Masseto 2011

Toscana IGT

Climate and harvest

After a very late developing 2010 growing season, 2011 was characterised by warm, dry weather and a much earlier than average harvest. A rainy winter was followed by a warmer-than average spring that brought forward the start of vine growth by 10 days. Budbreak was particularly rapid and uniform, always a good indicator of a fine growing year. Then cooler weather in June and July slowed vine development. The expected rains arrived on schedule after flowering and during veraison, encouraging optimal cluster growth, aromatic intensification, and, even more important, exceptionally generous accumulation of polyphenols. A heat spell at the end of August further quickened ripening, resulting in the earliest harvest to date in the history of Masseto. The grapes arriving in the cellar were perfectly sound and healthy, well balanced, and with no sign of over-ripeness. Harvest began on 25th August and finished on 1st September, bringing in a total of 5 different lots.

Vinification and ageing

Harvest began on 25 August, starting in the youngest parcels, and concluded on 1 September in Masseto Junior, bringing in a total of 5 separate lots of grapes. The clusters were hand-picked into small 15kg boxes, then hand-inspected on sorting tables both before and after de-stemming. They were then gently pressed, and each vineyard lot was fermented separately, both in stainless steel tanks and in oak, followed by a 15-20 day maceration at 25-30°C. After conclusion of malolactic fermentation in 100% new barriques, the individual wines remained there for the first 12 months of maturation. The final blend was then assembled and returned to barriques for another year, for an overall total of 24 months' maturation. Twelve months' bottle-ageing followed before the wine was released.

Tasting notes

With the 2011 vintage, Masseto returns to a typically Mediterranean expression of a warm year in the Bolgheri terroir. Yet the overall impression is one of superb balance and measure, notwithstanding the wine's rich concentration and ripeness. A near-opaque colour greets the eye, followed by explosive aromas of gloriously ripe wild red berry fruit cosseted by hints of toasty oak and dark chocolate. A full-bodied palate impresses with its deep concentration and opulence, displaying remarkably supple, glossy tannins. Masseto 2011 concludes with a cleanly-defined vein of crisp acidity, infused with the fruit and spice encountered on the nose.

Tasted July 2019