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WOMEN IN WINE



No matter how much

we (obviously) love wine, there's a reality that's impossible to ignore in the industry: there's a gender imbalance that persists despite advances in equality in other areas of society. Only 4% of wineries in California are women-owned, and just about 10% are women-run. That, considering how women are advancing past many men in higher education. What gives? Some of the disparity is there from day one. When Tara Gomez of Camins 2 Dreams [Press 2] and formerly of Kita Wine [Direct Press April 2021] attended winemaking school at Fresno State, only 12 out of 100 in her graduating class were women. Of those 12, only Tara and one other woman graduated with a winemaking degree instead of a marketing degree.

Megan Bell of Margins Wine [Press 4 Red] in Santa Cruz told me that her class at the UC Davis winemaking program was 60% women. While that may be an improvement from past years, why isn't that reflected in actual careers? It seems, in part, due to an unwelcoming culture, Bell says, "women will go work their first internship, like I did, and have such a bad experience they'll say, 'I don't want to work on a team like this.'"

Bell noted that most wine production teams don't have HR, so "lots of stuff flies that wouldn't fly in a normal workplace." Beyond the "sexism and the discrimination and the harassment that's often present on a production team," Bell says a lot of the problem is a toxic mentality that can persist for anyone trying to climb the ladder. "There's this idea that the

more miserable you are, the more chops you have. During harvest in Napa, people would be like, 'I pulled 120 hours this week, how many did you do?' and I'd be like 'uh, I want to work 60 hours because I want a work/life balance.' I think women aren't as easily fooled by that type of mentality. They're fine saying, 'That's stupid. I don't want to compete with that, I don't want to play with the 'big dogs,' where men would be more inclined to try and prove that they're a badass by working themselves to death."

Brianne Day [Press 4 White], of Day Wines in Oregon's Willamette Valley, talked about the mentality of working harder, not smarter, as well. "I realized early on that we can do anything physically that needs to be done. We might not use our bodies in the exact same way. And that was helpful to me. A guy, just because he's big, can, you know, just pummel something into submission. That might work for him, whereas we might use a little bit more finesse because we can't necessarily do things in the exact same way — but that's not a bad thing. Of the worker's comp injuries on my staff, I've only had them from guys."

"Nothing [in wine] is that hard," Bell says. "But in the more sexist spaces I encountered there was this idea that 'we need to pretend this is hard so that we feel like we're doing a really good job. Everyone wants to feel skilled at work, but how can we help people feel like they're doing a great job at work without having this toxic environment? It's almost like those folks haven't received enough positive reinforcement for their efforts so they end up trying to get it from others, and who's going to be the easiest



"In California, only 4% of wineries are owned by women. In the county I work in, there's only two. And there's almost 100 wineries."

Megan Bell of Margins Wine, in Santa Cruz

Front cover: Megan Bell and Judith Beck

target? 'A woman, she's not going to be able to do this. I will show her my great skill set.' I think women are more like, 'I can also roll a barrel. It's easy to roll this barrel. It's a circle.'"

The unwelcoming environment on production teams leads many women to other parts of the industry, like sales or lab work, where there is often another woman and a degree of isolation from the more toxic parts of the business. Tara Gomez noted that "for all the wineries I worked for, it was a more female-dominated lab." She ended up meeting her future wife and partner in Camins 2 Dream, Mireia Taribó, while working at the lab at J. Lohr in Paso Robles. And while Tara was in the lab because of a lifelong love of chemistry, the lab can sideline women who want to pursue winemaking but don't feel welcome in that world. Support from others is crucial here.

Megan Bell had such a bad experience as an intern in Napa, she thought that she didn't want to work in wine after all. Luckily, she had been at UC Davis with Martha Stoumen, Shaunt Oungoulian and Diego Roig from Les Lunes/Populis, and Meredith Bell of Statera, who were all a big influence on her. They were a few years older and had geared their tasting group towards low-intervention small-production wines. She didn't

understand the difference then but quickly saw it after her time in Napa. Megan said they urged her to keep going, telling her, 'Now that you've had this experience, you know what your values are and you can find a better job that works for you.'

Her next internship in Oregon, at Beaux Freres, was a turning point. "In my Napa job I was never given real responsibilities. They were like, go clean the drains, paint the barrels. I had to beg for things to do." Upon arriving in Oregon the owner told her, "OK, here's your ATV. Here's how we

make the Biodynamic sprays. You're going to go spray it in the vineyards." She told him "I don't know how to do that, I have no experience," but he wasn't fazed, and encouraged me to just go figure it out."

Bell says, "that was a really great opportunity for someone like me who had always played a more submissive role at work, especially — to wait to be told what to do." Yet here was her new boss telling her, "we're not going to teach you how to do this, you can look it up and figure it out for yourself, because we know you can do it," as she tells it, adding, "and he was right. It was an equitable environment and an eye into how things can be, where I felt confident at work and to ask for more. It was the opposite of my previous experience."



Brianne Day

"Just hearing that you are good at this you can do this can make a big difference in people's lives," Brianne Day reiterates. "I don't feel like I was told to trust my gut. I think it was more, 'You can't. You're not going to be a success at this. What do you know? You don't know anything.' When I first started I was asking permission and more timid and all of those things and I don't anymore. If I want to do it I'm going to do it. I tend to employ mostly women and I try to really encourage and empower them and say trust your gut. You know how to get there. Trust yourself."

Summer Wolff [Press 4 Red], a New York ex-pat, has lived in the Monferrato region of Italy with her husband Fabrizio Iuli [Direct Press December 2021, July 2022, & October 2022] since 2008. Despite working alongside Fabrizio and taking on more of a role in the winemaking at Iuli, she knew she would not be taken seriously unless it was her name on the label, so she started her own recently. She echoed the sentiments of Megan Bell and Brianne Day, saying, "Listen to your instincts. If your gut tells you to macerate a few more days, to blend, to leave a specific tank out, to leave a wine longer before releasing, to add more or less sulfur...trust in yourself. A winemaker only gets one chance each year to create their 'art,' so that moment and culmination of hard work at harvest should be done with excitement, courage and confidence."

She has an up-close view of the differences between the US and much of Europe, where she sees far more of a patriarchal attitude embedded. "The average US couple seems to have much more gender balance. Things

are changing slowly in the younger generations here in Italy as well I believe, however my generation is still very stuck in gender roles, and in male dominated households. I have been to many wine tastings all over Europe and all over the US. The only tastings where it feels like there is one female to every 50 males (wine buyers/industry people) is Italy. I think there were two women that were 'buyers' in the two full days of this past tasting we attended [The VI.NA.RI. Natural Wine Fair in Milan]. All of our sales agents in Italy are men, 100% of them. The women work in the office, they do not 'sell.' There are starting to be more women somms which is nice, and I hope that trend continues to go in the right direction. It is also only here in Italy, where, when I am behind the table with Fabrizio, I am very often completely ignored." She mentioned the last straw was being elbowed by someone angling to speak to Fabrizio. Yet she is trying to channel that into something positive. "I was inspired to do something more. I am still working on exactly what that is and the best way to bring some of these amazing women together, not just to complain to one another, but to really try and change this perception that sadly is still very prevalent here in Italy."

Megan Bell talks about similar challenges at wine fairs. "When I pour at wine fairs," she says, "I will not let another person stand behind the table with me, no matter how busy it is. If it's another woman, they assume we're the sales team, and if it's a man, they won't talk to me. I need to be there by myself. That way it forces the person to ask, who are you in this company? And I can say, 'I'm glad you're asking.' You should ask that of everyone, not

just assume.”

Many of the women I spoke with mentioned the pressure to constantly prove themselves, or always have ‘fighting gloves on,’ as Brianne Day put it. It seems they always have to be prepared in a way that is not as frequently required of male peers. She recalled a visit to Italy this summer where a wine shop owner kept asking her, “Who consults, who makes your wine?” And I’m like ‘I make my wine.’ ‘But there are so many decisions, you have to be an expert, so, who did you hire to be your expert? And I’m like, ‘I’m the expert.’ I didn’t convince him. He didn’t think I was the expert.” If you’ve tasted Brianne’s finely-tuned wines, you know she is absolutely an expert. These experiences are myriad, hardly contained to the wine industry, but certainly ingrained in a regressive way that is even more difficult outside of the US and Europe, in places like Georgia, where women winemakers are still quite rare, and even I was scolded at a wine fair in Tbilisi for being a man who wanted to try a rosé. I wasn’t able to reach her for an interview, but Jane Okro of Sister’s Wine [Direct Press 4 Mix/White] is among a small but growing group of women winemakers there.

In societies where feminism has been somewhat effective at changing people’s hearts and minds, there is still much to be done in terms of practical solutions to building equity in the workplace. One of the things that came up in my conversations was mentorship programs. Programs like the Vanguard, The Roots Fund, Batonnage, Hue Society, and others offer mentorship programs to give educational resources, financial

support, and placement opportunities to not just women but people of color and the LGBTQ+ community, all of whom have been historically sidelined or excluded from the wine industry’s focus on rich, white males. If women-owned wineries in California hover around 4%, Tara Gomez points out that “BIPOC women-owned is even smaller, less than 1%.” The good news is that programs like these, only a few years in, seem to be working to rectify some of the inequities. Gomez, herself a member of the Chumash tribe, says, “We truly believe in mentorship and being a role model for other BIPOC members wanting to get into the industry.”

Megan Bell is optimistic as well about the changes she has seen. “There are all these young wine brands, and the vast majority of them are started by women, actually,” she says. “I think what we’re seeing is that women aren’t getting the roles they want in the winery, so they’re like, ‘f&# it, I’m going to start my own label,’ Things like Purity Wine Collective [run by Noel Diaz, Direct Press December 2019] lets people come in and make tiny amounts of wine to get their footing and get started, maybe 30 small winemakers crushing just a few tons of wine a year. It’s so great to see those folks get that opportunity. Those women often work in the restaurant scene in the Bay Area, so that changes how wine is sold to customers because they have a presence there. We’re hopeful to slowly see that infiltrate, however, it will depend on which companies survive, and that’s the sad part.” Bell is referring to the fact that finance and banking is also male-dominated, leaving women winemakers to navigate another realm

where they are underrepresented and sidelined. “Who gets money? Men. That’s why we don’t see a ton of women-owned wineries: historically they don’t have access to capital. The first couple years you don’t need that, but year five? You’re going to need \$100,000 to really ramp up. If you don’t have family money or someone in your corner at the bank helping you – usually a man taking you under their wing – then you’re not going to have that access. But we’re on the forefront and it will spread to the more conventional wine spaces.”

Though the natural wine movement has its issues, many of the women I spoke to felt like it was a much more progressive space that has helped upend a lot of the conventions that has made the wine world unwelcoming for so many, for so long. The work continues, and the things that have been effective at giving more women an entry into the wine industry can be employed to include BIPOC and LGBTQ+ folks as well. First and foremost, though, is listening. Summer Wolff explains, “Something that happens all the time here is men talking over women (in general, but especially in wine). I have developed a pretty thick skin and am able to quickly interrupt the man who has interrupted me by saying firmly, ‘please let me finish what I was saying.’ However, it happens over and over and over again. Giving women a voice is incredibly important.”

Beyond listening, we can support the wines, buy them in easy and hard vintages, smoke vintages and frost damage vintages, and continue to make wine about sharing. This is our third year of an annual women

winemaker’s feature, and I admit I had some doubts about how useful it would be, and whether it would feel performative rather than bringing meaningful insight into the subject. In places like New York or San Francisco, we are used to receptive audiences to these topics. I didn’t want to feel like I was ‘preaching to the choir.’ After speaking with the women behind these wines, it became clear how relevant and urgent the issues around gender equity still are.

We’re just a wine shop, not a non-profit, but these women are also running businesses, and we can help them with the attention and exposure they need to keep pursuing their careers and growing their livelihoods. We have found no shortage of delicious and profound wines from women, and tasting in isolation there are, unsurprisingly, not any qualitative or quantitative differences that I’ve ever noticed between male and female winemakers. Some of the very best wines on the market right now are made by women, and featured in our club regardless of the month. However, a woman’s path to creating that glass of wine is very different from a man’s, and that is an opportunity to use wine as an avenue to explore and better understand the women behind them and the cultural contexts they occupy. This is an ongoing discussion and one that I look forward to continuing to learn from.

Cheers,
Jonathan Kemp

Special thanks to Logan Davis as well as the winemakers interviewed: Megan Bell, Brianne Day, Tara Gomez, Mireia Taribó, and Summer Wolff.

Georgina Marini 'Zero 8' **Bianco 2021**

Lazio • Italy
Press 4 Mix/White

It's amazing that after all these years, so many eyes and attention paid to Italian wine, there's still exciting new work in unique places. Georgina Marini's farm is in an off-the-beaten-path province called Viterbo, at Lazio's northern border with Tuscany and Umbria. Lake Bolsena, the largest volcanic crater-lake in Europe, is the tone setter for the region's terroir, providing all the ingredients for quality grape growing and winemaking: volcanic soils, varied exposures, elevation (1,411 feet) and moderating seasonal temperature changes.

Georgina Marini's work revolves around regenerative farming, with focus on the native varieties found in this part of Lazio: Procanico (a local Trebbiano subtype) for white wines, Aleatico for reds. Grapes are manually pressed and fermented spontaneously with long macerations and in old barrels. The name Zero 8 is for the year that their label was established, and also the year her daughter Ginevra was born, 2008.

"Zero 8" Bianco is a gorgeous, fragrant and engaging wine, textural and savory. Quince, melon, tarragon, chamomile and citrus oil are aromas that come to mind when nosing this medium bodied amber wine. Fine and supple fruit tannins are lifted by brisk and refreshing acidity. Only 175 cases were made (insert crying emoji here). *Bruno Sant'Anna*



Georgina Marini

Sister's Wines Kisi 2019 **Kakheti • Georgia** *Press 4 Mix/White*

Women making wine and bottling them for export is a rarity in Georgia, where bottling traditional wine for export is a new phenomenon in itself. Jane Okruashvili, whose last name is often shortened to Okro, was a political scientist who wanted to be a part of the renaissance of pre-Soviet wines taking place. Her brother John and her now farm about 7 hectares, and are business partners. Most of the wines from their cellar are labeled as Okro's wines but she is making some under her own label, Sister's Wines, as well.

Her Kisi — a bright, energetic white grape — is fermented and aged in the traditional clay *qvevri* without fining, filtration, or sulfur additions. It's definitely a little funky so with zero sulfur and a few years in the bottle, don't expect this to hold up after being open for a day, or even a few hours. However, it is full of snappy tension and punchy fruit. Dried mango, a touch of smoke, nutmeg, and orange pekoe tea. Detailed, chewy textural layers bring it all together. This shows off all my favorite things about this style of Georgian wine: an unmistakable sense of place, a primal thirst-quenching quality, and a raw, rough edge that creates layers of surprising complexity and beauty.

Jonathan Kemp

Judith Beck 'Beck Ink' Red 2020 **Burgenland • Austria**

Press 4 Mix/Red

Judith Beck took over her small family estate in 2014. They have been certified biodynamic since 2007 and asserts that biodynamic viticulture not only improves the quality of soil life but dramatically increases the vibrance and liveliness in her wines. Before taking over her family's estate Judith trained at the famous Bordeaux estate Cos d'Estournel in France. The grapes are destemmed and the fruit is left to macerate on skins for 10 days to achieve a balanced extraction then the wine is racked off of the skins and moved to large neutral acacia barrels for 2 months. The wine finishes aging for 8-10 months in 500-1000 liter

barrels before blending and bottling unfining/unfiltered, with no added sulfur.

This is a fantastic red blend of 80% Zweigelt and 20% St. Laurent. The wine has all the expected characteristics of these two signature Austrian grapes aromas of roses and fresh flowers, a bit of vanilla and sweet spices, zippy acidity, deep berry compote, a bit of that rose juice with light tannic structure that is perfect for

a refreshing winter meal or with a light chill in the summer months. This wine is incredibly stable for a zero-zero wine and manages to be both dark and inky like its namesake with an incredible amount of freshness that keeps it light on its feet. *Jeremy Hernandez*



Cascina Tavijn Vino Rosso 2021

Monferrato • Piedmont • Italy
Press 4 Mix/Red

Cascina Tavijn has been overseen by Nadia Verrua for nearly two decades after taking over from her father, Ottavio. Their roughly seven hectare farm is located in the Piedmont region of Northern Italy. At the age of 23 she returned to the family farm after an instinctual voice pulled her back to the countryside. After a lot of hard work and prodding, Nadia was able to convince her mother, Teresa, to persuade her father to include her in the farming of the grapes, bucking the traditions of Piemontese families

who only had daughters. To our fortune Nadia has been able to continue growing as a winemaker and consistently produces some of the most exciting natural wines to make their way to the states. She chooses to work with grapes which are endemic to their specific area of Monferrato d'Asti. Focusing on Ruche, Grignolino, and Barbera as her main varietals. Her 'Vino Rosso' is comprised of organic Barbera and Freisa from the hillside vineyards of Asti. The 2021 'Vino Rosso' is a prime example of Nadia's commitment to experimentation, care, and quality that we and her devoted enthusiasts have come to expect from her wines.

The grapes are hand-harvested, followed by destemming and a gentle press to start fermentation. A longer, cold fermentation takes place over two months with no temperature

control. Aged in tank and Slavonian oak for about a year before bottling. Unfined, unfiltered with a touch of sulfur at bottling. Only a few bottles of unsulfured wines make it to her husband's restaurant Consorzio (a don't-miss destination) in Turin.

On the nose I detected dark black cherry, spruce and thyme, cacao powder and dried flowers. On the palate I tasted darker purple and blue fruits such as stewed plums and black cherry, lots of food friendly acidity, light tannins lending a bit of earthy grip and a hint of bitter herbal notes on the finish. This is a gorgeous table wine perfect for red sauce dishes and roasted root vegetables. Nadia lovingly refers to her wines as 'supernatural' and I'd tend to agree. Nadia's following is devoted, so we were lucky to snag the lion's share of this recent arrival for our Direct Press members. *Jeremy Hernandez*



Nadia Verrua

PHOTO: J. KEMP

Margins Sangiovese 2020 **Arroyo Seco • Central Coast • California** *Press 4 Red*

Megan Bell of Margins Wine is not just a great winemaker, but a person with many thoughtful insights on how to create more equity in the wine industry. Her path to winemaking was not typical. She knew she wanted to work outdoors so she enrolled in the UC Davis winemaking program at the age of 18, with no wine background. She had been working in outdoor education but figured she wasn't going to be able to make a living teaching kids about nature. Eventually she not only found her way to working outdoors but to making some of our favorite 'New California' wines. She is meticulous about her vineyards, farms many herself, and pays her workers 30% more than they would likely be earning elsewhere.

She told me her Sangiovese from 2020 was the "hardest, hardest wine I've ever made and the worst pick I've ever had." She went through the fire lines to pick these grapes, and in the smoky conditions with a small crew, what normally would take two hours took ten. After all that, she had to wash the ash off the grapes back in Santa Cruz. The results were far better than expected. There is some smoke but I find it works well with Sangiovese's earthy, musty nature and adds a nice dimension to the wine without it tasting like a campfire. Black cherry, sage, fine texture, and a nice balance of fruit and tannin. Smoke taint is only going to be more prevalent in the future,

and maintaining fruit contracts with grape farmers is important for their livelihoods. It will take winemakers like Megan who can take on these challenges and make creative calls in the cellar to turn nature's chaos into something delicious. *Jonathan Kemp*



Summer Wolff

Summer Wolff 'Gio Gio' Vino Rosso 2021 **Monferrato • Piedmont • Italy** *Press 4 Red*

Summer Wolff has worked in nearly every part of the wine industry, beginning in restaurants, which led to private client sales for an importer, which led to her starting two import companies, first Indie Wineries and now Hootenanny Wines. Since 2008 she has lived with her husband Fabrizio Iuli in the small Monferrato village where his family has made wines for over 100 years. 2021 saw her start her own wine label. Though she is actively involved in Cascina Iuli, she felt that she would never be

respected as a winemaker until her name was on the bottle.

The 'Gio Gio' Rosso, named for her son, Gioachino, is 100% Freisa from her neighbor, Rosalba, who has farmed organically for decades. Rosalba (who is in her 70s) drives the tractor, works the land, and with her daughters, had one of the first organic food stores in the area. The wine is fermented in a mix of steel and the traditional local concrete vats. It's a balanced, detailed take on Friesa, which used to be made only into sweet wines and, I find, can get hot and clunky in the wrong hands. This is not the case here. It has chewy tannins, snappy cranberry acids, silky black cherry, and a touch of cooling basil on the finish. It's full of clarity, vibrance, and just enough earth to make it undeniably

Piemontese while not sacrificing anything in the way of pleurably fresh quaffability.

Jonathan Kemp

Day Wines 'Lemonade' 2022 **Willamette Valley • Oregon** *Press 4 White*

We're unabashed fans of Brianne Day's work, as you likely recall reading about her and her wines on email offers, wine club features etc. Her story in wine is of curiosity, perseverance, entrepreneurship and empowerment. Impactful experiences

in 2011 doing harvest at Huber-Verdereau in Volnay and with Belle Pente in Yamhill, Oregon led to her first press in 2012. It's a rich and interesting story — visiting wineries, harvesting at a number of different vineyards in different countries — I highly recommend a listen to her interview on the Oregon Wine History Archive podcast. In her vision of creating a space to engage in a larger conversation outside of Oregon Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris.

Lemonade Rosé has become a little bit of a symbol of this resilience and commitment to growers. Originally it was made out of necessity, a way to use the smoke-tainted Pinot Noir from the 2020 fires without breaking her fruit contracts, as so many others did. It was really an

effort to make the proverbial lemonade out of lemons, but it turned out so well it is now on its third vintage, now free of smoke taint. Regardless of how difficult a harvest is there's room to "make lemonade." A very welcome message in a bottle. Crushable, crisp, with strawberry, watermelon rind and a grapefruity zing. A wine to unwind and energize.

Bruno Sant'Anna

Barbara Öhlzelt 'Kitz' **G'mischter Satz 2021** **Kamptal • Austria** *Press 4 White*



Barbara Öhlzelt

Barbara Öhlzelt is another in Austria's Kamptal region who, along with Arndorfer and Jurtschitsch, are going against the grain, making lighter, fresher wines instead of the more powerful, rich style that has been Kamptal's claim to fame. Barbara's first vintage was 2004 and she has been unassumingly making some of the most precise, crisply detailed wines in the area with just seven hectares of vines.

The 'Kitz' Gemischter Satz is a classic Austrian field blend that includes Rivaner, Grüner Veltliner, Gelber Muskateller, and Weissburgunder. It's invigorating and vivid, with a grassy, citrusy cut. Underripe pear notes and a zesty, mineral finish make this the perfect 'crisp, dry white.' It will give you a nice jolt of Vitamin C on a cold day and cool you down during the most sweltering heat wave.

Jonathan Kemp

Camins 2 Dreams Spear **Vineyards Syrah 2019** **Sta. Rita Hills • California** *Press 2*

This is a story of two incredibly accomplished wine pros coming together in all aspects of life. Mireia Taribó earned her Masters in Enology while making wine at an artisanal winery in Catalunya. Around the same time, Tara Gomez, a member of the Chumash tribe, was also earning an Enology degree at Fresno State, and working at a couple of large wineries while starting her own artisanal project. In 2008, Tara put her projects on hold to travel and gain experience abroad, and during that time she worked two harvests at

Castell d'Encus, the same winery where Mireia was the winemaker. Tara made a return to California in 2010, and started a successful winery in partnership with her Chumash Tribe called Kitá Wines, and in 2017 the wife/wife team finally joined forces and began their own label, Camins 2 Dreams, sourcing fruit from very specific sites in the Santa Rita Hills region of Santa Barbara County.

There is a lot of detail to their Spear Vineyard Syrah. The wine fermented naturally with 20% whole clusters and was aged for seven months in neutral casks. The result is highly aromatic and pure: boysenberry, lavender, sarsaparilla and mushroom were my notes. Tannins are open-knit and a vibrant streak of acidity echoes the vineyards cool terroir and lifts this wine's richness. There is some Northern Rhone seriousness but with an added lift that comes from these ocean-influenced vines. You can tell there's a very high taste level, love and care here. Tara and Mireia told us they hope to "see and promote change from conventional farming to regenerative farming so we can preserve the land for future generations. Also, that more people care for and show more respect for the land, the food, and the workers." Enough said. *Bruno Sant'Anna*

La Stoppa 'Macchiona' 2012 **Emilia-Romagna • Italy** *Press 2*

La Stoppa has a long and rich history in the Emilia-Romagna region in Northern Italy. Founded over a century ago, Elena Pantaleoni began to lead the winery in the mid 90's that

her family acquired in 1973. The vineyards are farmed organically according to the Suolo and Salute method. The average age of the vines and poor soils lend to a lower yield and higher concentration of character in the grapes. The wines are made with a minimalist approach in the cellar.

All the vineyard work is conducted by hand to ensure that great attention is paid to the selection of the grapes that make it into the wine. The younger grapes make their way into younger wines like the Trebbiolo and the older vines lend their grapes to producing long-aging wines as in the 2012 Macchiona. Since the mid 90's when Elena took the helm the winery made the decision to cultivate primarily local varieties such as Barbera and Bonarda for their red grapes, Malvasia di Candia Aromatica,

Ortrugo and Trebbiano for white grapes.

The Macchiona is Barbera and Bonarda macerated on the skins for 30 days using only indigenous yeasts, fermented in stainless steel vats, and matured in Slavonian oak for 12 months and aged a further minimum of 2 years in the bottle. This long aging and maceration results in a beautiful meaty iron laden wine with aromas of raunchy wild berries, pickled okra, dusty rustic spices and finishes with a note of sour cherries with just enough umami and tannin to make it a contender for heavier fare like braised meats and rich cheeses. The wines of La Stoppa are truly characters in and of themselves, each occupying a specific mood with an alluring charisma that cultivates enthusiasts the world over. *Jeremy Hernandez*



Elena Panteleoni



Above and back cover: Mareia Taribó and Tara Gomez of Camins 2 Dreams



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