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## Cantina Ribelà's Saittole: Castelli Romani's miraculous, tasty quaffability

Claudio Celio

It takes guts to think of setting up a winery, starting from scratch. What's more, in an area famous for its fine white wines like Castelli Romani. It takes tenacity and passion. Qualities Chiara and Daniele Presutti are not short of; philosophy scholar, the former, architect, the latter, they decided to jump into their new adventure five years ago and have been whole-heartedly pursuing this project since then.

A project - with little or nothing to do with their past studies - which has a name: Cantina Ribelà. The initial spark was their common passion for wine – tasted at first, then researched and finally made. Tenacity came next – the perseverance that kept Chiara and Daniele at the grindstone for twelve months, working and learning the craft in an Umbrian winery ten hours a day. Courage, finally, for it takes a lot of pluck to purchase two hectares of vineyard near Rome (at Monte Porzio Catone) and decide that's going to be your main occupation and preoccupation.

"Daniele and I said to ourselves: it's now or never, so we got started," Chiara confides, telling us of the endless visits, investigations and chats with the elderly locals that preceded their choice of vineyard. Eventually, they picked a small valley called Pentima, within the Castelli Romani Park, where they found old Trebbiano and Malvasia vines, which they set out to plant and reproduce in a small new vineyard.

Terrain is the characteristic, volcanic soil of Castelli Romani, with layered tuff in varying depths and consistencies, a legacy from the past, when the Roman Castles were a very active volcanic area. Winemaking philosophy is absolutely natural; thus, only copper and sulfur in the vineyard, spontaneous fermentation and biodynamics. Production consists of approx. 12,000 bottles, split into four labels: Saittole is one of their white wines from Trebbiano and Malvasia grapes.

The 2015 vintage is certainly not distinguished by its acidity: "It was a very hot year," the producers say. Nonetheless, in spite of a certain, fat roundness on the palate (which theoretically, would not make it particularly to my liking), is gifted with an unbelievable quaffability. This is thanks to the miraculous, savory/salty crispness of the wine, which manages to balance the alcohol and maintain a distinctive, decided appeal. The year's hot climate is inscribed in the wine's color – a lovely, intense gold – and in the yellow fruit flavors with underlying minerality and slightly sulfurous nuances. I would pair it with rather fat fish dishes, including lake fish.



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