# VILLA DIAMANTE

Country: **Italy**
Region: **Campania**
Appellation(s): **Fiano di Avellino**
Producer: **Antoine Gaita**
Founded: **1996**
Annual Production: **650-800 cases**
Farming: **Organic**

Antoine Gaita's story begins far away from the vine-covered rolling hills of Irpinia, east of Naples: he grew up in Belgium, where his father worked in the coal mines. After developing a passion for wine at a young age, Antoine felt the need to return to his roots so he settled back in the Campania town of Montefredane, along with his New Jersey-born wife Diamante, also a returning migrant. In 1996 they established Villa Diamante, and began to bottle organically grown Fiano di Avellino from the hillside surrounding their home.

Unlike most vineyards in the area, Antoine's meager 3 hectares of Fiano face north, favoring a slow and steady ripening marked by hot days and cool nights. His primary goal is allowing the high-altitude *terroir* of Montefredane to express itself by avoiding the use of chemicals in the vineyard while maintaining a non-interventionist philosophy in the cellar. After whole-cluster pressing, the juice is either inoculated spontaneously from a starter culture *(pied de cuve)* or with yeasts selected from the vineyard, depending on the vintage. Antoine is constantly experimenting, with his background in chemistry driving his methods as his perennial desire for improvement provides a quasi-academic thrill. Nothing is hurried, as the wine completes its malolactic fermentation and ages extensively *sur lie* to acquire stunning mouthfeel and glorious complexity. After a year-long *élevage* in stainless steel tanks, during which a natural clarification takes place, the "Vigna della Congregazione" is bottled unfined and unfiltered, with only a small dose of sulfur. This wine is an exercise in finesse, showcasing Fiano's potential for purity and longevity along with its striking aromatics. Villa Diamante's Fiano possesses a sense of completeness, from its delicate floral perfume and mineral character in youth to the pristine texture and smoky, nutty notes it develops with bottle age. These are fascinating, unique wines from a creative genius.

| Wine | Blend | Vine Age | Soil Type | Vineyard Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fiano di Avellino "Vigna della Congregazione"** | Fiano | Planted 1983-1996 | Clay, Limestone | 3 ha |

* "ha"=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

# VILLA DIAMANTE (continued)

## VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Guyot training
- Vineyards face north
- Vineyards sit at 400-600 meters altitude (1,300-1,950 feet)
- All grapes are harvested by hand
- Spontaneous fermentation or inoculation by yeasts selected from the vineyard, depending on the vintage
- Alcoholic fermentation lasts 25-30 days in stainless steel tanks
- Wine ages for 12 months on its lees in stainless steel tanks before bottling
- Wine ages for 4 months in bottle before release
- Wine is bottled unfined and unfiltered