

Montepeloso

“...some of the region’s most finessed wines....” *Antonio Galloni*

When Fabio Chiarelto, a trained historian, purchased the Montepeloso estate in 1998, it was already well on its way to international stardom. Chiarelto could have rested on that reputation, but he knew in his heart that the estate was only beginning to reach its potential.

Montepeloso draws from hillside vineyards around the town of Suvereto. The zone’s petrified clay soils, and its proximity to the sea, give a startling intensity of flavor to wines. It’s little wonder that a half dozen estates have sprung up over the past 20 years though, by contrast, most are planted in the heavier clays of the valley floor.

Reshaping the Vineyards

For eight long years, Chiarelto painstakingly reshaped the estate’s vineyards. With each vintage, he experimented with blends and techniques that would harness the latent power provided by the *terroir*, but temper it so that the *terroir* could fully express itself.

His obsession is such that we find few others with which to compare him. But he perhaps most reminds us of the great Montalcino iconoclast Gianfranco Soldera. Like Soldera, Chiarelto remains driven by his own philosophies, possessing an obsessive commitment to quality, with an apparent disinterest in what others think of him or his wines.

While progress has been steady, the 2006 vintage marks the beginning of this estate’s “mature phase.” The vineyards were finally rehabilitated, and Fabio had settled on a mix of varieties ideally suited to express the essence of Suvereto and

Montepeloso. His experiments in winemaking and *élevage* had shown him the right balance for each

wine. And, he had developed a profound understanding of his *terroir*, and the direction each wine should take. Just as important, Chiarelto brought in a business partner to give him the resources to continue the estate’s ascent.

“*I can’t think of too many other producers who manage to reconcile these two seemingly disparate characteristics (ripeness and elegance) better than proprietor Fabio Chiarelto.*”
Antonio Galloni, The Wine Advocate



*Fabio
Chiarelto*

The Wines

With glowing reviews for Montepeloso’s 2006s, a growing number of collectors see Montepeloso’s wines as the most beautiful, profound, and expressive of the Tuscan New Wave:

NARDO — Nardo is the estate’s flagship “Tuscan Coast” wine, with a blend of approximately 50% Montepulciano, 30% Sangiovese, and 20% Marselan. This wine is a distillation of the Montepeloso *terroir*, and it is the kind of wine that is almost impossible to describe. Fewer than 400 cases made.

GABBRO — *The* great Cabernet Sauvignon of Suvereto, Gabbro has done for this variety what Tua Rita’s Redigaffi did for Merlot. A scant 200 cases are made.

ENEO — While the two luxury cuvées get much of the press attention, Eneo has quietly achieved a rabid following of its own. Aged in 2nd- and 3rd-year French barrique, it is a pure expression of Chiarelto’s vision, with a blend of Montepulciano, Sangiovese, Marselan, and Alicante.

A QUO — First introduced with the 2008 vintage, A Quo is intended to be an affordable way to introduce consumers to the estate’s unique aesthetic.

Montepeloso

Tuscany, Italy

OVERVIEW

First Vintage: 1994

Proprietors: Fabio Chiarelotto & Silvio Denz

Winemaker: Fabio Chiarelotto

Chiarelotto purchased the estate in 1998, after years in academia working as an historian.

While the estate had achieved renown under the former owners, Chiarelotto believed it held the potential to take quality even higher.

Looking to the future, Chiarelotto decided to drastically restructure (*i.e.*, cut back) the vines in early 1999. As the estate emerges from those changes, his healthier vineyards and growing understanding of the wines has positioned this estate to achieve even greater levels of quality.

VINEYARD INFORMATION

Soils: Lime-rich petrified clay & silex.

Zone: Suvereto

Elevation: 50-100 m

Vineyards: Original Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon planted 1980-1985 at 4,000/hA.

New plantings up to 8,500/hA.

VINTAGE NOTES

2008 – A vintage that featured uneven ripening.

Multiple picking passes were necessary.

Perhaps the best Gabbro ever?

2007 – May surpass 2006 for personality and concentration.

2006 – A vintage with good quality potential.

Ripe, pure, and expressive wines.

2005 – A dry, hot vintage that yielded powerful, long aging wines.

2004 – Appears to be a great, classic vintage.

2003 – The nearby ocean tamed this vintage's notorious heat. The wines are more forward than typical, but structured for aging.

ADDITIONAL WINEMAKING NOTES

Fruit is 100% destemmed.

No filtration

THE WINES

A Quo

Avg. Yields: <40 hL/hA

Blend: 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Montepulciano, 20% Sangiovese, 10% Marselan & 10% Alicante Bouschet
Oaking Aging: 4 months in 2nd passage barrique

Avg. Production: ~2,500 cases

Eneo

Avg. Yields: <40 hL/hA

Blend: 40% Montepulciano, 25% Sangiovese, 25% Marselan, & 10% Alicante Bouschet (2007)

Oaking Aging: 2nd, 3rd & 4th passage barriques

Avg. Production: ~2,000 cases

Nardo

Avg. Yields: ~25 hL/hA

Blend: 35% Montepulciano, 35% Sangiovese, 22% Marselan, & 8% Alicante Bouschet (2007)

Oaking Aging: A mix of old and new barrique & demi-muid.

Avg. Production: ~180 cases

Gabbro

Fruit Source: Estate

Avg. Yields: ~25 hL/hA

Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Oaking Aging: 100% new barrique.

Avg. Production: ~200 cases