

LA DISTESA
(Marche, Italy)

March 2024



With Corrado Dottori of La Distesa in the village of San Michele in Marche, Italy

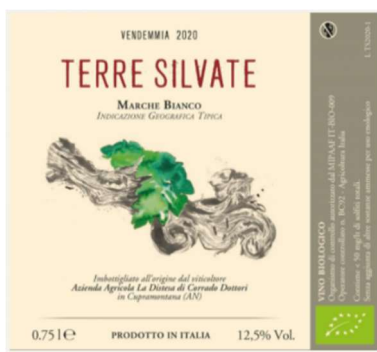
If wines can speak beauty of a place, then *La Distesa* wines are written on the verses of a Dante's poem. For *Verdicchio* lovers, one must head to the hills of San Michele in Marche Italy. To my palate, *Verdicchio* is the greatest Italian white. Finding a great *Verdicchio* is not easy. The rolling hills of San Michele produce inimitable *Verdicchio*. The story of *Verdicchio* is written in history on the hills of San Michele. I have walked the very hills with Corrado Dottori of *La Distesa* and I can say the hills have a sense of vitality and beauty. You can see a glimpse of the hills of San Michele in the photo above. The hills of San Michele do not stop with *Verdicchio*, they also produces superb reds and rosato, primarily based on *Montepulciano* grapes.

Corrado and his wife Valeria, who are now in their early fifties, left their professional desk-jobs in Milan when Corrado and Valeria were in their late twenties. Despite their successful and promising careers, their emptiness grew. It seems matters of heart are seldom easy to explain. So, Corrado and Valeria packed their bags and left Milan to settle down at Corrado's family farm in the tiny hamlet of San Michele in Marche. San Michele is located close to Adriatic Sea and is about three-hour drive northeast from Rome.

Corrado's family farm was started by his grandfather. Corrado's father was an engineer and his career path led him to the international city of Milan, where Corrado grew up. His parents kept the family farm and they took their impressionable son Corrado in his youth to the family farm for their annual vacations. Oddly, when Corrado and Valeria left their careers in Milan and decamped to the family farm in San Michele, the original plan was to open a B&B at his family farm. But then, as if it were in Corrado's destiny, the family farm came with one mere hectare of already planted *Verdicchio* vines. And that is how Corrado and Valeria began making their wines.

Soon, Corrado and Valeria were drawn to taking care of vines. Not happy with their initial wine results, they travelled to Loire in France to seek and to find better ways of making wines. In the Loire, Corrado and Valeria met Catherine & Pierre Breton. Coincidentally, we also import Catherine & Pierre Breton wines but I did not know Corrado and Valeria were inspired by the Bretons until I started importing *La Distesa* wines. Anyways, after meeting the Bretons, Corrado and Valeria's senses were awoken and they knew they had to begin making their wines all over again. The vines were farmed organically from the beginning. So, Corrado and Valeria kept their wine growing approach and later switched over to biodynamic. Today, *La Distesa* wines reflect the hard work that Corrado and Valeria put into the vineyards and cellar.

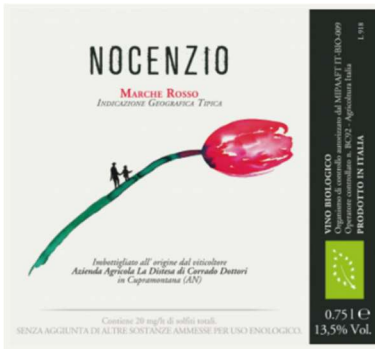
MARCHE BIANCO 'TERRE SILVATE' 2022
SKU: 476926 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$26.91 Wholesale per bottle



Savoury. Energetic and yet graceful. A little almond-like bitterness succinctly speaks Italian. What a lovely white. Finding a great *Verdicchio* is not easy. This one is beautiful. Predominately *Verdicchio* with a dash of *Trebbiano*. The vines are on clay with limestone underneath, which brings freshness and mineral complexity. The vines are from three different vineyards with different exposures in the classified villages of *Castelli di Jesi*, *Cupramontana*, and *San Paolo di Jesi*. The majority of grapes are direct press. About ten percent is on its skins briefly, which adds some flesh and structure. This wine is on its lees for about six months prior to bottling.

(The labels may not be current vintages and are shown for illustration purposes only)

MARCHE ROSSO 'NOCENZIO' 2022
SKU: 476727 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$32.23 Wholesale per bottle



Beautiful nose with summer berries. A hint of spices adds further complexity. Seductive entry, energetic mid-palate and spherical finish - a complete wine. This is an equal blend of *Montepulciano* and *Sangiovese*. *Montepulciano* is given a gentle press to retain the freshness while *Sangiovese* is in whole clusters to retain the perfume. The fermentation is in the traditional large vertical barrels and aging is in the neutral vats for about a year. The bottles rest for additional months prior to release. The resulting blend has alluring fragrance with earthy complexity. The vines are on a slope with clay on top and limestone underneath, which gives this wine the vibrancy and clarity. The vines were planted in 1973 and 1980

with some in 1999. The vines are from two plots in the classified villages of *Castelli di Jesi*, *Cupramontana* and *San Paolo di Jesi*. Corrado and Valeria recommend drinking this wine slightly chilled and in large gulps.

MARCHE ROSATO 'METICCIO' 2022
SKU: 436045 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$31.52 Wholesale per bottle



Unusual and delicious blend. A rosato (rosé) made from a blend of *Verdicchio*, *Trebbiano*, *Sangiovese*, *Montepulciano*, and a dash of *Cabernet Sauvignon*. All different varietals, both reds and whites, are harvested at the same time. Some are ripe, some are overripe, and some are underripe. The idea is that the blend will find a balance and complexity. The blended grapes are macerated only for a few hours before being pressed. Aging is in neutral vats for about six to eight months. It is like a field blend from Alsace, where Corrado and Valeria got the inspiration for this rosato during a field visit to the region.

SICILY 'HALARA' ROSATO 2021
SKU: 331044 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$35.14 Wholesale per bottle



A rosato to fall in love. Utterly delicious. Floral, elegant, and pretty. This is a compelling rosato from Sicily. This rosato is made with *Parpato* with a dash of *Catarratto*. Both varietals are indigenous to the village of *Contrada Abbadess* near Marsala in Sicily. Corrado and his wife Valeria have been vacationing annually for years in Sicily with five other friends and their families, who all happens to be vignerons. While vacationing one year, they found out a local beautiful vineyard was on sale. The vineyard had been owned by a woman for years and she was getting close to her retirement. Fearing her beautiful vineyards may be purchased by a big industrial

grower and the indigenous vines may be ripped out, the six wine friends bought this tiny 6-hectare vineyard. They all share the work and wines. Corrado poured this rosato, along with all his other wines, when Ramona and I visited him in May of 2023. This rosato is so lovely. It is hard to imagine rosato this fresh coming out of Sicily. The vineyards are just a few yards from the Mediterranean Sea, where the traditional windmills dot the landscape. The scene is depicted on the label. Halara means 'chill' in Greek (Χαλάρα).

MARCHE ROSSO 'LE DERIVE' 2019

**SKU: 436042 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$46.40 Wholesale per bottle**



Deep dark colour from *Montepulciano*. Complex. Full-bodied with a great balance. A hint of spices with alluring pretty nose. Ah, the old-world elegance shining through here without a trace of being old-fashioned. What a beautiful wine. This wine is only made in certain vintages when Corrado and Valeria feel there is a balance. From the tiny single parcel on a steep slope in the commune of *San Michele*, which is considered to be one of the finest sites in *Marche*. The soils are shallow clay with limestone underneath. The surface is less than one hectare. The vines are predominately *Montepulciano* with smatterings of *Sangiovese* and *Vernaccia*. Each varietal is harvested separately. The blended wine is aged in neutral barrels for a long time - three to four years depending on a vintage. This is *La Distesa's* top red wine.



In the village of San Michele in Marche. La Distesa winery is the brick building to the right with a tiny church in the distance.

www.racinewineimports.ca