



## Platinum Best in Category Sweet Tuscany over £15 Fattoria La Vialla, Vin Santo Occhio di Pernice 2010 (15%) 375ml

This wine has a fascinatingly nuanced sweetness but is clean throughout, with a very long finish. Exciting aromas leap from the glass – walnuts, dates and baking spices – and on the palate it is rich with molasses and caramel encased by clove and anise notes, with a sea-salt finish.

£15 La Vialla

Tasted against III Fattoria La Vialla, Riserva, Vin Santo del Chianti 2011 III Fattoria La Vialla, Vin Santo del Chianti 2012 III Tenuta Badia di Morrona, Vin Santo del Chianti 2010

FEW WINEMAKERS TODAY are dedicating themselves to the long and complex occhio di pernice vinification process, says Fattoria La Vialla oenologist, Marco Cervellera.

He says the most important phases are the harvesting of perfect healthy bunches, their laying out in the winery's vin santo cellar, and the patience to wait for the slow withering of the grapes. Only after fermenting and oxidising slowly for years in small wooden caratelli barrels is it transformed into the luscious nectar that is bottled.

Production of this Platinum-winner is little more than 7,000 half bottles. It represents the winery's ethos of independence and pushing the boundaries, while at the same time honouring traditional winemaking. Occhio di pernice – a rosé style of vin santo made with Sangiovese (this is a blend of Sangiovese tand Trebbiano) – has a longer history than regular white grape-based vin santo, and in the 17th century was mentioned in poem written by physician and philosopher Francesco Redi.

Fattoria La Vialla also won a Platinum for one of its unfiltered whites this year (see p111), as well as picking up a slew of Gold medals.





95

## Platinum Best in Category White Tuscany IGT over £15 Fattoria La Vialla, Barriccato Bianco 2014 (35%)

Intentionally cloudy and unfiltered with a very pure, natural character. Vibrant nose of ripe citrus, spicy florals and hay then good weight on the palate, which has discreet tamins, exotic fruit, gentle acidity and a long, mineral finish.

£15 La Vialla

Tasted against No other Golds in this category

IT'S NOT THAT long ago, says winemaker Marco Cervellera, that opaque or cloudy wines that were entered into wine competitions were discarded without being tasted. 'This is our seventh unfiltered wine, and we will be producing more and more,' he adds.

Pattoria La Vialla is owned by the Lo Franco family, which has always had a strong commitment to organic – and now biodynamic – practices. 'How can anyone think that impoverishing the soil, depleting it of any living organisms for fear of pests or weeds, can be sustainable and produce healthy food and drink?' asks Antonio Lo Franco (pictured above, with brothers Gianni and Bandino).

This Platinum winner is made from Chardonnay and Viognier which, while not indigenous to Italy, can still be made into a unique, characteristic wine when treated with care, says Cervellera.

Thanks to the constant presence of yeast lees in unfiltered wines, which act as natural antioxidants, Fatroria La Vialla needs to add very little SO, to this wine (already at a very low level, even by Demeter's strict biodynamic parameters), which makes it ideal for those with allergies to sulphur.

The estate has another Platinumwinning sweet wine at this year's DWWA (see p114).