

Cantine del Notaio's Il Sigillo

scritto da Redazione Wine Meridian | 17 Giugno 2026



When you talk about Cantine del Notaio, you are talking about the winery that, in every sense, introduced Basilicata's wine to the world. This is the kind of statement that risks sounding rhetorical, and yet here it is simply true: the Giuratrabocchetti family has been instrumental in building the reputation of this Lucanian land, in telling the story of its extraordinary vocation, and in bringing Aglianico del Vulture to the tables and wine lists of restaurants across the globe. Behind this work lies a precise intuition: that the Vulture – this dormant volcano dominating the landscape of northern Basilicata – was no ordinary territory, but a terroir capable of producing truly great wines.

And the conditions are indeed among those found in only a handful of places on earth. The strong day-to-night

temperature swings, the rainless summers, the exposure of the vineyards, and above all that volcanic tuff soil which, as they say around here, "*nurses the vines*" – together they create an unrepeatable combination. To this is added a detail that borders on the legendary: the wines are aged in ancient tuff caves dating back to the 1600s, once belonging to the Padri Francescani, where humidity remains high and constant throughout the year. It is hard to imagine a winery more deeply rooted in its own land.

Il Sigillo stands at the very top of this philosophy and is its perfect expression. It is made from 100% hand-harvested Aglianico del Vulture grapes, picked between the last ten days of November and early December, after an on-vine over-ripening that echoes, in spirit, the philosophy of an Amarone. This is followed by a long thirty-day maceration, twenty-four months in French oak barriques and tonneaux in the tuff caves, and a further twelve to twenty-four months of bottle aging. This is a wine built with time and for time.

In the glass, the 2018 vintage shows a deep ruby red with light garnet reflections. The nose is of rare complexity and breadth: preserved forest fruits, chocolate and cocoa, black pepper, then dried violet, tobacco, leather, liquorice, cinnamon, and that balsamic touch of menthol that lengthens and refreshes everything. On the palate, it delivers the classic meeting of opulence and elegance that defines the great Aglianicos: a soft entry, full and velvety body, excellent freshness and minerality, tannins now perfectly integrated yet still vibrant. The finish is very long, spiced, with returning notes of liquorice and dark chocolate.

Following the winery's own suggestion, we paired it at the end of a meal with a bitter melted cocoa dessert, where the interplay of sweetness and bitterness brought out all of its spiced soul. It was a truly wonderful experience.

Company Profile

Cantine del Notaio, in the green heart of Basilicata, has been dedicating its commitment to explore all the potential of Aglianico del Vulture making a great research on this indigenous variety grape that groves here at its best thanks to a combination of temperatures (a big difference in degrees during summer season between the day and the night and very high temperatures due to hot air coming from Africa), lack of rain (no rainfall for 2 months in summer season), a good exposition of the vineyards and the rich volcanic soil (the presence of a common tufa volcanic layer under the soil that feed the plants, in local dialect "u tuf c'allatt"). The winery owns 52 acres of vineyards on the most vocated hillsides of the Vulture area (called the first zones) in 5 different municipalities (Maschito, Ripacandida, Ginestra, Rionero in Vulture e Barile). The wines of Cantine del Notaio are all aged in very old natural tufa caves that date back from 1600, belonged to the Franciscan Monks (underground the street level, long about 1500 Km), that guarantees a constant humidity all the year. The names of the labels all refer to the notary profession, and there is a logic order: L'Atto, Il Repertorio, La Firma and Il Sigillo are the red wines; Il Lascito is a Twenty Years Anniversary Red Wine; La Scrittura is the rosé wine while Il Rogito is called the "roSsato" wine because of its colour; Il Preliminare, La Raccolta and La Parcella are the white wines; Il Passaggio is the sparkling charmat method wine while La Stipula Bianca Brut and La Stipula Rosé are the sparkling classic method wines; Il Protesto is the sparkling red wine; La Nota is the sparkling red classic method wine; La Postilla is the sparkling sweet wine made with Moscato grapes and L'Autentica is the passito wine made with Moscato and Malvasia.

CANTINE DEL NOTAIO

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