

GREAT WINE SEMINAR 2002

**SASSICAIA – TENUTA SAN GUIDO**

*Presented by Marchese Nicoló Incisa della Rocchetta*

**Background** – Sassicaia has been called the “original Super-Tuscan” and relies primarily on Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Franc constituted 30% of the blend in earlier vintages and was reduced to 15% by 2000. The first commercial vintage was the 1968, and in 1994 the wine was awarded its own DOC, “Bolgheri Sassicaia.” The wine is known for its reserve and structure; it is slow to evolve in bottle, as this tasting confirms. The fruit is entirely destemmed and given 14 to 18 days of vatting with ambient yeasts at a maximum of 30° C. Aging is in one-third new French oak barriques for 24 months.

**Sassicaia 1998 (from magnum) \*\*\*\*(+)**

*Nearly dense dark red-purple. Rather non-expressive, undeveloped nose with hints of black and red fruits. Tightly wound, restrained palate. Pure, cool fruit at center. Firm backbone. Excellent balance and harmony.*

**Sassicaia 1997 (from magnum) \*\*\*(+)**

*Moderately dense garnet. Subtle red cherry fruit in the aroma along with dusty and black olive notes. Just beginning to open. Medium weight and concentration. Moderate dry tannin at end. Still undeveloped.*

**Sassicaia 1995 (from magnum) \*\*\*(+)**

*Moderately dense garnet with brick highlight. To the nose, a slight sharpness, then cedar and tobacco accents. Some signs of initial development. Characteristic firm, dry frame. Hints of secondary notes in finish.*

**Sassicaia 1990 \*\*\*\*(\*)**

*Moderately dense garnet. First vintage in series to offer more revealing aromatics: complex notes of dried leaf, cedar, and milk chocolate. In the mouth, excellent concentration matched by clean, fresh acidity. Wonderful balance and harmony. Still youthful with great promise.*

### **Sassicaia 1989 (from magnum) \*\*\*\***

*Moderately dense brick with tawny rim. Evident evolution in the aroma with a high-toned aspect and accent of tobacco. The palate is not overly rich and is dominated by acidity and tannin. The structure appears to be overtaking the fruit. Should evolve rather quickly.*

### **Sassicaia 1988 \*\*\*(\*)**

*Moderately dense garnet. Rather low intensity aromatics with hints of tobacco and leaf. Still appears quite reserved. Focused and concentrated on the palate. This is an austere wine with great cut: the prototypical “food wine.” Should soften somewhat with further cellaring but is likely to remain firm and dry.*

### **Sassicaia 1985 \*\*\*\*(\*)**

*A very youthful, dark red garnet color. Very rich aroma full of dark fruits and a note of tobacco. Ripe, dense taste and concentrated fruit separate this wine from the other vintages. An unusually fat Sassicaia concealing its typical acidity. A big, promising vintage.*

### **Sassicaia 1982 \*\*\*\***

*Moderately dense dark garnet with tawny rim. Maturing bouquet with attractive tobacco, cedar and leafy highlights. Developing mature flavors: seems to be on its drinking plateau. Medium weight and resolved.*

### **Sassicaia 1978 \*\*\*\*\***

*Lightening brick color. Mature nose emphasizing dried red fruits and a note of oxidation. Very concentrated in the mouth and etched by high acidity and some tannic grip. Most revealing in its highly impressive, long finish. An arresting, classic Sassicaia – resembles the '88 with more substance. May become a bit more supple with a few more years of aging.*

### **Sassicaia 1975 \*\*\*\*\***

*Moderately dense dark brick. Rich, sweet bouquet exhibiting saddle leather and spice. Very rich attack and textured center with lovely leathery tone and Sassicaia's typical acidity at the end. A very satisfying wine allying richness and a ripe frame. Very long finish.*

### **Sassicaia 1970 \*\*\*\*\*+**

*Paling dark brick. Mature bouquet revealing leather, a woody tone and note of oxidation. The palate is complex, long and satisfying with a dry ending. This has reached its apogee, and further aging is likely to dry out the flesh that remains.*

