on the 24th April.

Bolgheri's season was similar with good winter rainfalls and a warmer than average spring (April being 4°C above long term averages), leading to strong early shoot development. It is understood that flowering was delayed by a week on normal with a very dry summer period more similar to summer 2006/07 or 2008/09 in Coonawarra, with the months of June July and August seeing very little rainfall at all (down 152mm on historic norms). The warm maximum temperatures continued through summer, very similar to Coonawarra's maximum average temperatures. Bolgheri's minimum temperatures got a lot warmer at 14-18°C over the summer months, compared to Coonawarra's at 10-13°C. This brought harvest on early for the Merlots, about half way through though a massive rain storm hit over 1.5 days dropping 200mm on the area. Similar to Coonawarra it did not swell the grapes but rather lifted the canopies and hastened ripening. The Cabernets were harvested through the end of September and into October, with most producers finished by the 2nd week in October. The real defining difference for Bolgheri was two fold in the dry summer with late rains and then the warmer than average nights consistently through the year.

By Daniel Newson – The Yalumba Wine Company



“The Patron” 2006

2006 Vintage

Average winter rainfall and warm spring conditions resulted in an early budburst and excellent shoot growth. A warm to hot summer with favourable rainfall events throughout encouraged steady vine growth and balance resulting in early ripening. Small berry size led to below average yields but also produced a crop with intense fruit characters. Altogether vintage 2006 was very satisfying, producing fruit displaying excellent varietal flavours.

The fruit for this wine was sourced primarily from our ‘Old Cabernet Block’ on the Laira vineyard adjacent to Coonawarra township on classic Terra Rossa soil with the balance coming from selected parcels located on the Kirkgate vineyard.

The wine components were fermented on skins in submerged cap stainless steel fermenters for a period of seven days with pumping over twice a day to ensure maximum extraction of flavour and colour. The wine was then pressed off skins while still slightly sweet and pumped to new fine grained French oak barrique and hogshead barrels to complete primary and malolactic (MLF) fermentation. On completion of fermentation the wine was racked off lees for clarification and siphoned back into the same barrels for maturation. During the first six months of barrel maturation the wine was racked barrel to barrel by hand a further two times to achieve the required wine clarity and assist in wine development. Total maturation time in oak was 22 months.

Grapes

Cabernet Sauvignon 92%, Merlot 8%.

Region

Coonawarra

Technical

14.5% ALC, 7.4 g/L TA, 3.36 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note

Colour: Deep crimson red.

Bouquet: A vibrant nose displaying a rich mix of dark fruits – blackberry, mulberry and cassis with some traditional minty notes backed by cedar, mocha and vanilla derived from barrel fermentation and maturation.

Palate: The rich and complex fruit driven palate displays sweet dense dark berry fruit characters and some choc-mint notes. These flavours are seamlessly integrated with vanilla and mocha oak and flow through to a long fine silky tannin finish.



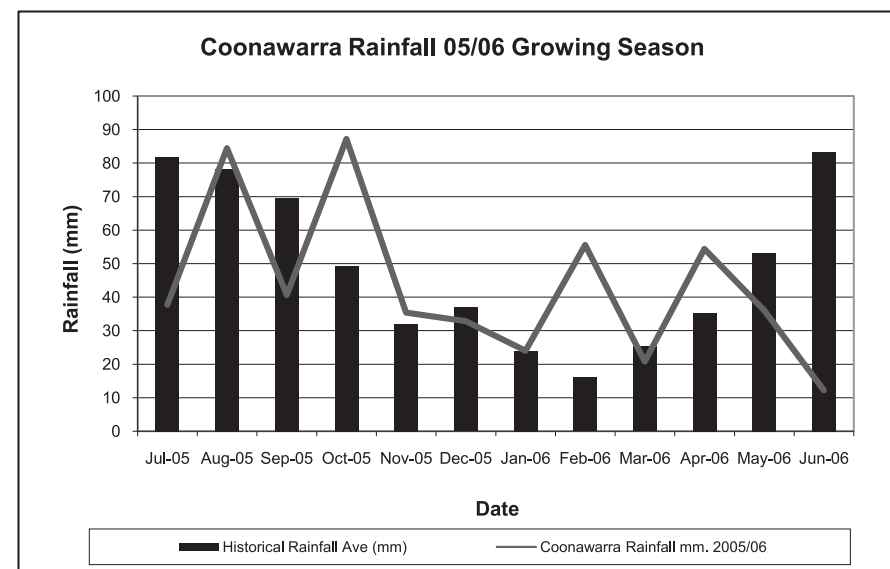
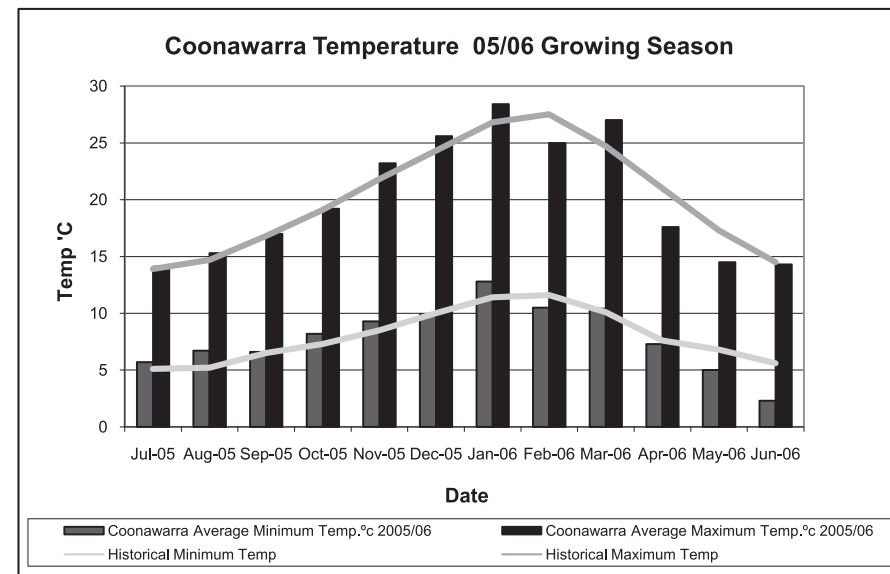
“The Tally” 2006

2006 Vintage	Vintage 2006 was warm, dry and early. Fruit was taken from our Dead Morris vineyard (66%) and Walker vineyards (34%) with 64% receiving a long maceration on skins. Maturation was for 20 months in new fine-grained barrels from Seguin Moreau, Sylvain, Saury and St Martin cooperages, before light egg fining and bottling in March 2008 under Procork.
Grapes	100% Cabernet Sauvignon.
Region	Coonawarra
Technical	15.0% ALC, 8.08 g/L TA, 3.41 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note	Deep rich red in colour, the nose shows fine charry vanillin oak with rich dark berry blackcurrant and blackberry fruit, with a perfumed violet note. The palate is rich and round with black liquorice fruit flavours and a finer tannin structure characteristic of the 2006 vintage. As with all releases of the Tally, it is the harmony and balance of this wine which are its outstanding features. Decant before drinking.
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Climatic Graphs





SASSICAIA

Sassicaia 2006

2006 Vintage

Tenuta San Guido cultivates fruit from several plots scattered around Bolgheri extending 75 hectares (190 acres). The annual production of Sassicaia is approximately 180,000 bottles.

In the very northeast of the region there are vines at Castiglioncello, Doccino and Quercione, at an altitude of between 200m and 300m. There are plots at San Marino and Mandrioli, and then Aianova and the Sassicaia - Italian for "place of many stones", with an altitude of 80m. This area has predominantly gravelly and chalky soils, similar to those of Graves in Bordeaux, and is just north of the Mediterranean Sea planted to 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Cabernet Franc, with an average vine age of 30 years.

Grapes

85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Cabernet Franc.

Appellation

Bolgheri Rosso Superiore D.O.C.

Technical

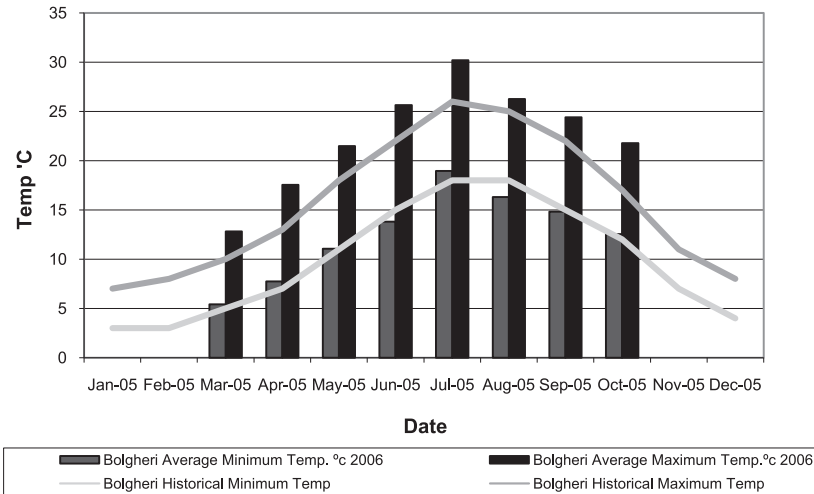
14.5% ALC

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

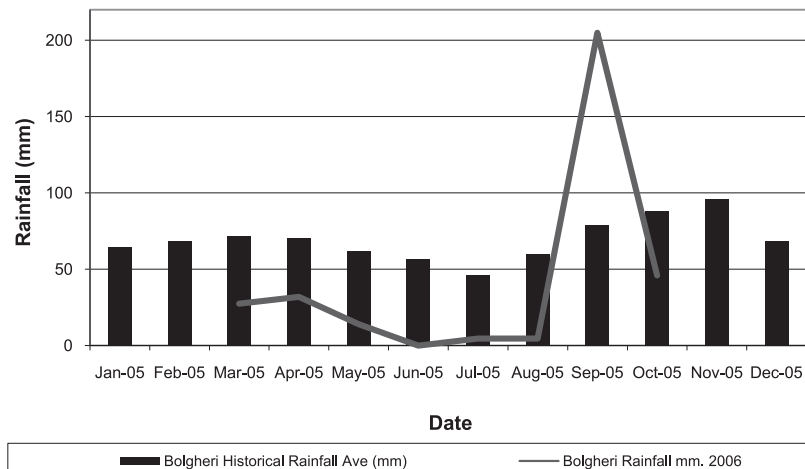
Tasting Note

Sassicaia has an intense, concentrated and deep ruby colour. The elegant aroma is complex with notes of red fruits. The flavour is powerful, concentrated and has great depth with sweet and balanced tannins. In the mouth it is rich and dense, yet harmonious and elegant. The wine has a decisively long finish with significant organoleptic depth and a polyphenolic structure which ensures this wines extraordinary longevity.

Bolgheri Temperature 2006 Growing Season



Bolgheri Rainfall 2006 Growing Season



Sapaio 2006

2006 Vintage

Grapes 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc,
 10% Merlot, 10% Petit Verdot

Appellation Bolgheri DOC Superiore

Technical 14.8% ALC, 5.7 g/L TA, 3.63 pH

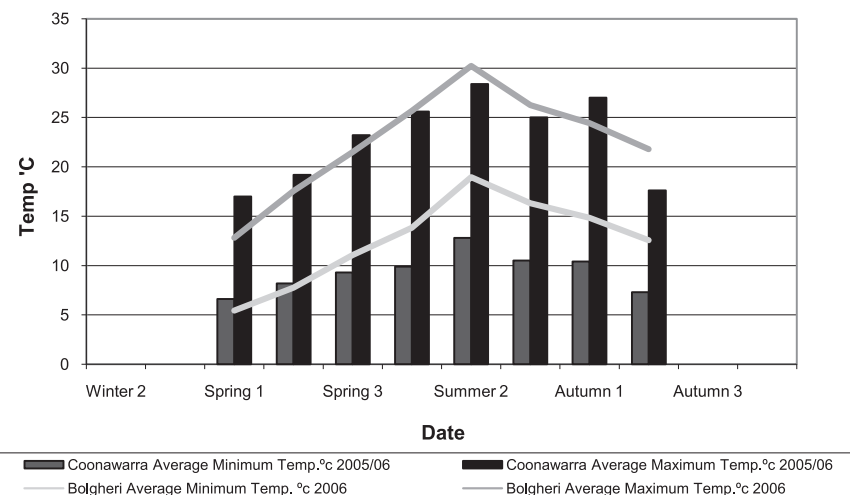
WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Philosophy The estate of Podere Sapaio was founded in 1999. The 40 hectares that belong to the company are divided among the municipal areas of Castagneto, Carducci and Bibbona.

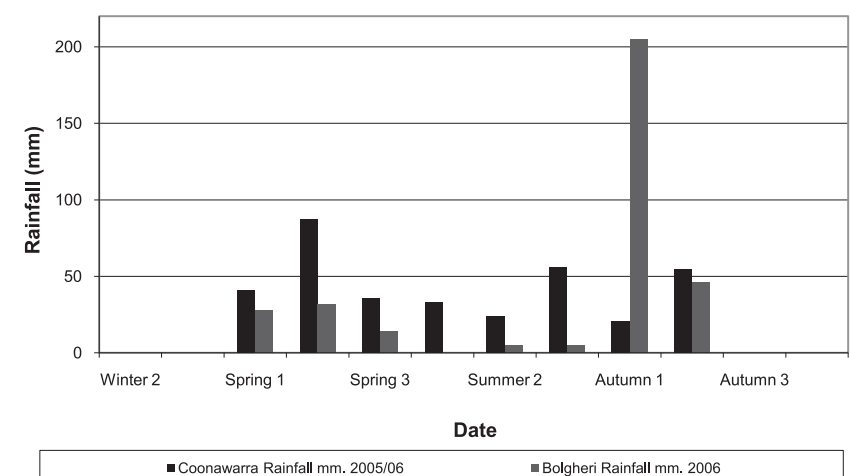
The vineyards are situated on quaternary deposits, ranging from rough loose sandy beds to flood deposits with draining calcareous soils, and are planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot. There are also other smaller amounts of other varieties such as Petit verdot. The company also owns a few hectares of olive groves, with the Frantoiano, Moraiolo and Leccino varieties.

The philosophy of Podere Sapaio is to experiment and innovate whilst searching for new expressions of Bordelaise vines in Bolgheri, and to produce wines that are strong, elegant and long lasting at the same time. The names Sapaio and Volpolo come from two ancient Tuscany vines. They were chosen to exalt the local origins of the product beginning with their names. The crown on the trademark for the Podere Sapaio is a tribute to the nobility of the wines and the land, which said to be respected in the work that is carried out in the vineyard and in the cellar. The two wines are produced under the consultancy of Carlo Ferrini, an internationally renowned wine expert. Both wines are Cabernet Sauvignon blends, resulting from a mix of different parcels of fruit, from within the vineyard.. They interpret the characteristics of the year in two different ways. Sapaio, a Bolgheri DOC Superiore, requires 18 months of aging in barrique and 8-10 months of refining in the bottle before entering the market. Volpolo spends 14 months in barrique and 6 months in the bottle.

Comparative Temperature 2006 Growing Season



Comparative Rainfall 2006 Growing Season



Tasting Notes

Wine 1

Wine 2



TENUTA DELL'ORNELLAIA
BOLGHERI

Ornellaia 2006

2006 Vintage

The 2006 growing season was marked by rainy winter and by warm spring days, which extended the bloom period well beyond the first week of June. April through August saw practically no rain at all, which resulted in the vines' producing clusters somewhat smaller than the norm. A not overly-hot summer allowed the vines to develop fine aromatic components and a good crop. Excellent weather during the ripening period, combined with the smaller size of the berries, produced fruit with exceptional concentration. The start of harvest witnessed wonderfully sound, ripe fruit, with good concentration.

Selecting only the best quality fruit in the vineyards, the clusters were carefully hand-picked into small, 15-kg boxes and transported to the winery where a second quality selection was carried out on a double sorting table, both before and after the grapes were de-stemmed. The grapes were then given a gentle pressing, and each separate grape variety and each vineyard block was fermented separately, for a total of 66 different base wines. The wines remained in barriques for 18 months in Tenuta dell'Ornellaia's temperature controlled cellars. After 12 months, the final blend was assembled from the base wines, and underwent six months of further ageing in barriques. The wine was then aged for 12 months in the bottle before release.

Grapes

56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot,
12% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot

Appellation

Bolgheri DOC Superiore

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note

The main characteristic of Ornellaia 2006 is without a doubt its lush depth and 'exuberance' ("L'Esuberanza"). Here is a powerful, concentrated wine whose intensity is immediately obvious. Its complex, rich bouquet is complemented by sweet, dense-packed tannins and a lively acidity, and all of its components are in admirable harmony creating a very elegant wine.



Il Pino di Biserno 2006

2006 Vintage Characterized by normal or average temperatures, a wet winter was followed by a dry spring and summer with excellent conditions for flowering and ripening. Harvest began in early September with Merlot and Cabernet Franc picked first. After an interlude of rain in mid-September good weather returned and the vineyards dried quickly, creating ideal conditions for finishing harvest in early October when the Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot were picked.

Grapes are sorted on a vibrating belt in the cellar, de-stemmed and soft-crushed. Fermentation takes place in stainless-steel tanks for three to four weeks at 50 degrees. Malolactic fermentation was divided evenly between French oak barrels and stainless-steel tanks.

Grapes Cabernet Franc 35%, Cabernet Sauvignon 32%, Merlot 25%, Petit Verdot 8%

Classification Indicazione Geografica Tipica di Toscana

Technical 14.5% ALC, 4.8 g/L TA, 3.57 pH

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note Intense, bright ruby hues. The nose opens with a clear-cut aroma of ripe soft fruit, which is perfectly offset by spicy notes and continues with a hint of eucalyptus as it evolves in the glass. The wine has excellent balance, with fine, ripe tannins and fruit, providing a harmonious mid-palate and elegant, long finish. It can be enjoyed young or cellared from five to seven years.

Tasting Notes

Wine 3

Wine 4

Tasting Notes

Wine 5

Wine 6



Grattamacco Rosso 2006

2006 Vintage	<p>A wine produced from a vineyard of 10 hectares at 100 m asl, where the soil is characterized by calcareous sandstone, marl and calcareous flysch mixed to clay and calcareous clay, while the climate is of a temperate Mediterranean type.</p> <p>There are 4500 to 6000 vines per hectare with a yield of about 6 tons of grapes per hectare. Vines are trained to Cordone speronato and Guyot. Harvesting is done manually. The average age of the vines is 20 years.</p> <p>Vinification in open truncated cone-shaped oak vats for the alcoholic fermentation. Malolactic fermentation in barrique. Ages for 18 months in barrique, in first and second passage. Bottle refinement 12 months minimum.</p>
Grapes	65 % Cabernet sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 15% Sangiovese
Appellation	Bolgheri Rosso Superiore D.O.C.
Technical	13.5% ALC

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note	<p>Intense and well outlined nose, very refined: evolving with black berries, together with clear balsamic and Mediterranean traces. Perfectly integrated oak with spicy sweet notes and an elegant boisé in the finish. Enters the mouth austere and fresh, evolving in a good balance between the mineral traces and the fine tannic notes. Good length, with more complex notes of tobacco. Important and complex, with a character strongly linked to its land of origin.</p>
Food Matching	<p>Goes well with game, as e.g. local preparations of wild boar, roast, braised and stewed red meats, medium aged cheese.</p>

ARNIONE 2006

2006 Vintage	<p>2006 was an exceptional year, one of the company's best. The grapes enjoyed optimum climatic conditions, which are particularly favourable in the period from véraison to ripening, and produced a full harvest with thick skins, rich in desirable elements.</p> <p>The height of the wine cellar is exploited, making the most of gravity to move the grapes, must and wines. After de-stemming and soft crushing, the grapes are fermented and macerated in steel tanks for approximately 12/15 days at a temperature not exceeding 30°C. Following this, the wine is decanted into barrels for malolactic fermentation.</p>
Grapes	<p>Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot.</p> <p>The grapes are sourced exclusively from the vineyards of the Campo alla Sughera agricultural company situated in the heart of the Bolgheri denominazione di origine area.</p>
Appellation	Bolgheri Rosso Superiore D.O.C.
Technical	14.5% ALC

WINEMAKERS COMMENTS

Tasting Note	<p>Colour: intense ruby red, with garnet highlights.</p> <p>Fragrance: subtle, full and sophisticated. The wine has notes of mature dark fruit (blackberry, plum, cassis), shades of sweet tobacco and spices, all of which blend together perfectly.</p> <p>Taste: well-balanced, soft and elegant, with a persistent finish.</p>
Food Matching	<p>Game, grilled meat, seasonal cheese, large platters of creative Tuscan cuisine such as crêpes with pecorino cheese and mushroom fondue, wild boar with blueberries, cinto senese prosciutto with glazed black cabbage.</p>

Tasting Notes

Wine 7

Wine 8

Tasting Notes

Wine 9

Wine 10

Tasting Notes

Wine 11

Wine 12
