

Fattoria Selvapiana

(Chianti Rufina)

Once a property of the bishops of Florence, Selvapiana was acquired in 1827 by Michele Giuntini, a successful Florentine banker. Giuntini expanded the cultivation of the vine with improvements and installations remarkable for their time. He also perfected the wine making and ageing.

Presently vines are grown on thirty hectares of specialized vineyards, and extensively in rows between the olive trees that are typical of the ancient Tuscan landscape. Annual production averages 12,000 cases. The Chianti Rufina is selected from the total wine produced in quantities that vary annually. The lots that do not reach the required quality standard are sold as “table wine”.

Choosing a good Chianti can be a little confusing. It has an enormous range: from a fruity, slightly prickly, ready-to-drink wine, to a tannic, intense, ageworthy one. And the region itself, an idyllic part of Tuscany, is divided into seven subregions. Chianti Classico is the largest and best known, but Chianti Rufina, though the smallest of the seven, produces equally prestigious wines.

The best guide through such a morass is a reliable producer, such as Selvapiana, a 150-year-old family winery in Rufina that ranks as one of Chianti’s best. Selvapiana produces four Chiantis, a regular Chianti Rufina, which is delightful right now, and three Chiantis Rufina Riservas. Two are single vineyards, the “Bucerchiale” made with 100% Sangiovese is very typical of this grape, though the “Fornace” with 10% Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend is more international in style.

