



## MASSERIA ALTEMURA: OPENING OF THE NEW ESTATE

### *THE HISTORY AND PRESENT OF THE ZONIN FAMILY'S NEW WINE-PRODUCING DOMAINE IN SALENTO, PUGLIA*

On October, the 13<sup>th</sup>, the Zonin family celebrates the opening of its new winery, the **Tenuta Masseria Altemura**, in the Salento Peninsula, Puglia. The most recently acquired wine Estate of Casa Vinicola Zonin, part of an ancient farm and built in the traditional architectural style of the area, aims to be one of the outstanding leading wine estates in Puglia and in Italy as a whole.

Masseria Altemura is situated in the commune of Torre Santa Susanna, equidistant between the seas that lie off Puglia's shores: the Ionian and the Adriatic. The property lies in a unique natural environment on the ridge of the Murgia hills, standing over a layer of pure, fresh water, surrounded by the dazzling, magical light of the Salento Peninsula and caressed by breezes that are always temperate.

This enchanting spot, inhabited in ancient times by the Messapians, is immersed in an important historical context: nearby lies the Castle of Oria, the famous and evocative Norman edifice built in 1350 by Frederick II of Swabia and subsequently acquired by the noble family of the Counts Martini Carissimo. Following the purchase by Cavaliere Gianni Zonin, the ancient buildings and the massive tower built at the time of Aragonese domination have been completely restored, in perfect accord with the local architecture and landscape.

In the estate's 130 hectares of vineyards the Zonins have decided to cultivate only indigenous grape varieties such as **Primitivo**, **Negroamaro** and **Aglianico**, as well as the white **Fiano**, pursuing a rigorously scientific – one might even say “Cartesian” – approach in the vineyards and winery: one which refines and enhances the exuberant personality of the wines of Southern Italy.

The substantial bio-architectural and landscaping operation carried out at Masseria Altemura also involved the soil, a clay loam interspersed with numerous calcareous rocks. Thanks to the innovative – and hitherto never practised in Puglia technique of “**pulverization**” - the blocks of limestone were in fact crushed and mixed in with the earth. The land was then subdivided into lots that alternate light-coloured areas of stone with dark ones of red earth. The **sunlight** is therefore reflected in different ways onto the bunches within a single vineyard, thus favouring different levels of ripeness in the grapes. In this way, by modulating skilfully the characteristics of vigour, freshness and finesse, one can therefore obtain excellent and characterful Puglian wines.



The wines of Masseria Altemura (supervised by Estate Director Antonio Cavallo) are the result of the hard work of the technical team, coordinated by **Stefano Ferrante** – Chief Winemaker of Casa Vinicola Zonin – and by **Carlo De Biasi** – Chief Agronomist for Casa Vinicola Zonin.

The wines are expressions of outstanding quality obtained in deference to tradition and to the characteristics of the region, in line with a philosophy that has always aimed to recuperate and highlight the values of **indigenous varieties** and concentrate on the interrelationship between human, historical/cultural and environmental heritage.

**Masseria Altemura** represents an **all-encompassing production model**, which is based on the use of resources that are present locally, is mindful regarding the materials and types of energy employed and creates added value for the countryside and the community in which it exists and operates.

It is no accident that a great deal of attention is paid to the use of water, a fundamental environmental resource whose availability can never be taken for granted. For this reason, innovative emergency irrigation systems have been adopted at this estate that allow one to optimize the use of the water available.

*“I’ve always been fascinated by the “Masserie” of Puglia: I have visited lots of them, ever since I was a young man and I went there to study the typical grape varieties of that area”* declares the President of Casa Vinicola Zonin, Gianni Zonin. *“I am proud, therefore, that our family has also put down roots in this zone of the Salento Peninsula, an extraordinary region and an ideal location for producing great wines from indigenous grape varieties”*.

The Zonin family places great stress on all matters regarding the environment and the local area, developing and using strategies and methods in the vineyards that are geared towards a production process that is completely ecologically sustainable. And Masseria Altemura is the finest example of this philosophy.

*Torre Santa Susanna, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2012.*

*For information:*

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