



TENUTA SAN GUIDO

SASSICAIA 1996



- Appellation:** D.O.C. Bolgheri Sassicaia
- First vintage:** 1968
- Grape blend:** 85 % Cabernet Sauvignon 15 % Cabernet Franc
- Soil composition:** The vineyards are planted on plots of land with different and composite morphological characteristics, as well as with a strong presence of limestone. These areas are also rich in rocks and rather rich in clay and are located at an altitude between 100 and 300 meters above sea level, facing West - South/West.
- Vine training:** Cordon spur system
- Planting density:** Between 3.600 to 5.500 vine stocks/Ha for older vineyards and 6.200 vine stocks/Ha for newer vineyards.
- Climate:** The climate in Italy in 1996 was not particularly favourable for wine: it was in fact rather negative, except in certain Mediterranean areas. The spring was cold at the beginning and it caused a slight delay in budding. Later on temperatures increased enabling perfect flowering and setting of the berry. Around the second half of August, a 'green harvest' was carried out, leaving only the best clusters on the vines to ripen. These clusters ripened perfectly and at the time of the harvest were in excellent condition with good development of their aromatic and varietal characteristics.
- Harvest:** The grapes from the 1996 harvest were excellent in all aspects: healthy, high sugar content, excellent polyphenol content thanks to the quality and quantity of its sweet tannins. The harvest began on September 16th and finished in the second half of October.
- Wine making:** The primary fermentation took place in temperature controlled stainless steel vats at a temperature of 30° - 31° C. The maceration of the skins lasted 15 days for both the Cabernet Sauvignon and the Cabernet Franc, with a combination of pumping over and *délestage*. The malolactic or secondary fermentation also took place in the steel vats.
- Ageing:** On October 22nd the wine was put in the barriques, 50% new and the rest used once or twice before. During its first year of ageing the wine was racked every three months as it was very rich in extractive substances. After about 22 months in the barrel it was bottled as usual, without filtering only after a very light fining with egg white, and it aged a further six months before being put on the market.



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Assessments:

* 3/3 glasses

Guida "Vini d'Italia" 2000

the '96 ... the harvest promised to be exceptional. Expectations, needless to say, have been fully confirmed by a 1996 vintage worthy of an *anthology*. The strength of Sassicaia ... (is) in its confidence and consistent style ... The fair interpretation of the characteristics of a territory, without artifice or *make-up* in the cellar. So the '96 Sassicaia is not impressive for muscularity and extraction, but appeals for the purity of the fragrance and silky softness to the palate. The intense ruby color is not saturated, it has olfactory notes of spice and cedar, in order to offer a wide range of fruit flavours, black currant to the ripe blackberry. It enters the mouth discreetly and elegantly and is striking for its delicacy, to then acquire the flavour of a and well focused full size fruit. Mature, elegant, full, final has sweet, fine tannins, very persistent.

* 92/100 points

Guida "I Vini di Veronelli" 2000 (G.B.)

It made us wait a few years, as befits a true "star", but it is certain that with the 1996 vintage one returns to talk about the "mythical" Sassicaia, and expectations for the next vintage are even higher.

* 91/100 points

James Suckling

What a pretty wine with currants, minerals and hi(n)ts of mint leaf. Full and silky with chewy tannins but with tobacco and mineral character. this is very cool and refined. Just right now. Bordeaux-like. Will live a long time. Drink now
(*Non blind at il Cibreo in Florence 30/10/2008*)

* 91/100 points

James Suckling for the Wine Spectator 2009