

Federico Orsi/Vigneto San Vito

Profile

Federico Orsi was born in Bologna, but grew up in Brazil. After returning to Italy in his late teens to study business, he began working as a consultant while planning to earn his MBA. Though poised for the corporate life, the sale of a local Bolognese winery would forever change the course of his life.

In 2005, the Azienda Agricola San Vito was put up for sale. Having heard the news, Federico, who'd developed a passion for wine in his early 20's, jokingly proposed buying it to his family. Much to his surprise, they were overwhelmingly supportive! At first skeptical, Federico eventually agreed to purchase the estate on the condition that it would be resold if he could not make it work after 5 years.

With zero knowledge of viticulture or winemaking, he hit the books and eventually came across the philosophy of biodynamic farming. This holistic approach deeply inspired him, and with the knowledge acquired through numerous meetings with biodynamic farmers, the estate was converted from its first years under new ownership. Minimal intervention winemaking soon followed, and by 2009 the wines were all vinified with native yeasts, un-fined, unfiltered and only lightly sulfured at bottling.

The estate, located 30 minutes from Bologna in the town of Monteveglio, consists of 9.5 hectares of owned land, with an additional 5.5 hectares that are rented. Seven of those are planted in the indigenous white grape Pignoletto, which mostly produce *Sui Lieviti*, a traditional bottle re-fermented sparkler. 1.6 hectares of old vine Pignoletto planted on a steep slope produce the single vineyard bottling *Vigna del Grotto*, an elegant, age-worthy white fermented in large Slavonian botti.

2.5 hectares of mixed white get blended into the *Posca Bianco*: Alionza, Albana, Malvasia, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling. Finally, two hectares of red are planted in Negretto and Cabernet Sauvignon, with another hectare of Barbera.

The sparkling *Sui Lieviti*, *Vigna del Grotto* and *Martignone* are vintaged, while the *Posca Bianco* and *Rosso* are made in a "vino perpetuo" style, which entails bottling small amounts of a multi-vintage tank, then adding the current vintage wine to it, thus continuing a never-ending blend. While non-vintaged, each *Posca* bottle is hand stamped with the bottling date of its respective batch.

For more detailed information on the estate, please read Federico's interview.