

Excerpt from SLOW WINE, page 751

PANZANO IN CHIANTI (FI)
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"Great attention to details, adherence to local traditions, curiosity towards innovation, utmost respect for the vineyards and environment. And above all pragmatism and professionalism: this is Jennifer and Michael's approach, a tangible example of a comprehensive approach to making wine and making it well!"

15 hectares/37 acres – 42,000 bottles

THE HISTORY – Jennifer and Michael's parents were looking for a place to spend their retirement, where their children could also set down some roots and work. After searching far and wide, even throughout France, they found a small boutique winery - Monte Bernardi, which had already been producing quality wines. They immediately knew this was the place they were looking for. Jennifer is responsible for the commercial side of the business, while Michael, an enologist, is responsible for the vineyards and the cellar.

THE VINEYARDS – In 2008 a new vineyard was planted with 5 different clones of Sangiovese; 350m above sea level, on a steep incline and composed of a mixture of limestone (Alberese) and sandstone (Pietra Forte); the training is a modified Guyot with a density of 5,000 plants per hectare – an agronomic and "philosophical" approach opposite to that found in the Sa'etta vineyard: with vines over 40 years old, trained in a traditional Tuscan and with a density of 3,000 plants per hectare. Two new additional sites have been planted and have been given the names "Isola" e "Sottoisola".

THE WINES – Michael is smart and self-deprecating: he says "he learned in Australia how not to make wine" and it was there, where he started to research and develop his knowledge of biodynamics. In the cellar one finds stainless steel vats and big wooden barrels made of German and Austrian oak as well as smaller barrels used for the aging. The results you can taste: expansive and persistent. The **Chianti Classico Riserva Monte Bernardi 2008** (6,000 Btls; 17€) is the quintessence of the winery - enjoyably fresh and fruity, with a long and persistent finish. The **Chianti Classico Sa'etta Riserva 2008** (3,000 Btls; 28€) has more complex and deep aromas; it is an austere wine, of great balance. The **Chianti Classico Retromarcia 2009** (30,000 Btls; 11€) matured in small barrels, is juicy with a fine acidity, followed by sweet tannins. A little bit of Merlot completes the composition of this wine. **Tzingana 2008** (Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot; 1,500 Btls; 38€) is characterized by great freshness and drink-ability. An "international" wine that even when tasted blind has an undeniable Chianti provenance - one of the factors making this a great wine.

FERTILIZERS: manure pellets, biodynamic preparations, green manure

PEST CONTROL: copper and sulfur

WEED CONTROL: manual

YEASTS: natural

GRAPES: 30% purchased

CERTIFICATION: in progress