

2021

Vintage Report



GAJA

2021 Weather the storm

There is no perfect vintage or perfect wine. Our task is to manage the small imperfections that make a vintage and a vineyard unique and distinct from each other. 2021 played out very differently from area to area. The cold temperatures of winter and spring, as well as the drought, maximized the distinctiveness of the soils and microclimates, slowed down vine development and allowed the micro-terroirs to emerge in impressive ways.

Ca' Marcanda - Bolgheri

The 2021 vintage brings us wines of a classic Bolgheri style, mirroring in part the 2019 for its decisive structure and the 2017 for its delicate freshness. It started with a harsh and rainy winter that brought a good water reserve of 550 mm between October 2020 and February 2021. Spring was cold and dry with two frosts on March 7 and April 7, respectively, which delayed the vegetative cycle of the vines and fortunately caused little damage. The following summer saw only sporadic drizzle in June; it was the driest of the last decade. Luckily, the summer remained cool, which put the vines under less water stress and allowed the berries to ripen slowly, thanks in part to fresh northwest winds in July and August. The harvest began a week later than usual: in August on the 30th with the Viognier. The long-awaited rain in September failed to arrive and we finished the harvest with the last vineyard of Cabernet Sauvignon on October 2. Overall, the accumulation of water during the winter and cool summer was crucial to combat the prolonged drought. The reds are generous with round tannins that show ripe fruit along with a noticeable but integrated presence of alcohol. The robust structure is balanced by remarkable acidity and a pleasing freshness. The whites are strikingly fragrant and lively, showing a medium straw yellow color with green nuances.

Gaja - Barbaresco and Barolo

A demanding late harvest vintage has paid off with high quality grapes of smaller berries whose skins are thick and rich in aromas, color and structure, bringing us savory wines of significant volume and richness with a long finish. Abundant snowfall and low temperatures led to an unusually severe, rainy winter, followed by a dry spring. Temperatures picked up again in mid-March, accelerating the plant life cycle. Unfortunately, the cold temperatures returned on April 7 and 8 with icy winds that channeled through the valleys and affected the lower vineyards, especially in the Barbaresco area. Nebbiolo, which germinates early, suffered. In Sori San Lorenzo, where the sprouts were already 30 cm long, 30% damage was recorded. Other Barbaresco vineyards affected by frost recorded minimal losses of 5%. Our Barolo vineyards are located at higher altitudes and survived the frost unscathed. The summer rolled out dramatically with a bright and windy start, hot and violent mid-season, characterized by frequent thunderstorms, and ended hot and dry. The difference between a humid Barbaresco area and a drier Barolo area accumulated. While both benefited from thunderstorms that cooled the land, powdery mildew became a real threat

in Barbaresco in July. A redeeming rainfall came in the end of August, refreshing Barbaresco and Barolo and making the white varieties ready for harvest in early September. Nebbiolo was late in ripening, the rain on September 17 along with a drop in temperatures and a dense fog that helped complete ripening, and the harvest of Nebbiolo kicked off in Barbaresco on September 21 and ended on October 14 in our vineyards in Serralunga d'Alba in the Barolo area.



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Pieve Santa Restituta – Brunello di Montalcino

The 2021 vintage was a dry one, according to Oriano, who has worked in Pieve for 45 years, the driest ever, with 250 less rainfall than the seasonal average. It was characterized by a rainy winter with average temperatures, followed by a dry and cold spring and one of the most drastic summers of the last decade, when the average temperature rose from 16 °C in June to 26 °C in July, which, together with the warmth in August, brought the grapes to full ripeness. Our harvest began on September 15 with the Santo Pietro vineyard in Tavernelle and continued with the plots in Torrenieri and the Bolsignano vineyard. The harvest ended on September 30 with the Pian dei Cerri and Castagno Vecchio vineyards south of Santo Pietro. Despite the slow start, the considerable frost damage and the persistent drought during the summer, the cooler temperatures during the summer helped the grapes to reach full ripeness, achieving good quantities and also providing very good quality overall. The clusters were in excellent health due to the dry climate and showed no signs of skin burn, as summer temperatures were hot but never extreme. Fermentations progressed very slowly but finished well. The wines have elegant tannins, high acidity and average alcohol content, showing intriguing floral and citrus notes that are characteristic of this vintage.

IDDA – ETNA

The winter had very mild temperatures that rarely fell below zero, accompanied by abundant rainfall in the first half and preceded a dry period that lasted until the flowering of the vines, which accumulated a combined 100 mm of rainfall in April and May. The budding of the vines began early, from mid- March. The spring frost in early April severely damaged the buds, affecting future production in all areas of Etna. Thanks to the mild weather, secondary buds sprouted, but with a much lower productivity. This summer was characterized by a total drought combined with hotter than average weather. Temperatures rose significantly beginning in June, often reaching 40° C (104° F) and above by late July. The few rains, especially those in late September, provided relief for the vines and lowered the high temperatures. The fall began with abundant rain, imposing serious treat. The frost in the spring, together with the prolonged drought and the rain just before the harvest, caused considerable stress to the vines. Work in the vineyard such as thinning out the bunches was essential to achieve the harvest with grapes in perfect health. The grapes we bring home have quite a high sugar content and the stresses have reduced the acidity in the berries and increased the pH. This vintage brings us complex and Mediterranean wines, lively and dynamic.

