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Vallepicciola's “Dream Team”: The Secret Behind Their Wine Success

Dream Team Elevates Vallepicciola Winemaking

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From sx. Francesco Beni, Alessandro Cellai, Tamara Marini, Erasmo Mazzone

In the heart of Chianti Classico, where tradition meets innovation, Vallepicciola stands as a beacon of excellence in Italian winemaking. With a shared vision of crafting wines that resonate on a global scale, the winery's leadership has strategically assembled a "Dream Team" composed of experts whose combined talents are propelling the brand toward ever-greater heights. At the helm is Alessandro Cellai, General Manager and Oenologist, whose passion for viticulture permeates every bottle. Joined by Agronomist Francesco Beni, Cellar Manager Erasmo Mazzone, and Hospitality Manager Tamara

Marini, Vallepicciola's success can be attributed to a meticulous and collaborative approach to winemaking.

As the Chianti Classico harvest kicks off, Cellai reflects on both quantity and quality, noting a slight increase in grape yield and an even greater improvement in their quality. "We always aim higher," he states, setting the tone for a winery determined to elevate its name on the global stage.

Alessandro Cellai: The Oenologist's Artistry

Alessandro Cellai, who began his journey with Vallepicciola in 2020, brings a deep understanding of winemaking nurtured by years of experience and mentorship under the legendary Giacomo Tachis. Cellai approaches his role not just as a scientist but as an artist, shaping each vintage with the intention of creating wines that convey elegance and balance.

For Cellai, winemaking is a craft that demands attention to every detail. "My responsibility is twofold: to lead the team and ensure that our consumers experience the very best of what our terroir has to offer," he explains. His philosophy is rooted in the idea that great wine must reflect the soul of its environment. From grape selection to the final bottle, every step involves careful consideration, with the ultimate goal of producing wines that carry the distinct imprint of their origin.

Recent harvests have been promising. A well-timed mix of rain and heat during the growing season has contributed to what Cellai describes as exceptional quality, allowing the grapes to develop their best aromatic profiles. His collaborative relationship with the team is essential in translating this raw potential into finished wines of superior quality.

Francesco Beni: Mastering the Vineyard

Agronomist Francesco Beni is the man behind the vines. Overseeing 107 hectares of vineyard, Beni has spent over seven years perfecting the craft of vineyard management. His deep connection with the land, combined with cutting-edge technology, ensures that every grape cluster reaching the cellar has been nurtured to

its fullest potential.

From winter pruning through to harvest, Beni's role requires constant vigilance and adaptation. "Working with nature is unpredictable," Beni says, "but that's where the challenge lies. You have to anticipate problems and adapt to the rhythms of the earth." His expertise extends to understanding every nuance of the Chianti Classico terroir, from the soil composition to the microclimates that influence the grapes.

Beni's passion for experimentation and innovation plays a key role in Vallepicciola's success. By integrating new practices and technology, he can respond to the ever-changing challenges posed by both climate and market demands. His partnership with Cellai ensures that the fruit arriving at the cellar is of the highest standard, ready to be transformed into fine wine.

Erasmo Mazzone: Precision in Production

Once the grapes reach the cellar, the responsibility shifts to Erasmo Mazzone, the Cellar Manager and Wine Production Manager. Since joining Vallepicciola in 2016, Mazzone has overseen every aspect of the winemaking process, from fermentation to bottling. His role demands precision and an acute attention to detail.

Mazzone is deeply involved in each vintage's development, tasting grapes, taking samples, and working alongside Cellai to determine the perfect time to harvest. His methodical approach ensures that each step in the process—whether it's racking, blending, or aging—serves to enhance the wine's character.

"The job doesn't end with the harvest," Mazzone notes. "It's about crafting the wine through every stage, making sure that we don't lose sight of our overall vision." The cellar's capacity for small-batch vinification allows the team to explore multiple expressions of the same grape, ultimately leading to wines that are both diverse and rooted in the estate's identity.

Tamara Marini: Hospitality With a Personal Touch

At the intersection of Vallepicciola's wines and the public is Tamara Marini, the Hospitality Manager. With two decades of experience in hospitality, Marini is responsible for ensuring that the winery's visitors experience the full breadth of what Vallepicciola has to offer. Whether it's guiding a wine tasting or organizing bespoke tours of the estate, Marini's role is to make the winery accessible, enjoyable, and memorable.

Marini's approach to hospitality is simple: "I always ask myself how I would like to be treated if I were the visitor," she explains. This philosophy translates into a warm and welcoming atmosphere where every guest feels personally cared for. By sharing the story behind each wine, Marini adds a human touch to the experience, giving visitors a deeper connection to the estate and its products.

In the world of wine tourism, Vallepicciola is a destination in its own right. Located in the scenic hills of Chianti Classico, the estate not only offers a portfolio of premium wines but also gives guests a glimpse into the winemaking process. Marini's dedication ensures that every visitor leaves with a lasting impression of the estate's commitment to quality.

A Formula for Success

Together, this "Dream Team" has positioned Vallepicciola as a rising star in the world of wine. With each member contributing their expertise—whether in the vineyard, the cellar, or the tasting room—the team operates as a cohesive unit with a singular focus: to create wines that not only meet but exceed the expectations of wine lovers worldwide.

Vallepicciola's combination of tradition, innovation, and dedication is evident in every bottle. The estate, which spans 275 hectares, including 107 hectares of vineyard, produces approximately 500,000 bottles annually, encompassing 15 distinct labels. Beyond wine, the estate also produces grappa, Vin Santo, and extra virgin olive oil, further broadening its appeal.

With the Bolfo family's continued investment in the estate and the leadership of Cellai and his team, Vallepicciola is on a trajectory to become one of Italy's most recognized and respected names in wine. As Cellai puts it, "We always aim higher." That ambition, combined with the passion of the team, ensures that Vallepicciola will continue to shine on the global stage.