

# Bartales

## Best of

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SUPPLEMENT OF BARTALES



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ZOOM / METODO CLASSICO  
**BUBBLY FROM MAREMMA**



EVENT / MIELEMENTE  
**A WORLD OF HONEY**

# BUBBLY FROM MAREMMA

## In Tuscany, an impassioned challenge starts from Sangiovese

BY VALENTINA RIZZI

Over the last 10 years, many Italian regions have started experimenting with bubbly as an addition to their companies' product portfolios. Among the regions following this sparkling wine trend is Tuscany, a red-wine region, that over the last five years has started experimenting with its indigenous grapes to produce bubbly. Some attempts have turned out well, others less so, but what they all have in

common is the desire to go beyond the classic grape varieties in an attempt to enhance their terroir. The only rule that must be adhered to is that they are produced using the *Metodo Classico* (i.e. the traditional method).

Having abandoned the use of international grapes for its bubbly, the Tuscany region decided that to enhance its own area, it would need to use indigenous grapes such as Sangiovese as much as







**PRODUCERS**

THE FERTUNA  
ESTATE IN THE  
TUSCAN  
MAREMMA  
AREA.

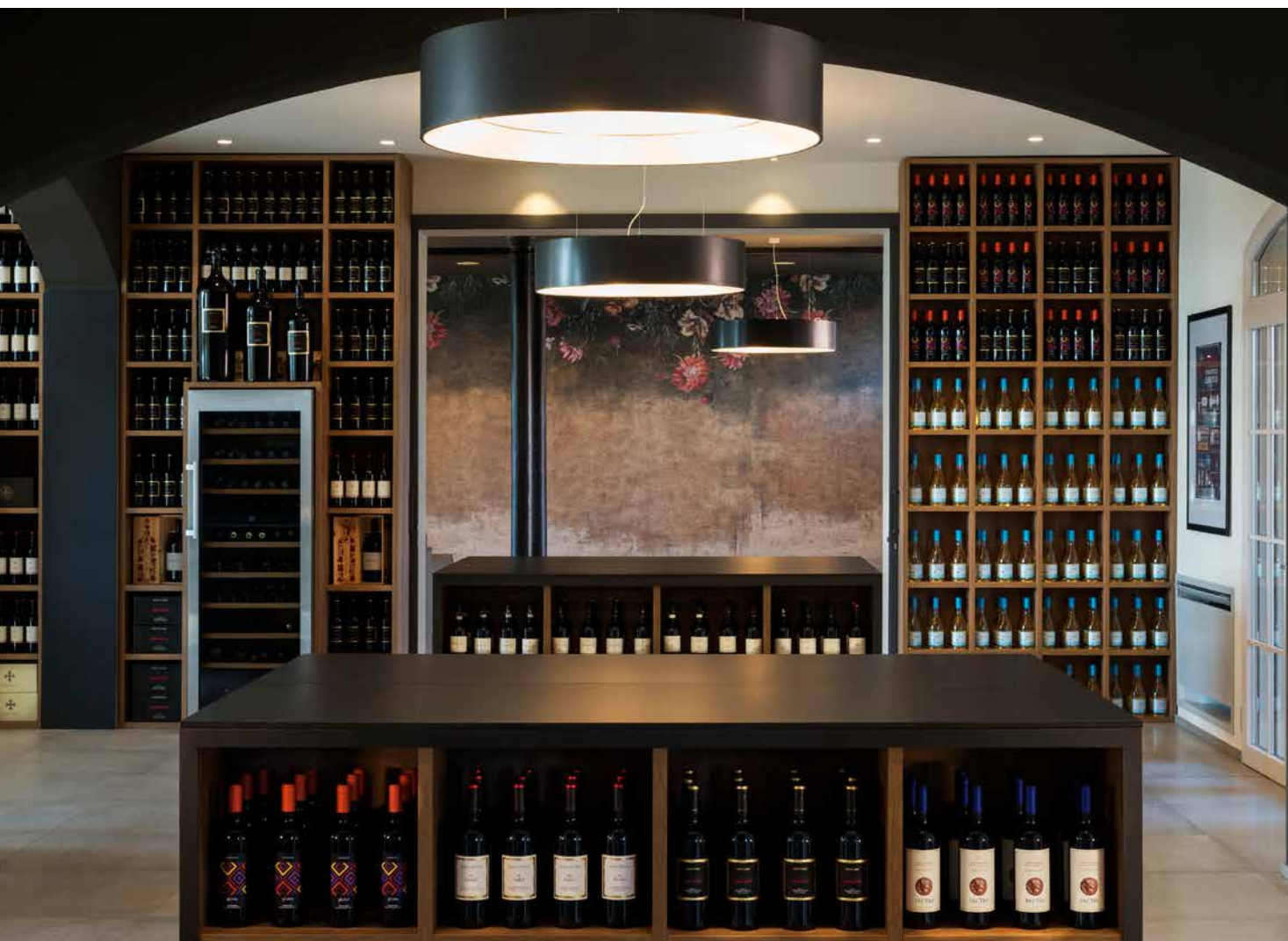
possible. Quite the challenge, because those same grapes have always been used to produce white wines or still red wines.

The journey to discover these bubbly starts in the heart of the Tuscan Maremma, where the Fertuna estate was born in 1997 in Gavorrano in the province of Grosseto. The estate spreads over a region that is highly suited to wine growing, where the composition of the soil is fundamental to the uniqueness of the wines produced.

The soil of the Tuscan Maremma is rich with Galestro (schistose rock) and

Albarese (limestone substrate) soil types. The fertile and uncontaminated nature, the Mediterranean micro-climate with a strong marine influence and a good day/night temperature range makes this terroir the ideal place for wine farming.

Thanks to its particular composition, the last decade has seen various investment and sector interventions made with the sole aim of improving the wine making and viticulture sector. The first and most important was planting the more renowned international grapes alongside the Sangiovese. These grapes will give the Maremma region a completely new



expression of great character.

The Fertuna estate is spread over 145 hectares, of which only 50 have vines. The first vineyards were planted in the year it was founded and still today they deliver interesting results. The planted plots all have their own identity. From the first year, the estate has been dedicated to researching its own terroir because not all plots are suited to all grape varieties – every variety needs a specific soil type. Careful manual harvesting twice a year, once when the grapes are still green and then again when ripe, allows for best harvest quality, a small detail that has made these wines special.

In the cellar, functionality and hyper

technology, combined with a project aimed at high environmental sustainability, are the business guidelines and form the basis of every vineyard planted. Tradition and modernity combine with perfection. The vinification and fermentation of the various plots take place in temperature-controlled stainless-steel vats with a programmed pumping over system. Ageing and maturation of the various wines takes place in the barrel cellar, in bariques and tonneaux from Allier – a bona fide recipe for success.

The *metodo classico* of the Fertuna estate comes from the curiosity to discover every possible detail of the Sangiovese. Making white wine was the first step in





finding a new identity for Sangiovese and now the second is adding the bubbles. A difficult project for the indigenous Tuscan grape that however has been able to provide noteworthy results.

After the Sangiovese is harvested, strictly by hand, whole bunches are gently pressed, followed by a natural process of decanting and then alcoholic fermentation to create the 10% alcohol content which forms the base and structure of the wine

used in the spumante. Half of the mass is then aged in Allier barriques for 6 months. Assemblage then takes place, followed by effervescence and then a second fermentation follows.

After fermentation in the bottle, the spumante remains on lees for a minimum of 36 months before proceeding with *remuage* and disgorgement. And so, the Tuscan bubbly from the Fertuna estate is born, a sparkling wine with a straw-yellow colour and fine *perlage*. On the nose the bouquet is complex: white flowers and delicate hints of white fruits as well as light toasted hints in the background blend with each other. When sipping, freshness combines with acidity, which give the finish hints of honey and bread crust. It is certainly a structured and elegant wine.

The Fertuna estate guarantees quality, reliability and concreteness.

Next to a large cellar, the Sanoner estate was born in 2009 from a family that





**PRODUCERS**  
THE SANONER  
ESTATE.



fell in love with the beautiful terroir that is the Val d'Orcia. It is a young business, born from the love of two hoteliers for Tuscany. Harmonious, enveloping and intense are the three words that they themselves have chosen to describe their business. It was in 2007 when, after 200 years and 6 generations of hoteliers, the Sanoner family and some partners gave life to the new project. In 2009 they planted the first hectare. They immediately adopted organic and biodynamic farming, an approach they have never vacillated from over time. They are aware and proud of the fact that they are just one link in the chain, a small cog in the mysterious cycles of nature.

Only a few hectares have been planted,



**PRODUCERS**

THE SANONER  
FAMILY. AT THE  
TOP, THE  
CELLAR.



suspended between the medieval rock of Vignoni Alto and the valley of the Orcia river, nestled on the gentle hills of Bagno Vignoni. Fewer than 5,000 bottles of wine are produced per label, with a considerable fondness for the various expressions of the main grape variety of the region,

the Sangiovese.

Its latest creation is “Aetos”, one could say an innovative interpretation of the famous grape. This *metodo classico* is produced with 90% Sangiovese grapes and 10% Chardonnay. All grapes are harvested by hand and early on, a





decision made to preserve its acidity and aromatic profile as much as possible. After harvesting, the grapes are pressed in whole bunches, the first fermentation taking place in steel and the second in the bottle, followed by ageing in the latter for 24 months. Fewer than 2,500 bottles are produced every year for this label. The result is a spumante that is smooth and complex at the same time, with perfectly amalgamated tannins that provide structure, without overdoing the aromatic and fruity richness.

A beautiful and young discovery that will provide renewed satisfaction through the years.

It is wonderful to see how wine making and the wine world have evolved and changed according to various needs over the years. Some out of passion, others curiosity, and still others out of real commercial needs. All with the aim of always providing the best. Historically the areas suited to bubbly are others, but thanks to new technology, this does not exclude the rest of Italy from having its say.

I always find it inspiring and exciting discovering new wineries, new families and new stories. Because a wine may be the best in the world, but without a story behind it, it is nothing.

