

## Abbadia Ardenga – Rosso di Montalcino

- Offers hallmark Montosoli structure with cranberry, tart cherry, tomato leaf and spice
  - Ancient site of Medieval monastery, summer retreat of Pope Pius II
  - Great pairing with lamb and white bean stew and Amatriciana rigatoni

### The Producer

In the glamorous world of Montalcino, home of Italy's iconic Brunello wines, it is rare to find a wine that combines tradition, history, quality, prime location and value. Abbadia Ardenga is such a property and we are honored to introduce it to the California market.

The estate is located in the cool rolling hills just North of the town of Montalcino. Nearby neighbors include Caparzo's famed La Casa, Altesino's Montesoli and Livio Sassetti's Pertimali. The vineyards surround an ancient 11th Century monastery which was once the summer retreat of Pope Pius II. Long before Biondi-Santi coined the term Brunello to describe the local Sangiovese, the wines from the Ardenga area were among the favorites of the Pope.

In addition to the 10ha of vineyards the Ciacci's manage 150ha of woodland and 300ha of arable land. Two hectares of Brunello vines were planted in 1967 while another 2 are over 20 years old, the remaining 6ha go into the Rosso and IGT wines with 2 newer hectares planted 3 years ago not making it into production yet.

The property has been managed by the Ciacci family since the '60s with Mario Ciacci being a founding member and former director of the Brunello Consorzio. He remains one of the leading resources regarding the Terroir of Montalcino. Current manager Paolo Ciacci has studied in Bordeaux and brings this experience to make improvements in farming and winemaking. Paolo is using organic and biodynamic farming to improve the quality of the vineyards. He has also modernized winemaking equipment, but he still employs traditional techniques and large oak cask aging using minimal sulphur. The Ciacci's stewardship has showed increased attention to doing what's best for the vineyard, which is reflecting itself in the wines.

The estate is gaining acclaim worldwide — evidenced by increasing media attention and ratings that put them on the same level with much more expensive and well-known Brunellos. As Stephen Tanzer puts it, "Ardenga has become an excellent source for well made Brunellos that cost a fraction of some of the most famous names of the Denomination."

Perhaps inspired by the Ecclesiastic roots of the domaine, Abbazia Ardenga is still managed as a non-profit entity, the only one in the region. Profits are returned to development of the property and are given out as scholarships for many causes. This allows decisions to be made with the long view rather than short-term rewards.

### The Wine

Located in the Torre Delle region of Montalcino, this centuries-old estate produces delightful wines at outstanding values. One of the highest plots of the estate vineyard is the source for the Sangiovese used to make the Rosso. It gets full southern exposure, optimizing potential for full and juicy ripeness. Farming is mainly organic with some biodynamic treatments. Paolo Ciacci makes the wines in a traditional style with modern equipment. After a gentle fermentation, the wine ages for 4 months in large neutral Slavonian oak casks and 8 months in the bottle before release. This is a fantastic Sangiovese that you don't have to wait for!



**Region:** Tuscany

**Appellation:** Montalcino

**Vineyard:** Estate

**Altitude:** 920 feet

**Soil:** Galestro, clay, limestone and marl

**Varietals:** 100% Sangiovese Grosso

**Trellising:** Spurred Cordon

**Harvest:** Manual in early October

**Vinification:** Fermented in stainless steel over 2-3 weeks; gentle pumpovers and light pressing

**Production:** 12,500 cases

**Aging:** 4 months in Slavonian oak barrels and 8 months in the bottle

**Tasting Notes:** Aromas of violets, wild berries, and forest floor open the doors to this Rosso's juicy palate full of crushed blackberry and baking spice. This is a fresh, distinctive and pleasantly fruity wine from Montalcino!