



“At Trinoro, I was driven by an emotional realisation that I was in a perfect place, aesthetically speaking. I had found a place where I was very happy to be.”

ANDREA FRANCHETTI



INTRODUCTION

The Franchettis are a noble Italian family, the Venetian side of which married into the Rothschild dynasty. Hemmingway was a family friend. An aunt married the American artist Cy Twombly.



A ski jump in Cortina and several Italian roads are named after them. They own a row of palaces on Rome's Via Gregoriana and a stake in the US textiles giant Milliken.

Andrea Franchetti left school early, cycling and hitchhiking to Afghanistan, before moving to Manhattan and finally back to Rome, where he married his Sicilian girlfriend.

Even more interesting, however is that despite this charmed background, his enduring legacy will be entirely self-made. In little more than 25 years, Andrea has founded two world-class wine estates.

Tenuta di Trinoro in Tuscany and Tenuta di Passopisciaro

in Sicily are both best-in-class examples of what can be done with Bordeaux varieties in the Val d'Orcia and with Nerello Mascalese on the slopes of Mount Etna.

These are extraordinary wines, made where no one else dared (although many have subsequently followed). Corney & Barrow is proud to represent them exclusively in both the United Kingdom and Hong Kong.

Guy Seddon

GUY SEDDON
September 2018



Andrea Franchetti



TUSCANY: TENUTA DI TRINORO

“A godforsaken place... with an ex-volcano between it and the sea.”

ANDREA FRANCHETTI

In 1990, the 41 year-old Andrea Franchetti spent some time alone at Trinoro. He had bought the ancient stone farmhouse and surrounding 50 hectares of land a decade earlier (by selling a Cy Twombly painting) but had never developed it. In his words, “I went crazy for the place – I was mesmerised”. He decided to make wine there, planting the first vines in 1992, with the help of friends in Bordeaux.

Andrea admits that agriculture seemed “the most boring thing in the world”. He also had little love for Tuscany’s native Sangiovese grape. Inspired by the “earthiness and elegance” of the great Cabernet Franc-driven wines of the right bank of Bordeaux, he resolved to make this unfashionable variety the focus at Trinoro.

The first commercially released vintage was 1997, since when Tenuta di Trinoro has become an outstanding ambassador for both Cabernet Franc and this previously unknown corner of inland Tuscany. The estate’s 100% Merlot wine, Palazzi, provides a supple yet full-throttled counterpoint, whilst the young vines *cuvée*, Le Cupole, is an unmissable introduction to Trinoro.



2016 VINTAGE NOTES

A mild winter and spring, a cool start to summer, then...

August had two hot weeks, during which the winds dropped. Andrea points to this as key to the development of body in his 2016s. September saw some rain, causing the grapes to swell a little. The Merlot started to ripen on 18th September and the team prepared for harvest, which started on the 24th. "I thought: this will be sensational wine"... The last load of Merlot came into the winery at the end of the long day of the 30th.

In the first days of October, a light rain fell on the Cabernet Franc. Picking of the first hillside plots started on the 10th, restarting on the 12th after a brief rainy interlude. "The advancing moon was dragging the fruit into supermaturity", meaning more pickers were drafted in, picking the remainder on the 12th and 13th.

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2017 VINTAGE NOTES

Frost, then drought, then
"brilliant regeneration"...

As in much of Europe, the Val d'Orcia was hit by frost on the morning of 19th April 2017. Starting at 3am, the Trinoro team lit fires in all of the low-lying vineyards, in an effort to stave off the worst of the frost. Although most of the primary buds were damaged, the secondary buds, hidden in the shoots, were saved.

In the affected vineyards, the decision was therefore taken to strip the vines of any surviving fruit, to ensure that the grapes, the fruit of these second generation buds, would all ripen at the same time. Understandably, Andrea called this "a long and tiring process".

This was also a drought vintage, the parched summer conditions making it necessary to spray water into the air at night-time from tractors to try to keep the foliage moist. This was done every night for three months, until the estate's reservoirs lay empty. Fortunately, this coincided with the beginning of autumn, which saw cooler weather return and allowed a late surge of development in the vines.

The bulk of the Merlot was picked at the end of September. The Cabernet Franc came in from 12th-14th October and the Cabernet Sauvignon on 24th October.

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LE CUPOLE

2016

42% Cabernet Franc, 40% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Petit Verdot. The telltale herbaceousness of Cabernet Franc echoes high class right bank Bordeaux, with plushness from Merlot and graphite and blackcurrant from Cabernet Sauvignon. The palate has blackberries, liquorice, violets, bitter chocolate and a dark rocky minerality. Surprisingly fine tannins channel the fruit nicely.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+

Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2029

£135/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

£140/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK

£100/CASE OF 1 DOUBLE MAGNUM, IN BOND UK

£195/CASE OF 1 IMPERIAL, IN BOND UK

PALAZZI

2017

100% Merlot. This has an endearingly perfumed, lifted red cherry nose. The palate is silky and rather luxurious, with an impregnated blueberry and violet aromatic charm, the tannins making their presence felt in a crescendo of grippiness from the mid-palate onwards. A finely textured wine, deft in spite of its natural power and substance, exuding poise.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5

Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2030+

£625/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

TENUTA DI TRINORO

2017

68% Cabernet Franc, 24% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Sauvignon. The superstar of the estate, this comes from 20-25 year old vines. Aromatic black cherries on the nose, with a gently coffeed graininess. On the palate, profound blackcurrant fruit balances against substantial, fine tannins – a full, assertive body. The overall sensation is savoury rather than sweet, with a disarming complexity of spices, driving through to a long, precise finish.

Corney & Barrow Score 18

Recommended drinking from 2022 – 2032+

£675/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

£685/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK

TRINORO BIANCO

2017

This is the first commercial release of Trinoro Bianco, which for the past decade has been the estate's "house white". It is 100% Semillon, from vines planted on a third of a hectare sandy plot. The nose has straw and textured white peaches, yellow flowers and orange rind. The palate is racy on the entry, fleshing out into a confident mid-palate of peach and apricot, with zesty lime notes. Moderate to full bodied, with a grippy phenolic finish, a fresh line of acidity lifting the flavours.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5

Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2024+

£235/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

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These wines are released en primeur. Delivery dates to be confirmed. All prices are quoted in bond UK.

SINGLE VINEYARDS: THE TRINORO CAMPI

The *campi* at Trinoro and the *contrade* at Passopisciaro evoke the same idea, to show the expression of a single grape variety in diverse *terroirs*.

The *campi* (plural of *campo*) are a collection of single vineyard Cabernet Francs, the first vintages of which were 2011 (Magnacosta) and 2014 (Tenaglia and Camagi). Andrea believes Cabernet Franc is under-estimated in Bordeaux. It also rather suits his nature to focus on a variety somewhat out of fashion elsewhere in the world of wine.

CAMPO DI TENAGLIA

2017

100% Cabernet Franc, grown on a tiny west-facing plot of 0.3 hectares, lying at 520m altitude. The soil is 2.5 metre-deep, crumbly limestone and thick sand. Lifted bitter cherries on the nose, with spices and liquorice providing a counterpoint to the bracingly grippy tannin and powerful rocky minerality. Muscular and starkly impressive.

Corney & Barrow Score 17+
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2029+

£255/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CAMPO DI MAGNACOSTA

2017

100% Cabernet Franc. Magnacosta is a 1.5 hectare gravelly site where an old stream eats (*magna*) into a hillside (*costa*), making for deep alluvial soils. This is dark and grittily mineral on the nose. The palate is firmly tannic at this early stage, but the tannins are fine-boned, lending an impression of delicacy. This is the most ephemeral of the *campi*, albeit with substantial ageing potential.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2029+

£295/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CAMPO DI CAMAGI

2017

100% Cabernet Franc, consisting of 1.5 hectares planted in 1991-92, which makes this the oldest of the *campi*. At 600m above sea level, it is also the highest. A thin layer of soil places a natural stress on the vines. The nose is perfumed and violet-driven, the palate more forthright, with fruit-coated tannins and a succulence of fruit. Andrea describes this as the “most dramatic” of the *campi*.

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5 – 18
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2029+

£285/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

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Vineyards at Tenuta di Passopisciaro



ETNA, SICILY: TENUTA DI PASSOPISCIARO

*“Like being on the surface
of the moon...”*

ANDREA FRANCHETTI

Growing vines on an active volcano is not for everyone. This is a landscape scarred by violence. A huge eruption in 1947 demarcated the core of what was to become Tenuta di Passopisciaro.

As a result, the estate is bordered at its upper limit by a ridge of black gravel, which is the cooled lava deposit of that eruption.

Andrea Franchetti's first experience of Mount Etna was in the winter of 2000. He describes his impressions of a “gloomy place... the misery of blackened streets and ashen churches in large old towns.”

After establishing the estate in 2000, Andrea has turned it into one the region's stars, as well as a global proponent of what can be achieved on volcanic soils. As he says, “It seemed crazy to restore vineyards so high up the mountain – above, it was erupting – but I liked that they were planted so high.”



In a nutshell, the Tenuta di Passopisciario vintages offered here can be characterised as follows...

THE 2016 VINTAGE

Deeply coloured, ripe wines, with gentle tannins. Andrea called this a joyous vintage to make, in which it was not necessary to “push and squeeze in the tank”.

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THE 2017 VINTAGE

Late summer and early autumn saw steady ripening, making for a leisurely and predictable harvest. The red wines are cherry-fruited with bright, fresh acidity.



PASSOBIANCO

2017

100% Chardonnay, from limestone soils, vinified without oak. Mid-golden colour, with a nose of ripe peach and zesty grapefruit, backed up by a creamy breadth. The palate begins ripe and effusive, but is reined back by a pithy citric twist and a chalkiness, which adds definition to the mid-palate. Fresh acidity ensures a long finish, which is precise and focused.

Corney & Barrow Score 16.5 - 17

Recommended drinking from 2019 - 2024

£145/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

PASSOROSSO

2016

100% Nerello Mascalese. Pale ruby: you could be forgiven for thinking this Pinot Noir from the colour. Delicate red-berried aromas – so far so Pinot – but with a ferrous, darkly mineral aspect which is somehow instinctively Italian. The palate is finely chiselled on the entry, pretty raspberry fruit quickly giving way to firm tannins and an overwhelming dark rockiness. Balancing glycerol and alcohol.

Corney & Barrow Score 17

Recommended drinking from 2019 - 2025+

£140/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

£145/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK

£115/CASE OF 1 DOUBLE MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK

FRANCHETTI

2017

Franchetti – so good, Andrea named it after himself – is a 50:50 blend of Petit Verdot and Cesanese d’Affile. A beautiful peppery, violet-infused nose leads into a palate of dense blackberry fruit, with a nod to raspberry and tomato leaf. A rich wine, with supple tannins and a beautiful vibrancy of fruit, which is supremely drinkable.

Corney & Barrow Score 18

Recommended drinking from 2021 - 2027+

£350/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

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SINGLE VINEYARDS: THE PASSOPISCIARO CONTRADE

The five *contrade* range from 1,000 metres above sea level to 550m.

We tasted them in descending order of altitude, although aspect and soil also play key roles in determining the wines' characters. The latter in particular is of crucial importance in this most quirky of *terroirs*, in which the uniqueness of each volcanic lava flow is intimately tied to the resulting quality and character of the grapes growing above them.

CONTRADA "S" SCIARANUOVA

2016

100% Nerello Mascalese, planted at 850-900m altitude. The name alludes to what Andrea calls a "relatively new" (200 year old!) lava flow upon which this *contrada* is sited. Bitter cherries and *crème de mûre* on the nose, backed up by a 'volcanic' mineral seam. The fore-palate is boldly fruited, with a substantial depth of blackberries and fruits of the forest. Whilst the mineral aspect is not as prominent this year (although we are talking shades of difference), I love this for its uncompromising power and swagger, framed by chalky, elemental tannins.

Corney & Barrow Score 18
Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2027+

£230/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CONTRADA "R" RAMPANTE

2016

100% Nerello Mascalese. This is the highest *contrada*, at 1,000 metres above sea level. The lava here has a slightly porous, oxidative quality. Aromatically detailed on the nose, this has white flowers and roses – very pretty – with that signature dark mineral streak beneath. The palate is intensely rocky on the attack, fleshing out on the mid-palate – pretty red berries – but without losing that crisp mineral verve. The fruit is crunchy, underscoring the impression of precision. Approachable young, this nonetheless has the fine tannic presence to warrant up to a decade of ageing.

Corney & Barrow Score 18+
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2027+

£230/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CONTRADA "G" GUARDIOLA

2016

100% Nerello Mascalese. 100 year old vines at 800m altitude, planted upon a lava flow from Etna's 1947 eruption. A slightly deeper hue of ruby, this has an intriguing nose of crystallised raspberries, roses, grapefruit and a meatiness suggestive of Syrah. The palate is insinuating, almost plush on the entry, before grippy tannins reveal themselves and the firm body grabs you, yet somehow avoids dominating. About as far from formulaic wine as it is possible to be, this is thrillingly uncompromising – analyse it too much and you'll probably conclude that it shouldn't work, but somehow it does!

Corney & Barrow Score 17.5
Recommended drinking from 2020 – 2028+

£250/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

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CONTRADA “P” PORCARIA

2016

100% Nerello Mascalese, planted at 650m. Mount Etna’s most famous and sought-after *contrada*, according to Andrea, who cites the “lush, robust” nature of its wines. The lava here is so frail, it splinters under your feet. Deep red cherries and violets on the nose, the purest fruit expression. Blueberries too, and bitter chocolate... The palate is soft and giving, revealing in its own good time that trademark nervy minerality, but never losing the generosity of fruit. This all works effortlessly. If “G” is excitingly unpredictable, “P” is a natural...

Corney & Barrow Score 19
Recommended drinking from 2021 – 2030+

£285/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

CONTRADA “C” CHIAPPEMACINE

2016

100% Nerello Mascalese, planted at 550m altitude. A “fuller bodied and rounder style” according to Andrea, given that this lies on the edge of Etna’s lava field. This is spicier and smokier on the nose, with pretty raspberry fruit and a lactic edge. The palate is starker and more overtly grippy from the off, with a fruit-coating to the tannins which affords it a satisfying generosity of style. Whilst this feels like the younger sibling of some of the wines here, there is undoubtedly a kinship. Approachable relatively early.

Corney & Barrow Score 17
Recommended drinking from 2019 – 2025

£200/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

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