

2020 HARVEST UNDERWAY. HOW ARE ITALY'S MOST REPRESENTATIVE VARIETIES FARING?

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24 September 2020. Italy's harvest is at the halfway point, and we asked, "How are they doing?" about the Country's most classic grapes.

(...)

Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon & Co. The international varieties have long found in Italy their ideal habitat and yield world-class expressions in certain areas that are now their "home." Among the iconic producers is **Masseto** (11 hectares in vines) whose same-named wine is a legend among wine lovers, and Bolgheri-based **Ornellaia** (115 hectares of vineyard), whose vineyards are a byword for utmost attention and sustainable viticulture. "2020 is great example of the now-unpredictable nature of our weather," observes Axel Heinz, director of both wine estates. "We have had to deal with challenges on various fronts: a spell of high heat and periods of cooler temperatures and rain. The Merlot is already in the cellar, since we finished picking that variety on 15 September. We are now in the process of picking the first clusters of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Petit Verdot. The grapes are gorgeous, ripe, with terrific quality."

Also located in Tuscany, in the enchanted Val d'Orcia's Sarteano, is **Tenuta di Trinoro** (23 hectares in vineyard), whose owner, Andrea Franchetti, is still waiting patiently to bring in his Merlot. "September's waxing moon is coaxing our Merlot into the final stage of ripeness," he says. "I go out into the vineyard every morning to taste the berries, just to measure the progress they've made overnight." As far as the Cabernet is concerned, though, "We're still going to have wait a good bit."

In Trentino, at **San Leonardo** (30 hectares in vineyard), Marchese Anselmo Guerrieri Gonzaga too is quite happy with the Merlot he has brought in. "It's still too early to pronounce an in-depth judgment, but we're quite confident regarding quality, since the technical figures all line up so well: excellent acidities, solid pH, and moderate sugars, so all this should ensure elegant, crisp wines, which are precisely the hallmarks of our San Leonardo." Here, too, the Cabernet is waiting for the autumn sun to bring it to final ripeness.