



Country:
Italy

Region:
Tuscany

Estate owned by:
Giuseppe Brancatelli

Winemakers:
Giuseppe Brancatelli
with consulting oenologist
Graziana Grassini

Vineyards:
Certified organic farming,
use of cover crops, green
manures, sexual confusion, and
the promotion of beneficial
insects and mycorrhizal fungi.

Year founded:
1999

Home link:
[http://www.brancatelli.eu/
vini-brancatelli/vino-toscano-igt/](http://www.brancatelli.eu/vini-brancatelli/vino-toscano-igt/)

Production:
Valle delle Stelle: 2,500 cases
Valle del Sogno: 750 6-pk cases
Petit Verdot: 400 6-pk cases
Giuseppe Brancatelli Syrah:
800 6-pk cases

The Azienda Agricola and Agriturismo of Giuseppe Brancatelli is a little slice of paradise with wines that stand out in the vast expanse of Tuscany. Before Giuseppe, Pino to his friends, founded the winery in the 1990s, he was a restaurateur and chef in the Netherlands, where he moved to at a young age from his native Sicily. Fast forward over 35 years and Giuseppe is married to Catherine (from Ireland) and has three beautiful daughters, all born in the Netherlands. He sold his restaurants and bought a small plot of land just 2 miles from the ocean. Between the beaches of Piombino and Follonica, in the tiny town of Riotorto, you will find Pino at his agriturismo cooking and hosting guests from around the world.

The word agriturismo is a blend of the Italian words for agriculture and tourism, a working farm that is set up to receive guests for meals and overnight stays. With the challenges of making a consistent living on agricultural products from a small winery or farm, this addition to the agricultural community in Italy is a lifesaver.

Giuseppe's father was a winemaker in Sicily and after nearly 50 years, Giuseppe has followed in his footsteps. From the beginning he had some strong ideas on how he wanted to approach farming and winemaking. For starters, the land Giuseppe chose was not the typical winemaking area and was not previously planted to grapes. In the 1990s, some might have said this land was too close to the ocean to maximize alcohol and ripeness, but this terroir heightens the minerality. Pino was also committed to organic farming. From day one the virgin soil has never seen any chemicals. What this area lacks in nutrients it makes up for in mineral complexity with a combination of sand, iron, limestone, and volcanic elements with a thin, rocky topsoil.

The area is known as the Val di Cornia, and can have pockets that are very high in iron which is why the Etruscans were here before the Romans, using the rock to build bricks. The combination of rocky soils and the constant breeze from the nearby ocean keeps the alcohol low in these wines and the freshness high. The winery's focus is on the Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes on the estate's 15 hectares. Pino's interpretation of these grapes are driven by the complex terroir of this area and highlighted by the native yeast fermentation and organic farming methods which make these wines distinct from other "Super Tuscans."

Helping to run the estate is Roberta (since 2008) and Alessandro (2012), but maybe the most exciting addition to the team happened in 2015 when Graziana Grassini, winemaker for Sassicaia since 2010, joined as consulting winemaker. Pino tells us that part of the reason Graziana took an interest in this small property is because she grew up in this area and wants to help make a great wine from her hometown. Together they continue to improve the quality of these wines year after year. Between the small production of wine and the guests who come to visit, the Brancatelli family are keeping the dream alive in this remote corner of paradise. A beautiful place to visit for those looking for something a little less touristy in Tuscan countryside.

