

**REGION**

Refinement, elegance and longevity: Avellino's key attributes

The wines from Irpinia – Greco di Tufo, Fiano di Avellino, and Taurasi in particular – which have a glorious past and a strong identity, were already well known during Magna Graecia. After some challenging times, they are now returning to the fore, firstly with Fiano and then with the others. This is partly due to the significant contribution of the Consorzio di Tutela Vini d'Irpinia, chaired by Milena Pepe. Our report features some of the most representative companies: Benito Ferrara, Villa Raiano, I Favati, Villa Diamante, Mastroberardino, and Quintodecimo.

BY ROGER SESTO



A SCENIC VIEW OF A MASTROBERARDINO VINEYARD

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**PIERO MASTROBERARDINO
ABSORBED IN A TASTING**

range of vine varieties that have become acclimatized over the centuries. However, respecting and safeguarding native varieties is not enough. We also need to consider and protect the land and microclimate. The winemaker's role is then to interpret what nature offers year after year. This is the modus operandi underpinning our classic wines". Mastroberardino points out: "Our company does not look for shortcuts for purely commercial reasons. Designing early-drinking wines often affects their propensity for ageing in the bottle and evolving well over the course of time. Therefore this kind of mindset is incompatible with our company history, which is based on wines that defy time without having to forego drinkability and balance". Asked how he makes the most of his love for wines capable of evolving over the time, he responds: "After many years, we 're-introduce' cellared vintages to some of our most loyal customers, who are positively surprised". Regarding a vintage that particularly impressed him, he says: "I am very attached to **Taurasi Riserva Radici** 1999. Admittedly, it is still a recent edition, considering that the ageing potential of a bottle of Taurasi often goes beyond our imagination: we are still tasting ninety-year-old bottles that have retained freshness and vibrant fruit. These are unforgettable experiences".

QUINTODECIMO: Healthy and balanced grapes for wines that age slowly

Professor Luigi Moio, a professor at the University of Naples, and his wife Laura Di Marzio are the owners of this splendid estate in Mirabella Eclano.

"We planted the first vineyards in 2001: one growth of Aglianico surrounding the company, facing North-West at 420 m above sea level, with a density of 5,000 vines/ha (1 kg grapes/plant), for producing **Taurasi Riserva Vigna Quintodecimo**, which was harvested for the first time in 2004. Then in 2006 we produced the first white wines. 2004 was an exceptional vintage for us. Only a few people know that, if the climate is perfect, vineyards yield little and therefore excellent fruit in their first year of production. Then they become more productive and the quality deteriorates, and starts improving again only after some years". Asked whether they have a wine library, the answer is: "We feel a physical need to store large amounts of each label of our wines, both of Aglianico and white wines such as Greco di Tufo, Fiano di Avellino and Falanghina. There are technical, but also commercial reasons for this: if you immediately start this way, your customers are not surprised to find more vintages of the same wine, properly revealing itself, on the price list". Regarding the most significant vintages of Vigna Quintodecimo, the response is: "I have already mentioned the very unusual 2004 vintage.

I also think that the 2006 vintage is good, 2007 is excellent, 2009 is superlative and 2010 is interesting".



**LUIGI MOIO AND HIS WIFE
LAURA DI MARZIO WALKING IN ONE
OF THEIR VINEYARDS**