

BODEGA CHACRA

PATAGONIA ~ RIO NEGRO

Joseph & Curtis

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Piero Incisa is a third-generation winemaker, the grandson of Mario Incisa Della Rochetta, the creator and proprietor of Sassicaia, one of the most renowned Italian wineries, and nephew of Niccolo' Incisa Della Rocchetta, who currently manages the family's wine-making enterprises, Mr. Incisa spent his childhood on the family estate in the Maremma district of Tuscany, privy to the exclusive centuries-old wine-making and vineyard management traditions to which he now claims his own expertise.

Upon completing his undergraduate studies at the prestigious Florimont school in Switzerland, Mr. Incisa worked briefly as an account associate at UBS in Geneva before setting out on the fulfillment of his lifelong dream to be a winemaker himself.

In 1999, Mr. Incisa moved to California to pursue a degree in Economics at Pepperdine University, then later returned to Italy where he managed the day-to-day operations of two family wine estates in Umbria – Titignano and Salviano – which are owned by his mother, Nerina Corsini Incisa Della Rochetta.

Shortly afterwards, in January of 2000, Mr Incisa again returned to the United States to pursue a masters from New York University which he completed in June of 2003.

Now a resident of the United States, Mr. Incisa divides his time between New York City, Italy and Patagonia, where he has begun a very limited production of his own Pinot Noir. This very high quality vintage, rendered from vines planted in the rich Patagonian Terroir in the early 1950's, is expected to yield no more than 1200 bottles its first production, coincidentally the same yield his grandfather made in the first vintage of Sassicaia. The new label, called Bodega Chacra, became available in early 2005...and has quickly become one of the top 100 wines in the world. Piero is an amazing winemaker, but more importantly an amazing human being and friend.

So let's talk with Piero...

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At what age were you introduced to wine and wine making?

I got introduced to wine when I was very young, maybe 8 or 9 yrs old, we always had white and red wine at the dinner table, I always looked at wine as an element of a meal more than an object of meditation. As far as wine-making I never formally studied agriculture or wine-making, I sort of learned on the field, by watching reading and participating.

Who was your biggest influence?

First and foremost my grandfather, the very first person that introduced me to wine, he always told us to buy off vintages from the best Estates with the greatest terroir, they are cheaper and approachable at a younger age! Second my uncle Nicolo' who took over the management of Sassicaia from 1968 to today. From him I learned humility, professionalism, integrity and respect for the environment and our people, whom are part of the soul of our beautiful estate in Bolgheri.

Did you ever want to be anything else besides a winemaker?

Yes off course, in my previous life I was a banker for a short while, but I always wanted to play guitar for the Stones.....

Having such incredible roots in Italy, how did you end up with a 2,000 plus acre vineyard in Patagonia South America?

I tried a wine in NYC made by my friend Hans, it was a Pinot, I thought it was very Burgundian in style, turned out the joke was on me, Hans had it made in Patagonia, after a sleepless week I called Hans, got on a plane and went to Argentina to see were the wine was made, found an abandoned vineyard that was planted in 1932, I first rented the vineyard for one year and we made the wine at my cousin Noemi Cinzano and my friend and her partner Hans Vinding Diers winery, Bodega Noemia, once we realized what our experiment yielded I went back to the owner of the vineyard, Mr. Pirri and managed to convince the owner to sell it to me, and here we are.....

Where would you say is the better place to grow grapes?

Depends what grapes, and what style of wine you like, Bolgheri has a truly a special Terroir and I think that Patagonia is also an incredible unique place to grow grapes, windy, cold nights, great luminosity, long even growing season no pest and very very old ungrafted vines!

For the record, your Trienta y Dos 06 is one of my favorite wines... what is yours?

That is very kind of you, there are too many wines to mention, I have many favorites, it depends on the season the mood and off course the food, however for my last meal I would like to drink Sassicaia 1988

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Why Pinot Noir?

Maybe because I am a bit of a masochist, and because Pinot can be the most ethereal of all grapes, and when its right, nothing compares.

How many wines do you make and what are the price points?

At Bodega Chacra we make first and foremost single vineyard wines from some pretty old vines, the first vineyard that I purchased was planted in 1932, its a small parcel that yields no more than 8000 bottles yearly, but its destined to grow as we are slowly bringing the vineyard back to its original condition. Unlike the Chacra "Treinta y Dos" this wine is made from full bunches, so in other words we leave the stems in the vat., this wine cost US \$ 75.-. lastly we make an entry level Pinot noir that is primarily made from a 20 years old vineyard, and with the declassified grapes from Treinta y Dos and Cincuenta y Cinco vineyards, its called Barda and it retails for some \$ 28.- a bottle. All of our vineyards are farmed in an organic and biodynamic manner.



I recently tried the Sassicaia 07 and thought it was excellent, what are your thoughts on the 07?

The 07 sits in between two amazing vintages, the 06 and the 08, perhaps a little less concentrated, which i don't mind, however it has its own distinctive personality even though it shares the same pedigree. As for all Sassicaia vintages it will blossom with age and it will become more subtle and intellectual. Its a vintage that is in my opinion more approachable at a younger age, it reminds me of the 1997 vintage.

Favorite restaurant?

La Pineta of our friend Luciano Zazzeri in Marina di Bibbona, Tuscany, Italy and Trois Gros in Roanne, France.

Favorite music/band?

Rolling Stones

Best place to vacation and relax?

Rio de Janeiro

Why do you think EVERY person in the world should have a wine cellar? :)

I think that wine is something that links and connects us in ways that no other beverage does, its also the oldest beverage in the world, so having a cellar is a way to trace and accentuate our life, sometimes just looking at the cellared bottles it brings memories of different events of our life, in a way its an indelible testament of our existence. So having a wine cellar helps us to remind ourselves of our roots, our connection to the earth in which we live on, and it helps us celebrate life with our friends, as sharing a great bottle of wine with a friend expands and enriches our life.

Whats on the horizon for Piero and Bodega Chacra?

First and foremost maintain a focused effort to preserve the integrity and purity of our terroir in order to express its tipicity through our wines.