

Wine of the day with red in dry summer climate produce small hearted grapes rich in colour and flavour. You can see this in traditional's 'Biancane' 'Biancane' Red, a tangy, intensely crimson-colored, glass-textured, vibrant, energetic, robust and elegant from blood holes with a well-judged mix of blackberry and strawberry fruit and vanilla oak (from barrel aging).

## CHIANTI-STYLE REDS

Chianti is the classic red wine of Tuscany, a fresh, tangy wine traditionally drunk young in the bars of Siena and Florence. The best modern chianti is also made as a more serious, age-able red for wine lovers, a wine with biting red-plum flavours that take on softer balsamic notes as the wine gets older. Chianti and Chianti-style reds are made mainly from the sangiovese grape blended with a seasoning of other local grapes or French ones like cabernet sauvignon and merlot (for 100 per cent sangiovese reds, see p. 172-73).

### *Fattoria La Vialla, Casa Conforto Chianti Superiore (Tuscany, Italy)*

Via di Meliciano 26, 52029 Castiglion Fibocchi (AR = Arezzo), Italy  
T: +39 0575.430020 [www.lavialla.it](http://www.lavialla.it)

Visiting Fattoria La Vialla in central Tuscany is like taking a step back in time. The owners, the Lo Franco family, have managed to preserve their 1,350-hectare (3,335-acre) estate as a biodiverse, mixed farm rather than doing what so many other Tuscan estates of this size did from the 1960s onwards, which was to concentrate on a single crop, like, say, wine or olives, as was believed to be more cost effective. La Vialla has 190 hectares of biodynamic vineyards for its mainly Chianti red wines (Demeter certified).





*Fattoria La Violla in Tuscany, Italy, is an unusually diverse farm and vineyard.*  
Fattoria La Violla





It also has 14,000 olive trees for oil (produced in La Vialla's own mill), 1,250 sheep for meat and for milk for pecorino cheese, plus 800 chickens for meat and eggs. There are also over 200 hectares of arable land for cereal crops, providing wheat for bread, pasta and biscuits; plus pastures, bee hives and fruit trees for preserves, sauces, jams and honey. The remaining 700-odd hectares is woodland (oak, chestnut and pine), which provides firewood and wooden stakes for the farm and vineyard.

What the Lo Franco family have found is that having such a diverse range of crops is qualitatively better and gives their products an edge in the market. To make enough biodynamic horn manure 500 for all its crops, La Vialla buries a staggering 600 manure-filled cow horns every autumn. Green waste from all the different crops gets recycled into well-maintained piles of biodynamic compost, which then gets spread wherever it is needed. You don't have to be a soil microbiologist to see the difference in colour and texture between La Vialla's dark, smooth, crumbly-looking soils and those of La Vialla's conventional neighbours, which are bleached and full of large, hard clods of earth that look more like rocks. I don't think you can make good wine in general or good Chianti in particular from cement-like soils. La Vialla's Chianti Superiore 'Casa Conforto' is made mainly from sangiovese. It's a pretty, country lunchtime wine with supple red-plum and cherry flavours that leave a refreshing aftertaste. Try with Tuscan sausages accompanied by white (cannellini) beans in tomato sauce.