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Inside on Page 2
New Châteauneuf
from
Henri Bonneau

Inside on Page 4
Coutet
'Cuvée Madame'
Returns

FEBRUARY 5, 2002

TUSCANY

'Cheval Blanc in the Sun'

Andrea Franchetti's Bold Experiment at Trinoro

In December, Robert Parker resumed a *Wine Advocate* tradition: naming his Wine Personalities of the Year. In singling out Andrea Franchetti for praise, he wrote:

"... aristocrat and self-trained winemaker ... Franchetti is fashioning remarkable wines that offer complexity and compelling richness. His 1999's are superb If Bordeaux's famous Cheval Blanc were produced in Tuscany, it might be here."

"Here" is Tenuta di Trinoro, Franchetti's estate in Southern Tuscany—far from the region's famous viticultural areas. When he bought the property in 1992, it had little more than the remnants of a century-old vineyard and an extraordinary *terroir*—nestled between two towering mountains, it has one of the longest growing seasons in Italy. But in less than one decade, he has made Trinoro one of the great "cult" wines of Europe.

An Unrelenting Passion

Soon after buying the property, Franchetti began an ambitious program of planting vineyards of Cabernet Franc, Merlot and other Bordeaux varietals at densities approaching 10,000 plants per hectare. With an unrelenting passion, his goal was to produce wines that would rival the best of Pomerol and St. Emilion.

In the vineyard, no compromise is allowed. The vines are pruned to yield a tiny 20 hectoliters per hectare.

In the cellar, only new French oak is used, and rackings are minimized through state-of-the-art "micro-oxidizers." There is no filtration.

The 1999 Vintage

"Astounding richness, gorgeous purity"
—Robert Parker on 1999 Trinoro

The intense heat of 1999 delayed Trinoro's harvest until October, and Franchetti needed 13 passes through the vineyard to harvest gloriously ripe fruit. Sixty percent of the crop was ultimately discarded, leaving Franchetti with 800 cases of astonishingly rich wine.

With its Cheval Blanc-like preponderance of Cabernet Franc (70%)—and its creamy texture and flavors of Valhrona chocolate and black cherries—it begs to be compared with the finest Pomerols and St. Emilions. It's an important wine that should not be missed.

1999 Tenuta di Trinoro

\$89.95 *bt.* **\$1050.00** *cs.*



Parker: "This profound, dark purple-colored offering reveals noteworthy aromas of mocha, black fruits, spice box, and toast ... astounding richness, gorgeous purity, definition, and elegance"