

# LEADING LA SCOLCA: AN INTERVIEW WITH CHIARA SOLDATI

The President of Italy awarded her the title of Knight of the Order of Merit for Labor, and the media call her “the embodiment of Italian style” — we are talking about Chiara Soldati, the owner of the iconic La Scolca winery. We spoke with her and learned how the estate’s wines became favorites among celebrities and prominent figures, whether the winery adapts to trends, and how Chiara herself balances business, constant travel, and personal life. The occasion and scale of the story are grand: this year, La Scolca celebrates its 105th anniversary! Among La Scolca’s admirers are heads of state, the Pope, and stars ranging from Elton John to Tom Cruise.

*How did La Scolca become one of the most desired wines in Italy at such a high level? What is their main secret?*

Chiara: At the very beginning of our journey, we didn’t think of wine production as a business. We were passionate about French white wines like Chablis and Champagne and wanted to have our own one of that caliber. And we obtained a wine without any mask, any chemical addicts, any practice that can change the natural flavor of the grape. And now, year after year, we strive to preserve our authenticity: focusing on Gavi grapes, understanding the characteristics of each plot of land, using traditional methods with modern touches. And with a passion that spans generations.

I believe the secret of La Scolca also lies in how we convey our philosophy. When I started working 30 years ago, I decided to personally represent La Scolca — and today I am not just an ambassador but a storyteller. It is important for me not only to talk about a particular bottle or our business but also to explain how we understand wine culture, responsible consumption, feel the Italian style and heritage, respect the land and the people. Therefore, I invest all my resources in personally bringing La Scolca to every corner of the world — this is how I express gratitude to all clients and partners.

I see the market as a space for relationships. And I see business success in great support — it’s not account numbers, but people who believe in our story, are part of it, and help to write new pages.



Today I am happy because our 105th birthday is a starting point, not an arrival. This is the beginning of my son's career — Ferdinando has decided to continue the work and will manage La Scolca in the fifth generation. It is very important to me that he finds his own path, and I am sure he will bring his own vision, just as I once did. Because when you are so passionate, you overcome any difficulties. There is some inner enthusiasm that helps you remain not only successful today but also brave enough to look into the future.

*You constantly interact with famous and respected people — are there any special stories that you still remember?*

Chiara: On one of my first visits to Germany, I met a renowned sommelier, and he told me, “A great journey awaits you at La Scolca”. I was very surprised, as I just started my career, but he added, “Believe me, it's true. You are strong, strict, professional, but most importantly, passionate.”



Later, at one of the events, I met Colin Firth — he wanted to meet the producer of La Scolca and expected that the “Black Label” would be presented by a wise older man. But he discovered that it was young me talking to him about the wine (laughs). And last year in Las Vegas, I met Sting. It wasn't our first meeting, but you can't imagine how surprised I was that he recognized me! He hugged me like an old friend, and was happy to see me and our wines. I think La Scolca creates special connections. And that's the magic.

*The media write you “embody Italian style at its best”. What does it mean for you?*

Chiara: For me, the Italian Style is all about the “Grand Beauty”. Everything that expresses excellence in art fashion design architecture and also winemaking is connected with the Italian “genius loci”. It goes beyond the concept of Made

in Italy. There is an Italian touch or heritage wherever you have excellence, creativity and beauty.

In La Scolca we have it in our DNA and everybody can recognize it — while remaining a winery with a rich history and a focus on quality, we want to be a model of Italian perfection and lifestyle. Not limiting ourselves only to wine but combining dolce vita and sustainability, hedonism and moderation.

*Recently, you became one of the 25 Knights of the Order of Merit for Labor of Italy. Is it inspiring or does it feel like a serious responsibility?*

Chiara: Of course, receiving such an honor directly from our President Sergio Mattarella was an immense satisfaction. I now and forever bear the responsibility to honor this high recognition and set an example for younger generations.

It is both inspiring and challenging, especially now when the market is becoming more complex, saturated, and differentiation is harder. But I have learned to handle pressure and turn it into a point of growth. I am often asked how I manage to maintain balance: working, traveling, never getting tired, smiling, and having a personal life. The secret, of course, is in organization and planning, but also in not letting stress completely take over — and maintaining a clear vision. I believe that after the storm, the sun always comes out, and opportunities arise even in bad circumstances. Life with its difficulties has taught me to be strong and actively seek new solutions.

*Your life and work seem extremely intense. What is Chiara Soldati's superpower and source of her energy?*

To achieve success, you don't need superpowers. It's all about passion, enthusiasm, self-confidence, and hard, hard, hard work! I genuinely love my job, and there are a few things that particularly inspire me about it.

The first is production. For me, harvest and vinification time is a magical moment, like meeting a new child, because with each vintage begins a new challenge and a new chapter.

The second is global strategy. In the last four years, it hasn't been easy to focus on it, but I enjoy studying countries from the perspective of geopolitics, economics, business, cultural features, and how best to approach the market.

And the third, my favorite part, is travel. I love visiting new and familiar countries, discovering them from different angles, and building relationships with people.

I like being not only in capitals: In Us I visited Nashville or Seattle, I visited the Samarkanda, Bansko and varna in Bulgaria, Sylt in Germany, the desert resort in Dubai And I have the most incredible memories!

*Do you have any special habits or rituals that keep you balanced throughout the day?*

Like any entrepreneur, juggling everything isn't easy, but I have a wonderful team, and I am a well-organized person: I wake up very early and work all day. I work out with a fantastic trainer — this helps me stay in shape and relieve stress. I love yoga, music, and cooking. I also try to stick to a healthy diet: vegetables, fruits, fish and seafood instead of sweets, pasta, and pizza. And, of course, a lot of water in addition to good wine. During flights (and I have many), I always sleep — that helps too!

I also believe in the power of small breaks and doing what you love. I can't afford long rest periods, but even an hour at a beauty salon or a dinner at sunset is an opportunity to slow down for a while and enjoy life. It doesn't require much time or money — for example, sharing a bottle of good wine with special people. I have many friends around the world, and I try to stay in touch with them because this connection is also a gift of life.

*You are an activist with the Donne del Vino association and promote women's rights in the agricultural sector. Why is this important to you personally?*

I was born in the seventies, so the importance of women's rights is in my DNA, and my values are based on respect and freedom for all people without discrimination. I believe in women's talent, strength, and merit and consider networking the best tool for empowering women.

Of course, when I started working 30 years ago, Italy had a completely different mentality. But I always believed that if you are well educated, strong, and good at what you do, gender doesn't matter. I am very proud of my inner strength and reputation — but also of never losing my individuality. I always remain myself, never compromising. Because when I wake up in the morning, I want to see myself in the mirror — maybe with a few changes in appearance, but still the self that I like.



*La Scolca has a tremendous heritage but also adapts to trends. Why is this important to you? Why is it not enough for even iconic wineries to produce classic wines using traditional methods?*

La Scolca has always been a courageous brand. We started producing white wine in Piedmont, which is famous for its reds. We produced d'Antan, aged for 12 years, when the market offered only young wines like Novello or Beaujolais Nouveau. Sparkling wine made from 100% Cortese when everyone else was making blends. Even rosé, we released 30 years ago when it wasn't nearly as popular.

La Scolca means “looking forward,” and we try to anticipate and meet new market demands. Last year, the world was introduced to Cortegaia — a light early-harvest wine with 9.5% alcohol, fewer calories — only 52 per 100 ml, — and fully recyclable packaging. It's suitable for those on a diet, young people not yet ready for complex wines, and those who value responsible consumption. It's a new concept and a new challenge, but I believe in it.

Cortegaia is among others a wine for the new generation, and my son and I developed the strategy and tone of voice for it. But even in this, we continue to carry our identity, not losing what we are.

*“Black Label” is your iconic wine. Is its style changing now and can it be adjusted in the future according to trends?*

“Black Label” embodies all the brand's values and represents the essence of a contemporary lifestyle. You can find it in any exclusive location: from the Maldives to luxury cruises, from Dubai to Istanbul.

If you try many different vintages of “Black Label,” you will, of course, notice nuances that may differ, but the style and profile of the wine always remain unchanged. The secret of Gavi dei Gavi is that it's like a little black dress, a classic that always works and always stands out. By recognizing the aroma of lemongrass, citrus, and subtle minerality, you can identify “Black Label” with your eyes closed. For me, it's not just a symbol of the brand but also a favorite wine in everyday life — delicate, harmonious, like a melody, it always adds a touch of luxury and timeless elegance to any event.



*Looking back and comparing La Scolca 105 years ago and now, what has fundamentally changed and what has remained the same?*

La Scolca can be compared to Hermès — a family brand whose flagships, Birkin and Kelly, remain true to their essence yet continue to be relevant and desirable. The Kelly bag was used by grandmothers, mothers, and now fits into the style of the youth, just like “Black Label” — a wine that remains an excellent choice from generation to generation.

I prefer to consider the luxury the concept of special things. Because lux is not just about high price but also about meticulous attention to details, materials, and a long handcrafted process — that’s why you feel that you’re holding something truly valuable.

I can say that we have started to “dress” differently — more modernly, but still holding a vintage bag that conveys who we are, our style, and our origin. We look to the future while respecting the past and remembering where we started.

