

# PANIZZI

May 6, 2001

Dear Paolo:

During my trip to the USA in April and May 2001, I noticed it was emphasized that my Vernaccia di San Gimignano is the most expensive in all the markets, with only one exception. I will explain why I believe it should be so, both in Italy and in America.

The production of my vineyards barely reaches six tons per hectare, while the maximum legal limit is nine tons per hectare. Of this tonnage I produce 35-40 hectoliters per hectare while the legal limit is 63. By this selective approach I produce wines that are much more structured and concentrated. Because of the high concentration of sugar in my grapes, my Vernaccia is capable of aging for many years, negating the common belief that Italian white wines should only be consumed when young. Actually, it is my opinion that my Vernaccia shows best when aged because at that point the complexity of its aromas and flavors is displayed very evidently. That is my "true" Vernaccia.

Some time ago I had at my winery a vertical tasting from vintage 1991 until 1999 and the most highly rated was 1992.

In order to get a richer and more "iron-clad" white wine – my Vernaccia is never below 13% - it is necessary to manicure the vineyards carefully. Along with the usual agricultural procedures, close individual attention is given to each vine. Several passes through the rows are made to remove the unwanted leaves and to thin out the clusters in order to obtain maximum ripeness.

As for the Riserva, I remind you that mine is produced with both alcoholic and malolactic fermentation occurring in French barriques for 11 months. Therefore, the expense of the barrique is applied only to the mere 60 gallons of wine it produces. The same barrique could be used more than once during the same period of time, but the result would surely not be the same.

All this attention in the vineyard and in the cellar, combined with the use of state-of-the-art equipment offer reasons for my higher prices, while at least hopefully assuring a higher quality of wine.

Cordially,

Gianni

Azienda Agricola Panizzi – Podere Santa Margherita  
Località Racciano 34 – 53037 San Gimignano (Siena)