



## Cesanese di Olevano Romano DOC Superiore

To say “a great wine from Lazio” is usually a misnomer. Italia's greatest city, Rome, may be the center of the Ancient World, but the wines have historically left a lot to be desired. Not anymore! Cesanese, Lazio's most important variety, is thriving at Compagnia di Ermes, a tiny boutique estate nestled high in the Apennine foothills. Spiced cherry, pomegranate, fig, and dark currants are surrounded by firm, dusty tannins in this full-bodied (yet unoaked) Superiore. Just 3000 bottles made.

### WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Perched high in the dreamy village of Olevano Romano, this rustic, 3-hectare estate is run by longtime friends and winemaking partners, Silvestro Colli and Mariano Mampieri. Together with their daughters, they focus almost solely upon Rome's most important historical red grape: Cesanese.

### ENOLOGIST

Mariano Mampieri



### TASTING NOTES

**Color** Rich ruby

**Nose** Dark cherry, violets, hint of peach pit

**Palate** Dark fruit, firm tannins, and a low-yield mouthfeel

**Finish** Long and dusty



### VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

**Vineyard Location** Olevano Romano DOC, Lazio

**Vineyard Size** 3 ha

**Varietals List** 100% Cesanese

**Farming Practices** Non-certified organic; grapes picked by hand and dry-farmed

**Elevation** 450 m

**Soils** Calcareous. Volcanic.

**Maturation Summary** In Steel for 8-12 months and Bottled for 3 months

**In Steel** 8-12 months

**Alcohol** 13.5 %

**Acidity** 5.1 g/liter

**Residual Sugar** 1.9 g/liter

**Annual Production** 3,000 bottles



## REGION

### LAZIO

Lazio is a region in central Italy, and home to the ancient capital city of Rome. The region's reputation is mainly based on its white wines, the mainstay grape varieties being Trebbiano, Malvasia di Candia and Malvasia Puntinata.

Traditionally these wines were fat, rounded, abboccato and made for immediate consumption. Today the styles are lighter, drier and crisper thanks to modern vinification methods.

However they are still designed for drinking young, characterized by their sharpness, high acidity and a lightness that makes them an ideal accompaniment to the local cuisine. They cut through the heaviness of these dishes, such as porchetta (pork roasted with herbs) and abbacchio (young lamb).

### OLEVANO ROMANO DOC

Established in 1973, the Olevano Romano DOC is small - encompassing roughly 8000 cases of production each year - and only includes red wine. Not surprisingly then, it focuses almost solely upon three tiers of the Cesanese grape variety: Rosso (minimum 85%), Superiore (90%, 7 months required aging), and Riserva (24 months aging, with at least 6 in the bottle). The appellation takes its name from the community of Olevano Romano, located high in the Apennine foothills some 75 km east-southeast of Rome, but also includes parts of nearby Genazzano. Olevano Romano is one of a tiny number of DOC/Gs devoted to Lazio's historic grape... with all 3 located at high altitude and in close proximity to one another.

Generally speaking, two different clones of Cesanese are grown in this area: Cesanese di Affile and Cesanese Comune (both also named after nearby villages). Vines benefit from the altitude (450 meters on average) and also clay, volcanic, and sandstone soils, producing structured wines that often display elements of cherry, earth, spice and balsamic (or even teriyaki). The climate is warm, with lush vegetation that includes bamboo species that are thought to be native to this region. (In the old days, farmers would often use the bamboo to create triangular, tent-like trellises for their vines.)



## COMPAGNIA DI ERMES

The tiny, 3-hectare estate of Compagnia di Ermes is tucked high in the gorgeous hillside village of Olevano Romano, in turn located in the Apennine foothills some 45 minutes E-SE of Rome. With a sunny, southern Italian climate, gentle alpine breezes, and lush vegetation all around, it's the type of place where, at any given moment, time seems to stand still. Alongside a charming inn, winemaker Silvestro Colli and his family also run their bustling restaurant - called Il Boschetto - that can compete with some of the capital's very best. On a typical evening, the place is packed with native Romans who make the drive up... but few or no American tourists. If you're flying into Rome, it can be an amazingly peaceful place to stop and stay for a few nights while you catch your breath! Ultimately, Silvestro and his longtime friend, Mariano Mampieri, founded the estate to supply their clients with a true, artisanal example of Rome's main historic grape: Cesanese. Along with the Olevano Romano DOC, there are only 2 other appellations (in nearby towns) that are renowned for their robust, terroir-driven wine. Beyond these sites, the great irony is that the main red grape of Lazio still suffers from a poor reputation. By rights, given the vast influence of the Roman Empire, we should all be drinking Cesanese with our Tuesday night pizza instead of Sangiovese! For better or worse, however, even 2000 years ago, the Romans weren't especially lauded for making wine - they definitely knew how to export winemaking technology, but their own juice apparently left much to be desired. Enter Compagnia di Ermes, as this small batch, hands-on wine is enough to change anyone's opinion of this fascinating grape. Winemakers Mariano Mampieri and Silvestro Ciolli are all about quality over quantity: they basically make one wine and production is just 5000 bottles per year! Thanks to the low yields - and despite being unoaked - this Superiore nearly drinks like a big Riserva. So, for anyone who wants something unique and truly artisanal, this wine is exactly what Small Vineyards is all about!