

# Wine

INTERNATIONAL

## Carmenère on the Italian scene



Carmenère champions: Ca' Del Bosco (above) produces a 100% Carmenère;

The Italian view

Ca' Del Bosco in Franciacorta is perhaps the only producer really keen to enter Carmenère officially in the provincial listing of authorised wine varieties. Since 1993 it has been vinifying its Cabernet Franc and Carmenère separately. Today it has 8ha of Carmenère, of which 4ha of 25-year-old vines are in production; the remaining four hectares were planted in 2000 to a higher density. The first 30,000 bottles of 100% Carmenère, from the 1997 vintage, were launched in 2000.

'We started experimenting by grafting and thinning out the plants and leaves to reduce the intensity of the vegetal notes,' says Paolo Bonini, agronomist for Ca' Del Bosco. 'Lower yields and better ripening help to bring out the unique character and potential of this wine. It is deep and dark in colour with very round tannins and rich red fruity aromas, which are today more evident, while compared to the past, the herbaceous notes are only slightly noticeable.'

### 91 Ca'Del Bosco Carmenero Vino da Tavola, Italy

'Grassy and appealing with a ripe, intense palate and smooth, ripe tannins. This is lovely. Very characterful and pleurably drinkable with the right blend of green pepper, spice and sweet fruit.' *CM*

'Dark stone fruits with white pepper spice coming through. Excellent fruit quality, well-handled wood, finely grained tannins and excellent concentration.' *ML*

Drink 2003-2007

Contact: +39 0307 766111



SAMANTHA CAPORN is Wine International's tastings co-ordinator



The Istituto Sperimentale per la Viticoltura has since published a study on the distinctions between Carmenère and Cabernet Franc drawing on the different physiological characteristics of Carmenère, such as its vigour, early ripening and poor fertility, while chemical analysis shows a distinctive herbaceous character.

'The distinction between Cabernet Franc and Carmenère is quite clear,' says Mario Fregoni, professor of viticulture at the Catholic University of Piacenza. 'Not only is the Carmenère DNA analysis different but the leaves are smaller, the pips are different and the wines are characterised by softer, smoother tannins. The wines are complex and well-structured, rich in colour.'

Assumed name: in Italy most Carmenère is still labelled as 'Italian' Cabernet Franc, even though Carmenère and Cabernet Franc show distinct differences