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Read Between the Wines Presents Episode 103: Barbara Widmer of Brancaia, and the Discipline of Rebuilding What You Inherit

14 October 2026, Luxembourg - Read Between the Wines announces Episode 103, a conversation with Barbara Widmer, Winemaker and CEO of Brancaia, the Tuscan estate her parents built from a single sunlit hillside into one of the defining names of the Super Tuscan era.

In 1980, Bruno and Brigitte Widmer bought a derelict hillside in Castellina in Chianti because of how the light fell on it one Christmas morning. Their daughter Barbara was not meant to run any of it. She was studying architecture in Zurich when the 1994 harvest changed her course. She has now spent 28 years holding three very different estates, Castellina, Radda in Chianti and Maremma, under a single label and philosophy, a deliberate departure from the usual Tuscan practice of splitting family holdings into separate brands.

"Yes, absolutely. Wine is not just a drink, it's an expression of time, place, it's culture." **- Barbara Widmer**

The conversation traces Il Blu, created in 1988 and sold outside Chianti Classico's own rules as one of the first Super Tuscans, through to how Brancaia decides, late and deliberately, which wine earns which name. It also covers the estate's move from nursery clones to massal selection, and from spontaneous to controlled fermentation, as harvests grow warmer.

An exclusive bonus episode on organic farming, Equalitas certification and climate change at Brancaia is available for free only on our website.

About Brancaia

Brancaia is a family winery founded in 1981 in Castellina in Chianti by Brigitte and Bruno Widmer. Now led by their daughter Barbara Widmer, it spans three estates, Castellina in Chianti, Radda in Chianti and Maremma, united under a single label rather than split into separate brands. Its flagship, Il Blu, created in 1988, broke Chianti Classico's own rules and became one of the first Super Tuscans. Brancaia is organic and Equalitas certified across all three estates.

About Read Between the Wines

Now celebrating its 10th season with over 100 episodes, Read Between the Wines is a leading wine podcast exploring the people, places, and stories behind every bottle. Moving beyond scores and ratings, it champions storytelling, education, and authenticity, reaching a global audience of wine aficionados in search of stories rather than scores. Past guests include award-winning author Karen MacNeil, Dr. Laura Catena, and esteemed estates such as Tuscany's Il Borro, Château Haut-Bailly, and Domaine Faiveley.

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