

# BENITO FERRARA

**G**reco, the true blue-blooded Greco, is powerfully appellation bound. That is why the specification "di Tufo", meaning "from the town of Tufo" is indissolubly linked to the name of the grape and the wine. Some varieties - take Chardonnay - seem to perform very well across latitudes and longitudes. Greco, at least as we know it today, digs its heels in and refuses to budge. You want really good Greco? Must come to Tufo! Once upon a time, I suppose one would have gone to some equally interesting and specific place in Greece to find "the real thing". After all Greco means Greek, and it was the crafty Hellenes who colonized the incomparably rich Neapolitan area in the seventh century B.C. and thought well to bring Greco with them. Wonderfully civilized of them, of course!

Tufo is just what it is: a volcanic rock which, crumbling, becomes grainy and powerfully informs the soil. The town of Tufo acquired its name from the tufo rock it is founded upon and its soil, the wine following suit.

Tufo holds humidity very well, keeping its roots cool and well nourished. In Italy it is mysteriously linked to white wine alone: Orvieto, Frascati, Pitigliano, Tufo. The towns and the vineyards stand on tufaceous rock and soil. To see Tufo is to understand: the very houses of this tiny town perched on a steep hill are built out of tufo bricks.

And you can smell the wine in the soil and sometimes even in the air, for Tufo stands atop now abandoned sulfur mines, and the tart, gunpowdery bouquet so true of Greco di Tufo often blown through the hills.

Genuine, properly made Greco di Tufo is a bold, impatient wine, charged with nervous energy. How can one describe it? Greco di Tufo is Fiano's next door neighbour, yet, surprisingly, its most perfect opposite. If Fiano is

shy, subtle and soothing, Greco is aggressive, indeed reckless. One Apollonian, the other Dionisian, this comes close to the mark.

Tart, with a searing attack, Greco immediately melts honey-like on the palate, finishing, however, with a citric grip - all the while seducing with mineral suggestions of all kinds. Age will tame this wine somewhat, and it's a wonder what time will accomplish: the fine, sharp edge never blunt, but a patina seems to grace its savage features.

Gabriella Ferrara's Greco is such a wine, born of the slopes of San Paolo di Tufo, heart of this tiny appellation. And her Vigna Cicogna cru, from 70 year old vines on a full south exposure, seems to concentrate Greco di Tufo's impetuous nature into archetype.

Gabriella also makes small quantities of Aglianico and of Fiano.



## Greco di Tufo

Zone: *San Paolo di Tufo*  
 Varietal: *Greco*  
 Vineyard Ext.: *3.5 hectares*  
 Average Prod.: *25,000 bottles*



## Greco di Tufo Vigna Cicogna

Zone: *San Paolo di Tufo*  
 Cru: *Vigna Cicogna*  
 Varietal: *Greco*  
 Vineyard Ext.: *1 hectare*  
 Average Prod.: *8,000 bottles*