



# ALBERICO

## NEW VINTAGE RELEASES

*“A very special ‘farm’, which sits inside the city limits of Rome.”*

**Alessia Antinori**

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We are used to working with small allocations of wine at Corney & Barrow, but Alessia Antinori's Alberico takes the idea of 'small' to a new level. There are just eight rows of vines here – half black grapes, half white – producing just 500-600 bottles of red wine and the same of white. These are the survivors of what was once a larger wine estate.

Alberico Boncompagni Ludovisi, Prince of Venosa and grandfather to Alessia Antinori, inherited this breathtaking property in 1946. It lies on Rome's famous Appian Way – the Rome skyline is visible in the distance from the vineyard.

During the 1960s and 1970s, this estate produced wines which, in Ian d'Agata's words, were “often in the same quality league as Sassicaia or Solaia”. There is vinous magic in the air here which, having lain dormant, is being brought back to life by Alessia Antinori. There is also magic in the ground: the estate's volcanic soils lie above an ancient lava flow.

The wines are brilliant ambassadors for Lazio. The red is a Cabernet-Merlot blend, redolent of Bordeaux, with the heightened fruit weight of its more southerly origin and a charge of rocky mineral tension. The white is 100% Semillon, vinified in old oak barrels.

Corney & Barrow is proud to be the exclusive UK agent of Alberico.

**Guy Seddon**

October 2019

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## THE VINEYARD

The estate is planted with Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Semillon and Malvasia. Alessia produces a white and a red '*grand vin*', offered here, in addition to younger vines *cuvées* of each. Alberico Bianco is 100% Semillon, the Malvasia being used exclusively for the younger vines white *cuvée*. Alessia's grandfather, who she describes as "stubborn", uprooted the majority of the vines just before his death, meaning that the heart of the estate today consists of just eight surviving rows of vines. The estate is run along strict organic lines. The volcanic soils are rich in minerals and basalt.

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## ALBERICO BIANCO: 2015 GROWING SEASON AND VINIFICATION

2015 was rather rainy during the early season, although was crowned by a very dry, warm August. Harvest was two weeks later than usual.

The grapes were harvested manually, with only the finest selected for Alberico Bianco. They were then destemmed and pressed gently before fermentation in old oak casks. Following six months' maturation in 318 litre puncheons, the wine was bottled and given a minimum of 24 months' bottle age.

## ALBERICO ROSSO: 2013 GROWING SEASON AND VINIFICATION

2013 was the fourth harvest of Alberico Rosso since Alessia Antinori's revival of this tiny enclave of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon vines. The climatic conditions during the 2013 growing season were very varied, in part contributing to harvest two weeks later than average.

The two varieties were vinified separately, both being destemmed and fermented in temperature-controlled cement tanks. Following fermentation, the wine is run off its skins into large oak casks for a minimum of twelve months' maturation, before transfer to 318 litre puncheons for the final twelve months of ageing. The wine spends a minimum of two years in bottle before release.

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## **TASTING NOTES**

### **ALBERICO BIANCO 2015**

100% Semillon, consisting of three rows of over 50 year-old vines. Golden in colour, this displays brioche, pastry, white peach and quince on the nose, with yellow flower detailing and a little honey adding weight. The palate shows bright orchard fruits, fresh acidity and a phenolic twist on the finish. Textural, with great definition, this lends itself to earlier drinking, as suggested in our drinking dates below. A refreshingly low 12% alcohol.

#### **CORNEY & BARROW SCORE**

**17**

**(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 – 2020)**

**£99/CASE OF 3 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£33/CASE OF 1 BOTTLE, IN BOND UK**

### **ALBERICO ROSSO 2013**

50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 50% Merlot. Brick-ruby in colour. A fine earthy mineral nose of cassis and graphite, with blackcurrant and forest fruits. With a little time in the glass, raspberry and herbal, *garrigue* notes emerge, shot through with black pepper. The palate is savoury, with bright blackberries predominating, carried by a vibrant line of acidity and detailed by chalky minerality. The tannins are ripe and fine, just exerting a tweak of grip on the finish. Although this is a Cabernet-Merlot blend, there is something quintessentially Italian about it.

#### **CORNEY & BARROW SCORE**

**17.5**

**(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2019 – 2025)**

**£150/CASE OF 3 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£50/CASE OF 1 BOTTLE, IN BOND UK**

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## **TASTING GUIDE**

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

Wines are scored out of 20. Customers seem to like it and it has the benefit of simplicity. We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a '+' is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine. A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

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## **TO ORDER**

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