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Honoring a Legacy: Montalbera Releases “Il Fondatore” Ruchè to Celebrate Founder's 95 Years

Grandson Pays Tribute to Winemaking Titan

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RUCHÉ

Montalbera's latest homage, "Il Fondatore" Ruchè di Castagnole Monferrato DOCG Riserva 2021, is more than just a wine; it's a story bottled with reverence and a nod to the past. This special edition not only celebrates the winery's founder, Enrico Riccardo Morando, a titan of the Italian wine industry and a champion of the Ruchè grape, but also marks a nostalgic return to the winery's roots with a label design inspired by Montalbera's first bottles in the 1980s.

Franco Morando, the current CEO and grandson of Enrico, expressed a deep sense of duty to honor his grandfather. "I felt compelled to properly celebrate my grandfather," Franco explained, revealing that the new label mimics the original design used during the winery's initial bottling in 1987. The label is an almost exact replica, featuring cream-colored paper with a golden logo, now enhanced only by the addition of the name "Il Fondatore" and Enrico Riccardo Morando's own signature.

Encased in antique green glass and boasting broad shoulders, "Il Fondatore" is a limited treasure, with just 9,500 bottles and 95 magnums available, symbolizing the 95 years of Enrico's impactful life. The continuation of his mission now lies in the hands of Franco, who remains committed to the tradition of crafting quality wines and spotlighting Piedmont's indigenous varieties.







"Il Fondatore" emerges from the highest slopes of the Ruchè DOCG appellation, where vineyards bask in the sun for up to 70% of the day and benefit from cooling afternoon breezes. These conditions are ideal for the guyot-trained vines, which thrive in well-drained, loamy soils and are cultivated with a sustainable approach that includes advanced environmental technologies. The grapes are nurtured to maintain their natural coolness and shade, avoiding de-leafing to prevent over-ripening.

The winemaking process is decidedly traditional, involving 10-12 months of aging in French oak barriques sourced from Allier, Limousin, and Fontainebleau. This aging technique imbues "Il Fondatore" with a distinctive character that Franco Morando praises highly. The wine reveals a rich ruby red hue with garnet reflections and offers a fresh, silky texture. Its profile is robust yet balanced, featuring pronounced notes of morello cherry, violets, and spice. These elements combine to create a full, tense, and evolving mouthfeel that rounds off into a smooth, savory finish. Franco predicts that this Riserva will age beautifully over the next five years.

At the upcoming 56th edition of Vinitaly, held from April 14 to 17, 2024, Montalbera will introduce wine enthusiasts to "Il Fondatore" at their booth in Hall 10, Stand D2. The event promises not only a showcase of this exceptional wine but also features the new Timorasso DOC Derthona 2022, another testament to Montalbera's innovative spirit. An unconventional tasting session is scheduled for April 16, offering a playful pairing of Fine de Claire Vendéennes du Large No. 3 oysters with Timorasso, reflecting the winery's classic, lighthearted approach to serious winemaking.



Montalbera Estate

Nestled among vine-covered hills and hazelnut groves, Montalbera continues to be a pillar of Piedmont's winemaking excellence, just as Enrico Riccardo Morando envisioned since 1983. Under Franco Morando's leadership, the winery not only perpetuates but elevates the legacy of its founder, now accounting for 60 percent of the world's production of Ruchè, a true testament to its dedication and success in the wine world.