Dacastello’s Primitivo di Manduria D.O.C. – Pelagos – Le Clivie

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Primitivo di Manduria has carved out a major place for itself among Italy’s red wines. Its reputation has grown year after year, with strong market results abroad as well. This did not happen by chance. Behind it lies a clear improvement in quality, the fruit of the steady commitment of many Apulian producers who believed in this grape when it was still regarded mainly as a blending wine.

There is another reason for Primitivo’s success. It is a red of considerable structure that has found its own modernity while staying close to the tastes of today’s drinkers. I believe the decisive choice was to let elegance prevail over power. It is a path that has helped, and continues to help,

this style enormously.

Le Clivie’s Pelāgos 2023 is a fine example.

Le Clivie is the flagship line of Dacastello Vini, a winery based in Alba that offers a collection of wines from different Italian regions. That alone is interesting. A Piedmontese producer taking on Primitivo di Manduria shows just how central this appellation has become in the story of Italian wine.

The name Pelāgos means “sea” in ancient Greek and pays homage to Homer, who described the sea as “wine-dark.” The connection with the sea goes beyond evocation. The grapes come from bush-trained (*alberello*) vineyards in the province of Taranto, where the Ionian breeze and sea spray accompany ripening. Harvest is by hand, with the grapes brought to the winery in the early morning hours in small crates. After roughly two weeks of maceration in stainless steel, the wine ages for about ten months in large French oak casks.

In the glass, the colour is a deep, dense ruby. The nose plays on very ripe dark fruit, framed by Mediterranean herbs and a hint of spice that adds rhythm. On the palate the wine is full and soft, yet never heavy. The tannins make themselves felt without aggression, and the warmth of the alcohol, though present, is well integrated into the structure. The finish carries a pleasant savoury, almost briny note that recalls the very sea evoked by the name and invites the next sip. This is where you see the difference between a Primitivo that is merely powerful and one that has learned to be elegant.We paired it with excellent lamb ribs. The meat is flavourful, with its fatty portion and the toasty notes of the cooking, and calls for a red able to keep pace without overpowering it. Pelāgos did exactly that. The softness of the fruit enveloped the meat, while the tannins and that savoury close cleansed the palate bite after bite. A perfectly judged match.

Company Profile

For twenty years now, Dacastello Vini has embodied the variety and winemaking mastery of Italy.
Starting from the identification of areas of excellence across the country, Dacastello collaborates with local producers to create its wines.

The careful study and arrangement of each stage of the production process, from the length of maceration to the type of fermentation, ageing and blending, gives every bottle a distinct identity. Each wine reflects its territory of origin while meeting the tastes of today’s consumers.

Dacastello’s distinctive strength lies in creating wines that keep pace with the evolution of current tastes while preserving the essence and winemaking identity of the terroir.

The selection brings together an assortment of over one hundred wines, divided into four main collections: Dacastello, Le Clivie, Piccarda Donati and Za’ Monaca.

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