

# Fine Vines

## All in the Family

by Eunice Fried

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The Lungarotti sisters maintain their father's high standards for Umbrian wines.

In 1962, Giorgio Lungarotti founded Cantine Lungarotti in Torgiano, a small town 10 miles from Umbria's capital, Perugia. At the time, the province of Umbria in central Italy was not as well known for its wines as Tuscany, its neighbor to the west, but Giorgio Lungarotti was determined to change that. And change it he did.

Six years after establishing his winery, his Rubesco Rosso di Torgiano became one of the first wines to receive a DOC, Italy's official guarantee of a wine's origin and merit of quality. Rubesco became Lungarotti's flagship wine. Made of Sangiovese with 30 percent Canaiolo grapes, Rubesco is an easy drinking red wine of medium body with ripe berries and a bit of spice in its aroma. You'll find it priced at around \$15.

Leaping up in price is Rubesco Riserva, Vigna Monticchio, which generally sells for \$45. A deep colored, intense wine of great concentration, it has a mix of spice and fruit in its bouquet. But there is no mix in its grapes; all its Sangiovese and Canaiolo come from a single vineyard, Monticchio.

Still higher up the quality/price ladder is San Giorgio, a wine made half of Umbria's traditional grapes, Sangiovese and Canaiolo, half of Cabernet Sauvignon. First produced in 1977 and bearing Giorgio's signature in the glass, it is elegant, of great complexity, extremely well-balanced, well-structured and full-bodied. It is priced at about \$55.

In the course of three decades, Giorgio built Lungarotti into one of the most prestigious wineries not only in Umbria, but in all of Italy. Upon his death in 1999, his daughter Chiara became the winery's managing director at the age of 27, and with her youthful ideas and innovations she has guided the winery on a path that intertwines tradition with modernity. Chiara's sister, Teresa Severini, is the company's winemaker and export director.

Among the other wines in the Lungarotti collection is the moderately priced Torre Di Giano (about \$14), a fresh, light, white wine with a perfume of flowers and green apple meant to be drunk young. Another affordable selection is Lungarotti's flavorful, crisp Pinot Grigio (about \$15), the first of this varietal in Umbria, with a hint of tropical fruits and mint. And there are many more.

All this now, and the sisters have just begun



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