

de vinosalvo

vignaioli in toscana

Country:
Italy

Region:
Tuscany, Maremma Coast

Estate owned by:
Montecucco Alison Jane Hodder &
Claudio Berlingieri

Winemakers:
Alison Jane Hodder

Vineyards:
Regenerative viticulture practices
with a greater focus on soil health
than in standard organic viticulture,
4 hectares in total.

Year founded:
2010

Home link:
<https://www.devinosalvo.com/>

Production:
Levitas: 250 cases
Auspicium: 300 cases
Galfridus: 250 cases

De Vinosalvo produces handcrafted wines from two small parcels near Cinigiano on the Maremma coast of Tuscany. With an Australian-Italian emigree as the winemaker and chief dreamer, it's only natural that they planted Syrah/Shiraz and Sangiovese as the basis for their Mediterranean reds.

A fitting symbol of the company's philosophy is the name borrowed from a fundamental figure in the history of enology: Galfridus de Vinosalvo. Galfridus was an English scholar who wrote one of the earliest known documents on the craft of enology during the Middle Ages – around 1228 AD – and was called the savoir of wine, or De Vinosalvo, for writing down these ancient practices.

Alison Jane Hodder earned an enology degree from Roseworthy College in Australia and worked as a young winemaker in the McLaren Vale region of Southern Australia. She moved to Italy to undertake post-grad studies in Viticulture and Enology in Turin and after graduation, changed her career path and worked for the sustainability branch at the UN's FAO (Farming and Agriculture) based in Rome. She specialized in horticultural development policy and improvement of horticultural technologies, with a particular focus on sustainable grain production.

In an international career spanning more than 30 years she worked as technical adviser with 40 countries in Africa, Asia, Oceania, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Europe. During all this time the idea of going back to winemaking was taking shape. Meanwhile her husband Claudio Berlingieri, a globe-trotting engineer, was an environmental protection advisor to major infrastructure projects in the country of Georgia, feeling right at home in another country filled with artists, poets, and winemakers. There he met artist, Levan Mosiashvili, whose paintings are represented on several of the wine's labels.

Alison and Claudio started this new wine journey searching for the right place to create something of their own. After scouring central Italy for promising areas, Claudio's extended-family connections brought them to the Maremma region of southeastern Tuscany where they fell in love with a small property near Montecucco.

Perched between the Tyrrhenian Sea and Monte Amiata, the area has an extraordinary microclimate for winegrowing – sunny, dry summers, good ventilation, and a wide day/night temperature variation (diurnal shift) that helps to intensify flavors and conserve acidity in the grapes. These vineyards are blessed with an abundance of biological diversity, surrounded by woods, hedgerows, meadows, and creeks. With the motto of “tread lightly on the planet,” the vineyards are managed with regenerative viticulture practices with a greater focus on soil health than in standard organic viticulture.

With minimum tillage, organic fertilization, composting, and plant health management, it is in the vineyard where the character and quality of these wines take shape. The two vineyards BracciaLarghe, 0.5 hectares of Sangiovese, and Porrone, 1.5 hectares of Sangiovese and 2 hectares of Syrah, yield the entire production of less than 30,000 bottles. The winemaking practices are simple and thoughtful, yet knowledge intensive. The goal at De Vinosalvo is to express the variety, terroir, and natural variation among vintages with a focus on elegance and intensity of character.

