

Montepeloso

“...some of the region’s most finessed wines....” *Antonio Galloni*

When Fabio Chiarelto, a trained historian, purchased the Montepeloso estate in 1998, it was already well on its way to international stardom. Chiarelto could have rested on that reputation, but he knew in his heart that the estate was only beginning to reach its potential.

Montepeloso draws from hillside vineyards around the town of Suvereto. The zone’s petrified clay soils, and its proximity to the sea, give a startling intensity of flavor to wines. It’s little wonder that a half dozen estates have sprung up over the past 20 years though, by contrast, most are planted in the heavier clays of the valley floor.

Reshaping the Vineyards

For eight long years, Chiarelto painstakingly reshaped the estate’s vineyards. With each vintage, he experimented with blends and techniques that would harness the latent power provided by the *terroir*, but temper it so that the *terroir* could fully express itself.

His obsession is such that we find few others with which to compare him. But he perhaps most reminds us of the great Montalcino iconoclast Gianfranco Soldera. Like Soldera, Chiarelto remains driven by his own philosophies, possessing an obsessive commitment to quality, with an apparent disinterest in what others think of him or his wines.

While early progress was steady, the 2006 vintage marked the beginning of this estate’s “mature phase.” The vineyards were finally rehabilitated, and Fabio had settled on a mix of varieties ideally suited to express the essence of Suvereto and Montepeloso. His experiments in winemaking and

élevage had shown him the right balance for each wine. And, he had developed a profound understanding of his *terroir*, and the direction each wine

should take. Just as important, Chiarelto brought in a business partner to give him the resources to continue the estate’s ascent.

The Wines

Ten+ years of glowing reviews have led a

number of collectors to rank Montepeloso’s wines among the most beautiful, profound, and expressive of the Tuscan New Wave:

NARDO — Nardo is the estate’s flagship “Tuscan Coast” wine, with a blend of approximately 50% Montepulciano, 30% Sangiovese, and 20% Marselan. This wine is a distillation of the Montepeloso *terroir*, and it is the kind of wine that is almost impossible to describe. Fewer than 400 cases made.

GABBRO — *The* great Cabernet Sauvignon of Suvereto, Gabbro has done for this variety what Tua Rita’s Redigaffi did for Merlot. A scant 200 cases are made.

ENEO — While the two luxury cuvées get much of the press attention, Eneo has quietly achieved a rabid following of its own. Aged in 2nd- and 3rd-year French barrique, it is a pure expression of Chiarelto’s vision, with a blend of Montepulciano, Sangiovese, Marselan, and Alicante.

A QUO — First introduced with the 2008 vintage, A Quo is intended to be an affordable expression of the estate’s unique aesthetic. Blended from all the estate’s fruit, and raised in neutral wood, it’s also a shocking bargain.



Fabio
Chiarelto

“I can’t think of too many other producers who manage to reconcile these two seemingly disparate characteristics (ripeness and elegance) better than proprietor Fabio Chiarelto.”
Antonio Galloni, The Wine Advocate