



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
WINE MERCHANTS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON



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HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES  
WINE MERCHANTS  
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED  
LONDON

CORNEY &  
BARROW

INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS-1780

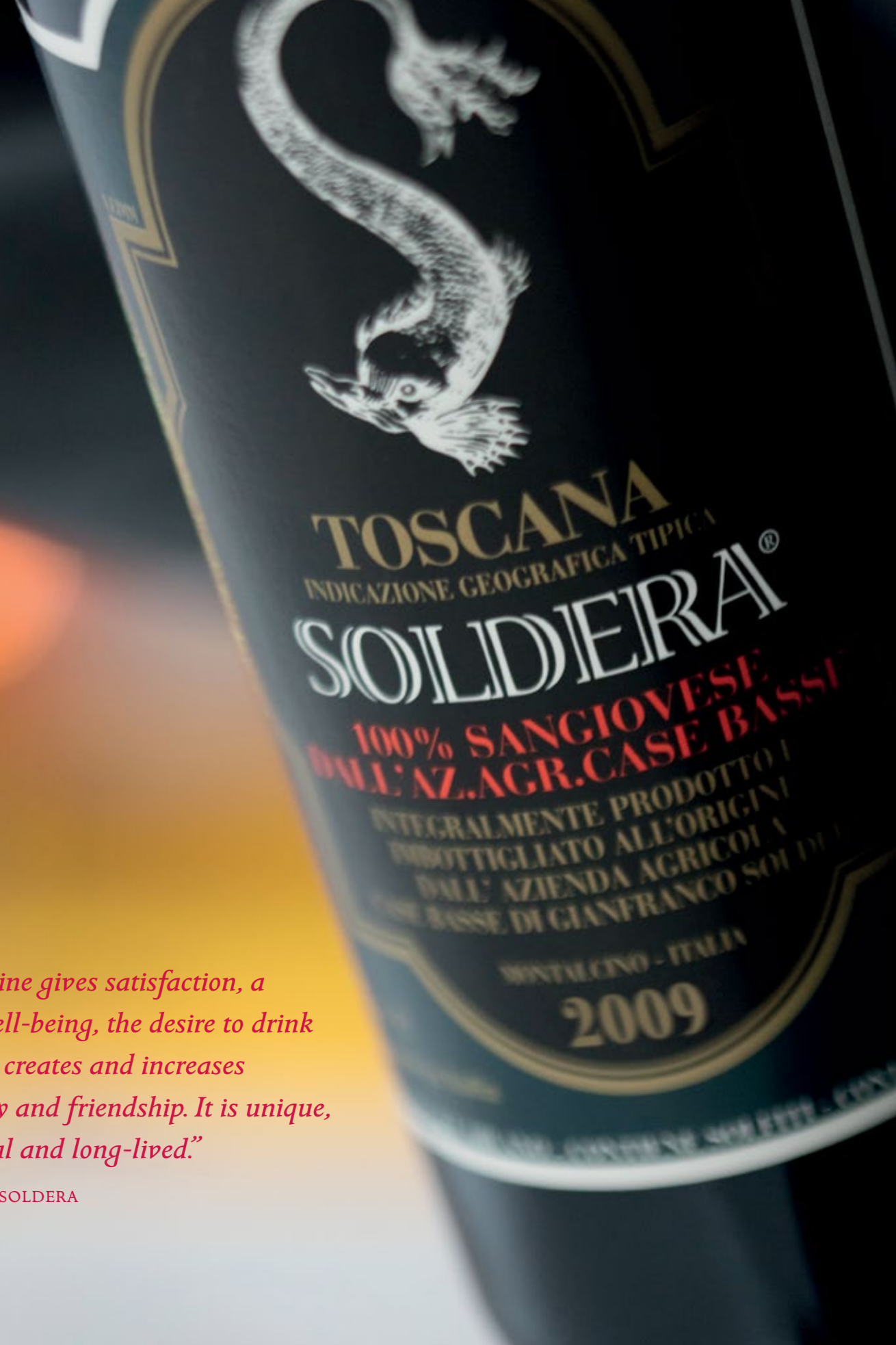
# SOLDIERA

2009 VINTAGE

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN  
HONG KONG, SINGAPORE, MAINLAND CHINA, MACAU, THAILAND, MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA

*“A great wine gives satisfaction, a sense of well-being, the desire to drink it again; it creates and increases conviviality and friendship. It is unique, rare, typical and long-lived.”*

GIANFRANCO SOLDERA



# INTRODUCTION

I cannot quite believe we are now releasing the fourth vintage since we started representing Gianfranco Soldera in Hong Kong, Singapore, Mainland China, Macau, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Time has flown by.

The initial introduction to this great estate was made when Roberto Conterno so very generously drove Adam, Alison and myself from his magnificent estate in Barolo all the way down to Brunello di Montalcino. As a lover, some would say obsessively so, of Italian wines, to be walking through the wonderful gardens at Case Basse with both Roberto and Gianfranco was one of those “pinch yourself” moments. There is such drive, focus, energy and generosity about both men. I think it is correct to say that any cellar should contain Soldera. The excitement this wine provides is extraordinary. This is why I have chosen, later in the offer, to write a little about serving and when to drink this wine. Sangiovese is a difficult variety to get right but what Gianfranco manages to produce defines, for me, just how good it can be. It is impossible to separate the man from the wine with Soldera. Every trip we make there feels part lecture, part passionate speech, but above all a re-union, the twinkle in the eye giving an insight into this eternally young mind of Mr Soldera. It always involves drinking his wine and usually at Il Silene, in Seggiano run by his great friend Roberto Rossi. I am smiling just thinking about some of the conversations, often unrepeatable, often very late at night. Simply put, this is one of the world's greatest wine estates and a wine made by one of the wine world's great men. Importantly, both Monica and Mauro Soldera are involved at the estate which provides a family feeling but also a very bright and consistent future.

*William Hargrove*

WILL HARGROVE  
Head of Fine Wine

# BACKGROUND

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Gianfranco Soldera was formerly an insurance broker in Milan but with a family history in wine. Gianfranco's grandfather made wine near Treviso, where Gianfranco was born.

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With winemakers also on his mother's side, Gianfranco fostered ambitions to find a few hectares where he and his wife Graziella might try their hand at producing world class wine. It is important here to be clear: if Gianfranco did not think he would make truly superb wine he simply would not bother. Having looked at the Veneto, Piedmont (a region he loves) and the rest of Tuscany, they discovered an abandoned old farmhouse in Montalcino. The surrounding land was considered unsuitable for vines. Gianfranco disagreed, something he is notoriously confident in doing. Absolutely convinced by the potential of the soil and situation, he promptly acquired the property. He started from scratch, planting only Sangiovese, on two small plots, Case Basse and Vigna Intistesti. Obsessive from the outset about the pursuit of quality, he was convinced that a complex ecosystem has to be sustained in order to provide an ideal habitat for growing vines.



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# VINEYARD & THE CELLAR

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“Soldera’s undeniable passion - some may say fanaticism - fuels his perennial search for perfection.”

“ KERIN O’KEEFE IN “BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO”

The two adjacent vineyards - Case Basse and Vigna Intistiesti - lie on the southern side of Montalcino, facing southwest. In total it is about two hectares in size, planted in 1972. The density is 7000 vines per hectare, planted on limestone and schist. The Case Basse soil, on lower ground, is heavy and produces a richer wine. Gianfranco’s idea of the perfect ecosystem extends beyond the vineyards but the vines are, in turn, sustained by it. Case Basse is constantly evolving as Gianfranco looks for ways in which to encourage a bird and insect-rich environment. The vines themselves are tended with extraordinary attention to detail. Everything is done by hand, pruning hard and short in winter and then a further green pruning during the season. Oat straw is scattered between the vines, revitalising the soil, allowing it to breathe and protecting the roots. Totally organic, Gianfranco is clear in his own mind that foreign agents ultimately end up in the wine. There are endless studies with many universities always ongoing in and around the vineyards.

It is very clear to Gianfranco that great wine is made through ruthless selection in the vineyard. There is however a contrast between the intervention in the vineyard and the total absence of it in the cellar. We asked

Gianfranco how he learned what to do as an outsider, imagining how distinctly unpopular he probably was with his neighbours, this city boy from the north. He learned most from Giulio Gambelli who turned out to be something of a kindred spirit. They share similar views on how to make wine – namely with minimal intervention, no temperature control, no added yeasts, just long maceration on the skins and long ageing in large Slavonian *botti*. Firm friends, G.Gambelli continues to be a consultant. The extraordinary cellar was recently constructed and has an innate beauty in its contrived simplicity. It is completely cement- and plaster-free, the walls having been built with stones wedged into wire netting and the floor is cobbled. This is all to allow the very building to breathe and the wine to mature even more slowly than in the past. When you taste in the cellar, direct from the large *botti* (barrels), there is absolutely no spitting allowed. I wouldn’t want to, but I have never come across this “rule” anywhere else.

At bottling time, the wine is not filtered and the bottles, unique to this estate, have been chosen for optimal wine conservation, dark in colour, long-necked to take long and supreme quality corks. Once bottled, the wine is then given time to acclimatise. The label sports a symbolic dolphin, sacred to Dionysus, god of wine and fertility.

# WHEN AND HOW TO DRINK SOLDERA

This may seem a patronising title for a section of this offer. It is not meant to be.

I feel strongly that the many different ways in which Brunello is made can lead to some popular misconceptions that should not apply to this specific wine. Gianfranco is also very definite on how his wines should be served. The wine should always be served cool, at what one might refer to as cellar temperature, allowing time to open and evolve. It should not be decanted. If a decanter must be used for an older bottle then it should be as narrow and bottle-shaped as possible. Gianfranco has also designed his own glasses which we hope to be able to offer soon. He believes that glasses should not be too wide.

Personally, I feel the biggest missed opportunity occurs by people assuming these are bold, rich wines that have to be aged for extended time. They do age exceptionally well but to not drink these wines in youth as well as with age is a fundamental mistake. A great wine is always a great wine and that is never truer than here. Soldera wines have amongst the widest drinking windows of any wines I know. I think Alison summed it up very well in the 2006 offer: “Tasting these wines one can only marvel at their complexity, their ability to be luscious, weightless, elegant, refined and yet powerful. They have subliminal authority and intensity.”



*“You can tell a great wine by its harmony,  
elegance, complexity and naturalness”*

GIANFRANCO SOLDERA

# 2009 VINTAGE

# TASTING NOTES

The production is equivalent to just over 8500 bottles. From very few producers do we get such a detailed vintage report. The 2009 season certainly came in two distinct halves. There were 142 days from flowering to harvest, the first half of this from flowering to *véraison* (the change in colour of the grapes) characterised by lower temperatures than average but higher rainfall. Conversely from *véraison* to harvest there were higher temperatures and restricted rainfall. This drier and warmer second half to the season meant the harvest could be done under superb conditions. The harvest was made on October 3<sup>rd</sup> with the grapes having been analysed from the end of August.

The spontaneous fermentations, in truncated cone-shaped Slavonian oak vats all went smoothly. Bottling was done without fining or filtration 70 months later.

## SOLDERA 2009

Only one large barrel. A limpid ruby, this is an extraordinary wine. It presents a tremendously complex nose managing to be sweet, floral and spicy. A little orange rind, then delicious fruit, deep and persistent. Red berries with a little dash of black in the background. Some herbs and spices, very fine, remarkably gentle, almost notes of raspberry in there too. Lovely red fruits then continue in waves, good but gentle acidity, some salinity as well. A wine that both begs to be drunk but makes you want to savour every mouthful.

Corney & Barrow Score 18 - 18,5

Recommended drinking from 2017 - 2037+

Price On Application

## ORDERS & ALLOCATIONS

We are very proud to have been given exclusive representation of Soldera, Case Basse in Hong Kong, Singapore, Mainland China, Macau, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia.

We anticipate that demand will be high for these wines. Combined with the severely limited production, this may mean that we have to allocate the more sought-after wines. Please bear with us whilst we gather requests – we will endeavor to confirm your order by 20th May 2016.

The wines are currently stored in the estate's cellars so please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery to our UK cellars.

## THE VINTAGES AHEAD

Despite the well documented loss of nearly 600 hectolitres of wines from vintages 2007 to 2012 the estate is gradually getting back to normality in terms of production. However, the extended ageing of these wines in botti means it will be some time before we see a release of a full production vintage. Following the 2009 vintage, there will not be a commercial bottling of 2010, with only a few larger formats being bottled exclusively for sale at charity auction. 2011 and 2012 are both, very sadly, minute. This will logically be followed by 2013 (two large barrels) and 2014 (one barrel) before the slightly more normally sized 2015, which we tasted when we last visited and which Gianfranco is clearly excited about.



# TO ORDER

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Please contact

## SINGAPORE

Telephone +65 6221 8530  
Email [singapore@corneyandbarrow.com](mailto:singapore@corneyandbarrow.com)  
Address 101 Cecil Street, #16-07 Tong Eng Building, Singapore, 069533

## HONG KONG

Telephone +852 3694 3333  
Email [hongkong@corneyandbarrow.com](mailto:hongkong@corneyandbarrow.com)  
Address Unit D, 6th Floor, 9 Queen's Road Central



