
SAN DONATINO
(Castellina-in-Chianti, Siena)

April 2024



Matteo Ferré of San Donatino on the high hills of Castellina-in-Chianti in the outskirts of Siena

I have been looking for a Chianti Classico producer for a long time. I still vividly remember my first trip to Chianti Classico many years ago. The producer, who will remain nameless for a reason that will be obvious shortly, that I was visiting was reputed to have the best site. Indeed, the vineyards were on a stunning hill. When tasting through the various Chianti Classico, however, every sample tasted the same with oxidized notes. Then, the producer proudly poured a sample of his latest Chianti Classico that was assembled in a stainless-steel vat. The sample tasted oxidized and warm. The stainless-steel vat was sitting outside next to his cellar without any temperature control. It was late May and the temperature was close to 30 C degree. For a fleeting moment, I thought I was in the *Madeira Islands*. All my other pursuits of Chianti Classico did not end successfully. It seems in pursuit of wines, as in life, all things happen for a reason.

Then, Ramona and I were in Rome last year on a wine buying trip. Tired from the jet lag, we had a takeout from a deli & bakery that was a walking distance from our hotel. The deli & bakery also had wines. We bought a bottle of Chianti Classico with our takeout. After tasting the bottle of Chianti Classico, we looked at our itinerary to see if we somehow could fit a visit to the Chianti Classico producer. In the end, we simply could not. We promised that we would visit the Chianti Classico producer on our next trip to Italy.

Back at home, six months had passed since our Italian trip. Then, out of blue, an email arrived from Matteo Ferré of San Donatino – the very Chianti Classico that we had in Rome. Metteo email read: *“I have been exporting to Quebec for a long time and I am looking for an importer in Vancouver. I love fishing and I need an excuse to visit BC.”* When I responded to Matteo with our story in Rome about his Chianti Classico, he was thrilled. So, that is how Matteo Ferre’s San Donatino wines arrived on our shores. It feels as though, after many years of pursuit, San Donatino Chianti Classico is meant to be.

San Donatino is located on a hill of Castellina-in-Chianti in the outskirts of Siena. The estate of San Donatino is 45 hectares, of which, only 16 hectares are planted to vines. The rest is left as natural forests with some olive trees. San Donatino vineyards are at a high elevation of about 420 m above sea level, which give lively and fresh wines. Castellina-in-Chianti, along with Gaiole-in-Chianti and Radda-in-Chianti are the three original communes declared as Chianti Classico back in 1716. These three communes merely cover a two-mile stretch. Over the centuries, the Chianti Classico and later Chianti zones were expanded to its current vast areas, driven by the political and financial interests. To me, still to this day, with an honest producer, the best bottles of Chianti Classico are to be found in the original three communes. I feel very fortunate to represent San Donatino of Classico Chianti.

CHIANTI CLASSICO ‘POGGIO AI MORI’ 2020
SKU: 378706 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$32.29 Wholesale per bottle



A hint a cherry taste with dust of earth that is anchored in the terroir of Chianti Classico. Pretty. Elegant. Balanced. Aged in neutral vats for about eighteen months, followed by many months in bottles prior to release. The vineyard sits very high at an elevation of 420 meter above sea level, which keeps temperature cool at nights during growing season, giving freshness. Matteo Ferré, the owner of San Donatino, believes it is the rocky hill at a high elevation that gives the compelling, inimitable taste of Chianti Classico. Grapes are picked by hand and fermented with ambient yeasts – like all of San Donatino wines. This is 100% *Sangiovese*. There are owls that live in and around the estate. You can see a rendering of an owl on the labels.

CHIANTI CLASSICO RISERVA 'POGGIO AI MORI' 2016
SKU: 378698 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$45.13 Wholesale per bottle



Regal. Elegant. Unforced concentration. Ah, so beautiful. This Chianti Classico Riserva speaks clearly about all things that are great about old-world wines without a trace of being old-fashioned. This wine has that illusive greatness: power without weight. This Chianti Classico Riserva is only made in certain vintages when Matteo Ferré believes the vineyard gives something compelling. *Élevage* is in the traditional neutral 30 hl litre botti (3,000 litre traditional barrels) for about 2 years. Then, the bottles are aged as long as Matto Ferré thinks the Riserva deserves. There is a long tradition in Chianti Classico that the Riservas must be aged for many years prior to release to ensure the wine is at its best. Open a bottle with friends, cook some Italian dishes, and experience the beauty of Chianti Classico Riserva that is released seven years after a vintage. This is 100% *Sangiovese*.

CAMPACCI 2022
SKU: 378701 SPECULATIVE 750ml 12 bottles/case
\$26.69 Wholesale per bottle



Fresh. Fruity. A red wine imbued with Tuscan soil and sun. This wine is made from the younger vines and it is also 100% *Sangiovese*. Maceration is intentionally kept short to bring out fruit for earlier drinking pleasures. *Élevage* is about six months with some bottle aging prior to release. A wine that is made simply but tastes anything but simple. This wine goes down the gullet easy. Attractive nose adds complexity to this wine. Ah, the beauty of Tuscany hills shining through. What a delicious wine. I feel like my Vancouver winter rain-soaked flesh is defrosting when I drink a bottle of this wine with Italian dishes. It is best slightly chilled.