Castello di Ama
L'APPARITA - MERLOT - 2021

REGION: ITALY - TUSCANY

CASTELLO DI AMA

Castello di Ama was founded in 1976, and is located in Gaiole in Chianti, within the additional geographical unit of the same name (UGA), located in the heart of Tuscany. It is located about 12 miles northeast of Siena in the hills of Gaiole. This is the heart of Chianti Classico, a bucolic rolling landscape of woods, vineyards and olive groves.
The estate is currently helmed by CEO Lorenza Sebasti, a member of the second generation of one of the four founding families. Marco Pallanti, who was once the President of the Chianti Classico Consorzio, has been the winemaker and technical director at Castello di Ama since 1982.
The goal of the estate is to have each bottle of Castello di Ama express the uniqueness of the terroir, and be an authentic expression of the vintage. Ama has practiced sustainable viticulture since the end of the 1990s, and recently received *Equalitas* (Italy) certification.

THE WINE

Vineyard Profile

L'Apparita, the first pure Merlot produced in Tuscany, has been an iconic wine since its initial harvest in 1985. Two parcels at the top of the Bellavista vineyard comprise the L'Apparita cru.
Vines were first planted in 1975 with Canaiolo and Malvasia Bianca, they have been replanted in 1982 with Merlot, using the clone nr 342. The open-lyre training system and predominately clay soil make this cru a crown jewel in world winemaking. Since the first vintage, this wine has maintained its unique expression in which the distinguishing features of Merlot are elevated by the terroir of Ama.

- Altitude: 1610 feet/490 meters
- Exposure: North-South
- Soil: Clay-calcareous
- Vineyard initially planted to Canaiolo & Malvasia Blanca in 1975; replanted to Merlot in 1982
- Vine Training System: Open Lyre
- Vine Planting Density: 2800 vines/ha

Harvest Notes

- Mild, rainy winter with few days below freezing followed by rather cold spring
- Almost no rain in June, average temperatures
- Hot July followed by dry August
- Cooler nights in late August
- Hand harvested September 13 – October 6, 2021
- Fermented using only indigenous yeasts at in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks from 86–91ºF for 28 days
- Manual pumpovers
- Racked and returned to tank for malolactic fermentation
- Aged 14 months in 50% new, fine grained barriques, the balance in once used barriques

Winemaker's Notes

Opaque purple-red. Elegant, refined aromas of black and red fruit, nuts and violets. Nuanced with robust concentration and depth, complemented by bright, juicy acidity. A full, ripe, long and elegant finish.

Technical Information

- 100% Merlot, Clone NR 342
- Alcohol: 14.5%
- Total Acidity: 5.4 g/l
- Residual Sugar: < 1 g/l
- Extract: 34.2 m/l

REVIEWS

L’Apparita – Merlot – 2021

100 Points - Vinous - Antonio Galloni, June, 2024

The 2021 L’Apparita is sublime. A wine of compelling inner perfume and exotic richness, the 2021 is shaping up to be one of the great L’Apparitas. Inky dark fruit, espresso, licorice, lavender and crushed rocks abound in a towering, statuesque wine that will absolutely thrill those lucky enough to own it. It perfectly embodies all the greatest qualities of this historic vintage. 2027 – 2046

97 Points - jamessuckling.com, August, 2024

This shows so much depth and intensity, with a beautiful nose of dark fruit, walnuts, licorice, iodine and seashells. Some wood showing now. Pure and structured. It shows both richness and freshness, with a full body and a compact, seamless tannin structure. Need time to soften. Try after 2028.

96+ Points - © Wine Advocate, July, 2024

One of Italy’s most collected Merlots, the Castello di Ama 2021 L’Apparita opens to a rich and inky-dark appearance. Very true to the grape, this vintage hits impeccable ripeness with soft cherry intensity and spice that is padded by extra textural fiber. Like always, this wine is especially successful in terms of mouthfeel and finish. The bouquet has ripe fruit, softly toasted spice and a hint of olive tapenade. It is quite the mouthful. 2025 – 2046

96 Points - Wine Spectator, March, 2025

Expressive and racy, this red features cherry, black currant, violet, green olive, cedar, stone and sweet spice aromas and flavors. Vibrant and firm, with savory elements of Tuscan scrub. Needs time to shed its tannins, but the length reveals its potential. Best from 2027 through 2045.

TST
THE SORTING TABLE

99 Points - Ian D'Agata Wine Review, December, 2025
The 2021 will go down in memory as one of the all-time great l'Apparita bottlings. Deep purple-ruby in colour, it offers superb nuance and lift to its aromas of kirsch, violet, licorice, coffee and crushed stone. Wonderfully sappy and very Merlot in the mouth, boasting impeccable energy and focus to its dark fruit, herbal and mineral flavours. And while there's no denying it conveys an impression of real power and fleshy dry extract, it also brings an exhilarating balance of sweetness and acidity to the fore. Very polished tannins coat every millimeter of the mouth on the building, vibrant finish. Clearly, this is an outstanding vintage for this consistently great bottling. 2028 – 2042

GENERAL INFO

Country	Italy
Region	Tuscany
Appellation(s)	Chianti Classico
Proprietor/CEO	Lorenza Sebasti
Founded	1974
Winemaker	Marco Pallanti
Annual Production	25,000 9L cases
Farming (Sustainable, organic, biodynamic)	Sustainable certified by *Equalitas* Italy

TST
THE SORTING TABLE