



To visit Possa, Heydi Bonanini's vineyards in Riomaggiore, is a breathtaking experience for the senses: the shocking beauty of Cinque Terre terraces on cliff sides so steep that they seem to fall straight into the sea, the ingenious monorail car that is required to access the vines, prickly pear cacti towering above the narrow track. Clay pots overflow with entrancingly scented Mediterranean herbs, and Heydi's bees visit his vines as well as his lemon trees.

Heydi farms biodynamically--he is a member of the "Triple A" group that includes Occhipinti and others. His tiny, terraced vineyard includes single rows of indigenous grapes he wants to preserve, such as Rossese Bianco and Picabon. Heydi makes use of some amphora; he also ages his wines in locally traditional woods, such as acacia, chestnut, and cherry. To make wine in Cinque Terre is to be a devoted preservationist. All children of this winemaking tradition spend their lives in awe of the backbreaking, relentless, and sometimes dangerous work of holding up the terraces from falling into the sea. He has known these stories his whole life, and he has hosted many visitors--and the emotions are still fresh on his face. The pride, the respect for sacrifice, for nature, for the love of a way of life