Winemaker: Paolo Caciorgna
Generation: 2nd

VIGNAIOLI MORELLINO SCANSANO

Cala Civetta Vermentino Toscana IGT

Lush in terms of body, but clean and zesty on the palate. this Vermentino performs the way we'd expect when well-made near the Tuscan coastline. While there are hints of minerality, the story of the wine revolves around its ample mouthfeel and warm climate, low yield fruit. The Cantina del Morellino is a true coop, with farmers owning an average of under 5 acres and doing everything by hand. Perfect anytime of year in lieu of Pinot Grigio or, for that matter, even an unoaked Chardonnay.

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Located just inland from the Tuscan coastline, the Cantina del Morellino is a true co-op that distributes profits to its 170 participating families. The average land holding is tiny - just 3 hectares - and sustainable farming remains the undying mantra.

ENOLOGIST

Paolo Caciorgna

TASTING NOTES

Color	Luminous straw yellow
Nose	Warm citrus, melon, and orange sherbet with linden and jasmine flowers
Palate	Fresh and mineral-driven, with intense warm citrus
Finish	Clean, medium

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

	12
Vineyard Location	Toscana IGT, Tuscany
Vineyard Size	60 ha
Varietals List	100% Vermentino
Farming Practices	Organically farmed (non-certified), dry-farmed, and picked by hand; vegan
Elevation	60-180 m
Soils	Limestone, shale, and clay
Maturation Summary	In Steel for 6 months
In Steel	6 months
Alcohol	13.0 %
Acidity	5.5 g/liter
Residual Sugar	3 g/liter
Annual Production	300,000 bottles

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CANTINA DEL MORELLINO

While August imports' tendency is to work with single estates, every now and again we come across a truly outstanding co-op like the Cantina del Morellino. They are a family-owned, interconnected network of exceedingly small growers, virtually all of them multi-generational and married to the land. With an average of just 4 hectares apiece, each of the 170 participating farmers treats their vines with the utmost reverence. Harvest times are micromanaged by their agronomist, and chief enologist Paolo Caciorgna, a native Tuscan, keeps personal tabs on all sites. This allows him to direct specific parcels to an array of smaller projects, and to trace the origins of any given wine. On top of all this, the Cantina is wholly devoted to sustainable farming - even when the word 'organic' does not appear on the label - and their yields in some cases drop down to 1 bottle per plant (incredibly low for a co-op).

The hilltop town of Scansano lies about 15 minutes inland from Tuscany's SW coastline – roughly halfway between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the extinct volcano, Mount Amiata. While hilly and fairly high in altitude, this area has a long history of agricultural development (pasture, olive and vine), and is therefore a little less wild and rugged than other parts of the Maremma. Drenched in sunlight, Scansano shares the same latitude as central Abruzzo (think La Quercia), and the Sangiovese from this region tends to be a bit fruitier than further north. Sweeter tannins and riper, darker cherry components help define the red wines, not least of all when the Morellino clone of Sangiovese comes into play. Historically speaking, Scansano was first inhabited by the Etruscans, followed by the Romans and eventually the Grand Dukes of Lorraine, who vacationed each summer in the town's gorgeous, storybook landscape.

REGION

TUSCANY

One of the most recognizable regions in the world, Tuscany has an enological history dating back to the era of the Etruscans. Like Piedmont, Tuscany's daily life is interwoven with its food and wine... In sum, vino is a daily facet of the Tuscan lifestyle. With winding roads, sculpted cypresses, and romantic hilltop towns, Tuscany's beauty is legendary, and for many, Florence - once the epicenter of the Renaissance - provides a cultural heartbeat. That said, while the rolling hills of Colli Fiorentini help form a baseline in the minds of many Americans, the region is also home to Italy's Apennine mountain range (stretching from north to south), the wild, southern Maremma district, and a gorgeous, rugged coastline. In the end, Tuscany is topographically quite diverse, and wine zones range from warm and coastal to surprisingly high, continental, and cool.

As one of Italy's most prolific and historic wine regions, it's no wonder Tuscany has so many dedicated and regulated wines. There are currently 42 DOC's and 11 DOCG's. The latter include, of course, Chianti, Chianti Classico, Brunello di Montalcino and Vino Nobile, all predicated on the single red grape that dominates Tuscan production: Sangiovese. Roughly two-thirds of the vines in Tuscany are devoted to this noble varietal, which also happens to be Italy's most planted grape overall. Beyond this, winemakers have been increasingly supplementing vineyards with Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon (both with a 300+ year history in the region). For better or worse, white varieties generally take a distant back seat to the reds, with Trebbiano Toscano being the most widely planted and Vernaccia and Vermentino enjoying more prestige.

TOSCANA IGT

Italy's first, most famous, and most broadly used IGT, this label allows for wines to be made in any village in any of Tuscany's 10 provinces, from Firenze to Grosseto. Likewise, wines can be made in virtually any style, using a long list of varieties, freeing producers from the stiff regulations surrounding DOCs and DOCGs. Its creation revolved around the advent of 'Super Tuscans' and the need for an official tier of wine in between the DOC and Italy's lowly "Vino da Tavola", which doesn't even allow a vintage to be printed on the bottle.

During the late 1960s, around the same time that Italy's DOC system was established, a number of famous producers in southern Tuscany – including the town of Bolgheri – began making expensive, high-quality, modern-style wines, often incorporating Bordeaux varietals. As well-made as they tended to be, these so-called 'Super Tuscan' blends had no historical precedent, and therefore didn't qualify for any of Italy's new appellations. As their wines gained in international acclaim (and price), and with no other recourse than to label their wines 'Vino da Tavola', producers began petitioning the government for another option. Finally, in 1992, the Italian government conjured a new wine classification category: Indicazione Geografica Tipica (IGT). This created a successful middle ground, allowing wines to print their vintage, varietal (as long as the wine contains at least 85%) and region of origin. Beyond this, very few regulations exist to constrain the winemaker. France's version is VDP (Vin de Pays) and the EU as a whole now uses the equivalent IGP category on wine labels.