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# Tenute Olbios, Superb Wines From Sunny Sardinia



**Per and Britt Karlsson** Contributor ⓘ

Lifestyle

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You find Tenute Olbios on the outskirts of the town of Olbia on the northeast coast of Sardinia, the beautiful Italian island in the middle of the Mediterranean. Sardinian wine is slowly coming into the spotlight, and it is easy to understand why when you taste the wines from Tenute Olbios. For those looking for uniqueness and character, Sardinia could be the next hotspot.

The 150 acres Tenute Olbios is owned and managed by Daniela Pinna and her husband, David. The summer temperature here is nice and warm, and, being close to the sea, there is always a refreshing wind blowing. Vermentino thrives in such an environment. The red grape Cannonau, better known as Grenache in the rest of the world, is also well established here.

Vermentino is an important grape in Sardinia, as well as on the neighbouring French island of Corsica. Good quality Vermentino is made all over the island under the appellation DOC Vermentino di Sardegna. Right here, where Tenute Olbios is located, the growing conditions for vermentino is considered to be outstanding. The island's only DOCG (the top level in Italy's appellation hierarchy), Vermentino di Gallura, covers the north-eastern part of Sardinia.

The vermentino wines from Tenute Olbios are exciting as well as excellent. They are entirely different from other vermentino wines I have tasted from Provence and Corsica. I ask Daniela why this is. Is it just due to the terroir?



Lupus in Fabula 2019, Tenute Olbios, DOCG Vermentino di Gallura Superiore, Sardinia, copyright ... [+]

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“Yes, the terroir plays an important role and gives our wines a special character,” she says. “Our vineyard consists of various plots of land, all of which have sandy soil of crushed granite. We do not irrigate, not even in emergencies; therefore, the grapes have a high concentration of taste and aroma. We harvest by hand and sort the grapes carefully. In the cellar, every step of the vinification aims at extracting and preserving the aromas at their best.”

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She presses the grapes carefully and immediately cools down the must better to preserve the perfumes. The fermentation is at a low temperature and very long; it lasts 40 to 50 days. The wine then rests on its lees before bottling.

## White wines

**Lupus in Fabula 2019, Tenute Olbios, DOCG Vermentino di Gallura Superiore, Sardinia**, is a delicious wine. It is full-bodied with a good mouthfeel, freshness and structure and aromas of ripe melon and stone fruit. A wine with a strong personality. (~35 USD – *prices are estimates since the wines are not widely available in the US*)

**In Vino Veritas 2008, Tenute Olbios, Vermentino di Sardegna DOC, Sardinia**, is a remarkable wine. It has a deep, golden colour, aromas of apricots, a bit of honey and distinct notes of oxidation; it actually feels a bit like a dry sherry, a fino (but with a much bigger body). If you like that style, as I do, then you will love this. (~35-40 USD)



In Vino Veritas 2008, Tenute Olbios, Vermentino di Sardegna DOC, Sardinia, copyright BKWine ... [+]

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Daniela explains that the wine matures partly in steel tanks and partly

in oak barrels for ten years in contact with film-forming yeasts (*flor*), which gives complexity. It explains the sherry aromas as a fino sherry also matures with *flor*.

## Sparkling

Daniela also makes a sparkling Vermentino with the traditional method (second fermentation in the bottle). **Bisso 2013, DOCG Vermentino di Gallura Spumante Metodo Classico** is an excellent sparkling wine with a beautiful, deep golden colour. It ages 24 months in the cellar before disgorging. The aromas recall ripe stone fruit, toast and honey. It is a full-bodied wine that works perfectly throughout a meal, from the starter to the cheese. (~57 USD)



Bisso 2013, DOCG Vermentino di Gallura Spumante Metodo Classico, copyright BKWine Photography  
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## Red wines

Sardinia's climate easily gives warm and ripe fruit to the red wines. However, the pleasant herbaceous notes we find in these wines also give them a refreshing character.

“In the red wines, I like to feel both the fruit, the tannin and the

freshness”, says Daniela. “I use a particular tank for fermentation, which allows gentle extraction of the tannins and the organoleptic characteristic of the grapes. The fermentations are long also for the red wines.”

### **Cangrande. 17, 2016, Tenute Olbios, IGP Colli del Limbara Rosso, Sardinia**

The dominant grape here is Muristellu, a local grape, presumably a synonym for the grape Graciano in Rioja. It is a lovely wine, full of finesse and relatively light in colour. It has a special and unusual taste with a lot of tobacco and a distinct aroma of medicinal herbs. The aftertaste is slightly sweetish, perhaps thanks to the ripe fruit. (~46 USD)



Cangrande 17, 2016, Tenute Olbios, IGP Colli del Limbara Rosso, Sardinia, copyright BKWine ... [+]

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### **Nessuno 2013, Tenute Olbios, IGP Colli del Limbara Rosso, Sardinia**

This is a powerful wine with a smooth character but with distinct tannins and aromas of ripe red berries, notes of raspberry jam, liquorice and wild herbs. The grapes are Cannonau (Grenache) and Muristellu.

“Nessuno only gets stainless-steel tank maturation. Here, I like to feel the tannin that washes the mouth,” says Daniela. (~46 USD)



Nessuno 2013, Tenute Olbios, IGP Colli del Limbara Rosso, Sardinia, copyright BKWine Photography  
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Cavè 2019 Tenute Olbios, Cannonau di Sardegna Rosato DOP, copyright BKWine Photography  
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## Rosé

The rosé wine Cavè is a *rosé di una notte*, which at Tenute Olbios means eight hours of skin contact. **Cavè 2019 Tenute Olbios, Cannonau**

**di Sardegna Rosato DOP** is pleasant with a relatively strong colour and an intense red fruit. It is dry and has hints of tannins at the end, combined with a delicious freshness. Daniela manages to get freshness in the wine, not least thanks to the soil, which, she says, “is not only suited for vermentino, but it’s also ideal for cannonau”. (~30-35 USD).

“In general, what characterizes our production is our attention to every little detail in all stages of production,” says Daniela.

It is evident, attention to detail pays off.

—***Britt Karlsson***



**Per and Britt Karlsson**

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