



The Grumello Castle | Grumello del Monte (BG)

Grumello Castle is a medieval residence located in the heart of the Valcalepio, a hilly area between Bergamo and Lake Iseo, at the center of a wine estate. It was built around the year 1000 as a military fortress with a watchtower. Due to its strategic location, it later became the residence of the military leader Bartolomeo Colleoni during the conflicts between the Republic of Venice and the Duchy of Milan. From this era, the tower, the guard room with a vaulted ceiling, the prison cells, and the large vaulted cellars—now used to age the wines of the Tenuta Castello di Grumello—remain.

Starting in the 1700s, the castle was transformed into a patrician residence with a simple and austere style. The ancient ramparts became a courtyard surrounded by a ring of centuries-old horse chestnut trees, and a private chapel adorned with stucco and colored glass was added. Over time, it passed through several noble families, including the Suardo counts, the Del Carretto marquises, and the Gonzaga princes of Vescovato. In the second half of the 1800s, Prince Gonzaga del Carretto imported some vine cuttings from France, which the local farmers referred to as *Burdunì*. This variety was actually Cabernet Sauvignon.

For three generations, the estate belonged to the Kettlitz Reschigna family of Milan, who acquired it from the Gonzaga family in 1953. Since the 1950s, with the technical support of oenologist Carlo Zadra in the past and currently Paolo Zadra, the castle and its winery have revitalized Grumello's wine tradition by producing high-quality wines. In 2022, the estate changed ownership and is now managed by Angelo and Daniel Gotti.

The castle is open to the public for guided tours, vineyard walks, and wine tastings accompanied by local products, available by reservation.



The Region

Grumello del Monte is located at the foot of the first hills of the Orobie Alps in Valcalepio, one of several valleys characterizing the Bergamo area, situated east of Bergamo province between Lake Como and Lake Iseo. On the hill of Grumello del Monte, within the Tenuta Castello di Grumello estate, stands the Colle Calvario vineyard, located at an altitude of about 300 meters above sea level, which gives its name to one of the estate's most important wines.

The majority of the vineyards are spread across the hilly areas surrounding the castle. The lower hillside areas, characterized by clay soils, are dedicated to the VR Valcalepio DOC Rosso. Limestone marl predominates on the higher hillsides, including the Colle Calvario area, home to the Colle Calvario and Burdunì wines.

At the foot of the medieval walls lies a “brolo” (an enclosed vineyard), where half a hectare is planted with the Merera grape, producing the Medera label. The estate primarily produces red grapes—about 80 percent of its production. The remaining 20 percent, made up of white grapes, grows on both the hillsides and lower areas, used in the Le Noci and VB Valcalepio DOC Bianco wines.

The vineyards' ages range from the youngest Cabernet Sauvignon, replanted in 2022, to the Moscato di Scanzo planted in the 1960s and the 40 to 50-year-old Cabernet Sauvignon of Colle Calvario. Other vines were replaced starting in the mid-1990s up to the present day.



The Estate

The estate spans 35 hectares, 15 of which are vineyards. Red grapes dominate, with Cabernet Sauvignon leading the way—making this the largest producer in Valcalepio—and Merlot. The estate also dedicates one hectare to Moscato di Scanzo and half a hectare to the indigenous red grape Merera. The remaining area is dedicated to white grapes, including Chardonnay and Pinot Grigio, which form the blend for the VB Valcalepio DOC Bianco. Almost a hectare is also set aside for two resistant varieties, PIWI, Bronner, and Johanniter.

The estate follows integrated pest management protocols, employing minimal systemic treatments, and as of early 2023, it is certified by the SQNPI. It was also the first winery in Valcalepio, over ten years ago, to adopt the cover crop method, which aims to protect and enhance soil fertility.

The surrounding woodland, rich in chestnut and hornbeam trees, covers nearly 20 hectares and provides natural temperature regulation. Woodland clearing began in 2022, removing invasive plants and enhancing the undergrowth by planting elderberry, mulberry, and sloe trees.



The Wines

Tenuta Castello di Grumello produces about 70,000 bottles annually. All the wines are made with estate-grown grapes, fermented and aged in the castle's cellars, which combine modern fermentation equipment with traditional wooden barrels. The wine range reflects the full spectrum of grapes grown in the Bergamo area, some of which, since the 1960s, have led the revival of the Bergamo wine sector, including the creation of the Valcalepio DOC.

Particularly noteworthy are the red wines, predominantly made from Bordeaux varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Chardonnay and Pinot Grigio form the classic Valcalepio DOC Bianco blend. The estate also produces a Piwi wine from resistant varieties, Bronner and Johanniter, called Le Noci, and has preserved the nearly forgotten indigenous grape Merera, used to create the Medera label.

A more recent addition is Burdunì IGT Bergamasca, named after the old Bergamo farmers' term for Cabernet Sauvignon vines. This wine, made mostly from the oldest Colle Calvario vines, aims to showcase the finest qualities of Cabernet Sauvignon from Grumello del Monte.

The estate's flagship wine is Riserva Colle Calvario, primarily a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot from the historic vineyards. The estate also produces a sweet red wine, Moscato Passito, made from the rare black Moscato di Scanzo grapes.



The Medera Wine from Merera Grapes

Tenuta Castello di Grumello is currently the only winery bottling this type of wine. The Merera grape was traditionally grown in mixed vineyards, but its low productivity led to its decline during the vineyard rationalization of the 1970s. After a genetic analysis of indigenous varieties in 2017, the grape's identity was confirmed, though experiments had already begun at Grumello Castle years earlier, led by Paolo Zadra.



Cellar Practices

The winemaking process is simple. White grapes are pressed whole, with a single clarification, and the must is allowed to settle overnight. Fermentation takes place at controlled temperatures with selected yeasts, and aging is done in stainless steel and in the bottle. For VB Valcalepio DOC Bianco, aging includes four months of bâtonnage, and Le Noci undergoes a short maceration on the skins for a couple of hours.

For red wines, different techniques are used. Medera is fermented with more punch-downs than pump-overs and is aged in stainless steel and in the bottle. The Riserva Colle Calvario undergoes up to 90 days of maceration, with part of the wine fermented in wooden vats and aged in new barrels and tonneaux. The Igt Bergamasca Burdunì is macerated for 25 days and aged in second- and third-use barrels for at least two years. The VR Valcalepio DOC Rosso has a shorter maceration time of 8 to 10 days and is aged in large wooden casks.

Moscato di Scanzo grapes are dried for 25 to 30 days, then fermented for about a month with a two-week maceration, and finally aged in stainless steel and in the bottle.



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO

1890



VB VALCALEPIO DOC BIANCO

Vineyards:

Soils: marly-limestone, south/southwest exposure, altitude between 200 and 300 m above sea level.

Plant density: 5,000 vines/ha.

Varieties: Chardonnay and Pinot Grigio.

Training system: Guyot-pruned espalier.

Production per plant: 2 kg.

Vinification:

Gentle pressing of whole grapes, fermentation at controlled temperature (16-18°C) in stainless steel tanks, batonnage for 4 months, bottling, then resting in glass for about 1-3 months.

Annual production: 15,000 bottles.



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO

1890



VR VALCALEPIO DOC ROSSO

Vineyards: Soils: medium-textured clay, south/southwest exposure, altitude between 200 and 300 m above sea level. Plant density: 5,000 vines/ha.

Varieties: Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Training system: Low cordon-trained espalier.

Production per plant: 2 kg.

Vinification: Traditional destemming and crushing of grapes, fermentation at controlled temperature (26-28°C) in stainless steel tanks, 10 days maceration with daily pump-overs, malolactic fermentation in stainless steel, aging in large barrels for 9 months, bottling, then resting in glass for about 1-3 months. Annual production: 25,000 bottles.



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO
1890



LE NOCI VINO BIANCO

Vineyards:

Soils: marly-limestone, south/southwest exposure, altitude between 200 and 300 m above sea level.

Plant density: 5,000 vines/ha.

Varieties: Piwi, Bronner, and Johanniter.

Training system: Low Guyot-pruned espalier.

Production per plant: 1.5 kg.

Vinification:

Gentle pressing of crushed grapes, fermentation at controlled temperature (16-18°C) in stainless steel tanks with selected yeasts, partially conducted malolactic fermentation, aging on fine lees for 9 months, bottling, then resting in glass for about 3 months.

Annual production: 3,000 bottles.



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO
1890



MEDERA IGT BERGAMASCA

Vineyards:

Soils: clay, east exposure, altitude around 200 m above sea level.

Plant density: 5,000 vines/ha.

Varieties: Merera (massal selection).

Training system: Low Guyot-pruned espalier.

Production per plant: 1.2 kg.

Vinification:

Traditional destemming and crushing of grapes, fermentation at controlled temperature (26-28°C) in stainless steel tanks, 10 days maceration with punch-downs, malolactic fermentation in stainless steel, aging in stainless steel, bottling, then resting in glass for about 1-3 months.

Annual production: 3,000 bottles.



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO

1890



BURDUNI' IGT BERGAMASCA

Vineyards

Soils: marly-limestone, south/southwest exposure, altitude between 200 and 300 m above sea level.

Plant density: 5,500 vines/ha.

Varieties: Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Training system: Low cordon-trained espalier.

Production per plant: 1.5 kg.

Vinification:

Traditional destemming and crushing of grapes, fermentation at controlled temperature (26-28°C) in stainless steel tanks, 24 days maceration with pump-overs and punch-downs, malolactic fermentation in stainless steel, aging in second-passage barriques for 12 months, bottling, then resting in glass for about 3-5 months.

Annual production: 12,000 bottles



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO

1890



COLLE CALVARIO VALCALEPIO DOC ROSSO RISERVA

Vineyards:

Soils: marly-limestone, south/southeast exposure, altitude between 300 and 350 m above sea level.

Plant density: 5,500 vines/ha.

Varieties: 40% Merlot, 60% Cabernet Sauvignon.

Training system: Low cordon-trained espalier.

Production per plant: 1 kg.

Vinification:

Traditional destemming and crushing, fermentation at controlled temperature (26-28°C) in stainless steel tanks, maceration up to 90 days with initial pump-overs and punch-downs. Malolactic fermentation in stainless steel. Aging in first-passage French oak barriques for 12 months, blending, bottling, then resting in glass for about 5-7 months.

Annual production: 5,000 bottles.



CASTELLO di GRUMELLO

1890



ROS VALCALEPIO DOC MOSCATO PASSITO

Vineyards:

Soils: marly-limestone, southwest exposure, altitude between 250 and 300 m above sea level.

Plant density: 3,000 vines/ha.

Varieties: Moscato di Scanzo.

Training system: Low cordon-trained espalier.

Production per plant: 2 kg.

Average vine age: 45 years.

Vinification:

Drying for 25-30 days in a fruit-drying room with forced ventilation, traditional vinification with destemming and crushing of grapes, fermentation at controlled temperature (28-30°C) in stainless steel tanks, 10-12 days maceration with pump-overs and punch-downs, aging in stainless steel, bottling, then resting in glass for about 3-5 months.

Annual production: 1,500 bottles.