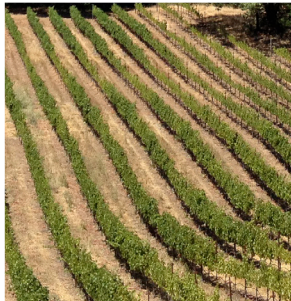


# Bibi Graetz Vineyard



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and “one of the rising young stars in Tuscany”**

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Considered one of Italy’s most ingenious winemakers, Bibi Graetz has risen from artist to cult winemaker since making his first wines in 2000. Bibi has earned critical praise among Italian wine lovers as much for the colorful labels made from his own paintings as for the wines alone.

Born and raised in Italy, Bibi makes his wine in his family home, Castello di Vincigliata, a castle in Fiesole, outside of Florence. Bibi uses only indigenous grapes to make his wine, including Sangiovese, Canaiolo and Colorino, which

are grown in vineyards, off the Tuscan coast.

Azienda Agricola Testamatta is an Italian winery run by Bibi Graetz, a winemaker of artist background from Italian/Norwegian heritage, who produces several Tuscan wines from vineyards located in the hills of Fiesole that overlook the city of Florence. Graetz has been described as a “cool winemaker” and “one of the rising young stars in Tuscany”. The wines are all classified as Toscana IGT.



“Tuscany is home to some of the world’s most notable wine regions”

## Tuscany Italy

Tuscan wine (Italian Toscana) is Italian wine from the Tuscany region. Located in central Italy along the Tyrrhenian coast, Tuscany is home to some of the world’s most notable wine regions. Tuscany is also known for the dessert wine Vin Santo, made from a variety of the region’s grapes. In the 1970s a new class of wines known in the trade as “Super Tuscan” emerged. Tuscan wine (Italian Toscana) is Italian wine from the Tuscany region. Located in central Italy along the Tyrrhenian coast, Tuscany is home to some of the world’s most notable wine regions.





## The LAND

The region of Tuscany includes seven coastal islands and is Italy's fifth largest region. The hills serve as a tempering affect on the summertime heat with many vineyards planted on the higher elevations of the hillsides. The Sangiovese grape performs better when it can receive more direct sunlight, which is a benefit of the many hillside vineyards in Tuscany. The higher elevations also increase the diurnal temperature variation, helping the grapes maintain their balance of sugars and acidity as well as their aromatic qualities.

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**A strong believer of terroir, Bibi is like a rebellious artist who scoffs at the Italian appellation system**  
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## His Philosophy

A strong believer of terroir, Bibi is like a rebellious artist who scoffs at the Italian appellation system. He believes DOC and DOCG are part of a politically manipulated commercial system. ‘Terroir does not depend upon the area necessarily. You may have a great, fantastic quality of grapes in Chianti Classico or Rufina but you will also find some terrible quality in these areas. Chianti Classico is known to make a lot of bulk wine with no personality as well. It’s the power of communication which is more important for marketing. Montalcino is thus more successful than Chianti Classico,’ says the winemaker who loves to drive around in his car and wherever he

likes the grapes, he is open to contracting with the growers.

He has transformed his winemaking philosophy into a new label this year. It’s a Game is an IGT Toscana red made from 100% Sangiovese. It’s matured in oak and should have aging potential of 10-15 years. It’s being launched at a price point slightly lower than Soffocone to give him a complete range at different price points. With the latest launch, Bibi has kept to his philosophy of using only the autochthonous (indigenous) grapes, with Sangiovese being his signature grape.





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**Graetz produces all label  
artwork himself**  
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## History

Perhaps due to his partial Norwegian ancestry, his mother married to the Swiss-Israeli sculptor, Bibi Graetz and his wines have received a great deal of attention from Norwegian press since the first vintage of 2000. Originally an arts graduate in Firenze, Graetz began wine production in the late 90s after facing the decision to either allow old lease contracts of the old vineyards surrounding his home at the Castello de Vincigliata to expire, or to make use of them. Graetz produces all label artwork himself.

Casamatta may be his most selling wine but Bibi Graetz is a Florentine young artiste by training, who is most proud of his top label Testamatta, meaning Crazy Head. He treats the wine business as a game and is actually releasing a new label he calls ‘It’s a Game’ .



# History of his Wine

Castello di Vincigliata is an old castle in Fiesole, a hilly suburb barely 5 kms from Florence, yet it has so many vantage points from where one gets a panoramic view of Florence. The castle was bought by the grandfather of Bibi Graetz who belongs to a family of artists. His Swiss-Israeli father is a sculptor. Although his family has been making wines for self use for some time he decided to set up a winery commercially only in 2000 with a single label called Testamatta, made from this land. Casamatta (crazy house in Italian) was born 3 years later.

‘I wanted to make a fun wine and offer it at a reasonable price. I made it

into a game by deciding to cut costs at every possible stage for the quality I wanted to create and then simply add one Euro a bottle for profit and it just took off,’

To make it more fun, he is planning to create a Solera system from the next vintage. He will keep half of the wine in the tanks and mix with half of the wine from the next vintage and so on-like Sherry except that the wines will remain in stainless steel tanks to keep freshness. ‘This will make the wine with the same body but more complexity,’ he claims.



# The wines and the grapes

Tuscany is Italy's third most planted region (behind Sicily and Apulia) but it is eighth in production volume. This is partly because the soil of Tuscany is very poor, and producers emphasize low yields and higher quality levels in their wine. More than 80% of the regions' production is in red wine.

The Sangiovese grape is Tuscany's most prominent grape, however, many different clonal varieties exist, as many towns have their own local version of Sangiovese. Cabernet Sauvignon has been planted in Tuscany for over 250 years, but has only recently become associated with the region due to the rise of the Super Tuscans.

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If there is Sangiovese with  
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## BIBI GRAETZ Wines

Testamatta, the ‘crazy head’, caused a sensation after he decided to get into the wine business in 2000, with their own grapes. Made from 100% Sangiovese grown on 75 year old vines, it was so powerful, spice, seductive and long that it was an instant success ‘The wine has nice balance. It is made from hand-cultivated grapes using natural yeast and has controlled sulphites. If there is Sangiovese with potential this is the one.

Soffocone is the label that has other interesting tales to tell. ‘We exported the wine for a couple of years to the USA before the government banned it as someone had complained that it symbolized fellatio and that any sexual imagery was not allowed on the label in the USA. We tried our best to try to convince them that the word meant only choking and suffocating, while walking up the mountain on a hot summer day. Eventually we had to cover certain parts in every picture to remove that illusion before they allowed it.’



