

## SERGIO'S TAKE ON 2003 TENUTA SAN GUIDO SASSICAIA



In the cellar at Tenuta San Guido with Italy's most fabled wine, Sassicaia.

In the summer of 2003, Italy was gripped with an intense heat wave. I had been driving around the country, from Friuli to Basilicata tasting wines, and everywhere I went stressed-out producers were hurriedly harvesting their crops weeks—sometimes even a month—before they usually did. I remember sitting at a table at Tenuta San Guido, the estate that produces Sassicaia as tractors passed by, setting down cartons of fruit around which masses of bees were hungrily swarming. I tried a few grapes—they were fat, juicy, and sugary sweet.

It takes an accomplished winemaker to make a well-balanced wine in a year like that. I've returned to Italy many times to taste wines from the 2003 vintage and have found that, predictably, many producers, worried that their grapes might burst when over-ripe, harvested too early. Their miscalculation resulted in batches of tart, syrupy wines full of underdeveloped tannins. But the wines of Tenuta San Guido are different. When I arrived at the estate this January for my final tasting, owner Nicolò Incisa della Rocchetta had bottles of Sassicaia from 1999 to 2003 waiting for me. Drinking them reaffirmed my belief that from an investor's standpoint, Sassicaia is the best valued collectible wine Italy has to offer.

Simply put: it's consistently excellent and undeniably distinct; it ages beautifully; and it appreciates quickly and at a high rate. Even in the 2003 vintage, Sassicaia was well-balanced and wonderfully-structured. And though it was dark, it had the same personality as the light 2002. The same went for the 1999, the 2000, and the 2001: with the exception of

some vintage influence, the wine doesn't change. Its character is distinct and indescribable, completely different not only from every other Super Tuscan but also from every wine in the world. I've tasted it in nearly every vintage made in the last 38 years and can attest to the fact that it ages endlessly and drinks beautifully forever.

And you can buy it at a relatively reasonable price and often see it quadruple in value within a decade. Of course, Sassicaia has its detractors, those who insist that its quality is fading. In my experience I've found that most of those naysayers are newcomers to the industry. They've read decades worth of articles touting Sassicaia's quality and value and then they've sat down and tasted a single bottle from 1998. Upon finding a wine that in no way resembles bold, modern drinks, they've decided that while the wine may have once been good, it's officially fallen from grace. "But have you ever had a Sassicaia from the '60s or '70s?" I ask them. And without fail, they haven't. Sassicaia's critics, most of whom came of age in a culture that awards high scores to big, soft wines, usually have a warped frame of reference.

In fact, the quality of Sassicaia has never faltered. But it's reserved; it needs time—it never shows right out of the bottle. And to be truly appreciated, it must be enjoyed with food.

### SASSICAIA

Sassicaia is a masterful cuvée of the best Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes from the vineyards of Castiglione, Doccino, Quercione, San Martino, Mandrioli, Sassicaia, and Aianova, all of which are situated on hilly slopes in a subzone of Bolgheri. When blended, the fruit from these carefully selected and meticulously cared-for sites creates an elegant and beautifully balanced wine.

### SASSICAIA

T. San Guido 2003 Sassicaia.....	\$127.45
T. San Guido 2003 Sassicaia(375ml).....	\$71.61
T. San Guido 2003 Sassicaia(1.5L).....	\$273.00
T. San Guido 2003 Sassicaia(3.0L).....	\$675.00
T. San Guido 2003 Sassicaia(6.0L).....	\$1550.00

*All wines listed above are future arrivals*

### GUIDALBERTO: SASSICAIA'S COUSIN

The 2000 vintage was the first release of a new wine created by the mastermind of Sassicaia, Nicolò Incisa della Rocchetta, and his stepson, Sebastiano Rosa, former manager at Argiano who collaborated in the creation of the Super Tuscan Solengo. The wine is named for Guidalberto della Gherardesca, a maternal ancestor of Nicolò's who cultivated vines in Bolgheri in the 19th century.

The grapes for the Guidalberto are grown on lands adjacent to the Sassicaia vineyards in a site owned by Conti Zileri, cousin to the Incisa della Rocchetta family. Vinification takes place separately for each of the three varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon (45%), Merlot (45%), and Sangiovese (10%). As in Sassicaia, the signature bouquet of the estate is easily detected. The wine displays similar finesse on the front of the palate and culminates in a rich, lasting finish.

### GUIDALBERTO

T. San Guido 2003 Guidalberto.....	\$69.00
------------------------------------	---------

### LE DIFESE: THE LEGEND CONTINUES

First Sassicaia, then Guidalberto, and now Le Difese. This wine represents a departure from international varieties with a focus on the noble Sangiovese as its base, accompanied by a 10% dosage of Cabernet Sauvignon. While the Guidalberto grabbed the headlines back in 2000, this cousin of the mythical Sassicaia was quietly released with the 2001 vintage in 2003. IWM was the first to bring this wine to American soil, and it remains virtually unavailable elsewhere in this country. As for Sassicaia and Guidalberto, the climate, influenced by the proximity of the sea and the hills surrounding the vineyards which protect them from the winds, has a very strong influence on the correct and healthy maturation of the grapes for Le Difese. While predominantly Sangiovese, unlike the other two wines, this wine retains the signature house aromas that not only indicate the estate but also brand it as a distinctly Tuscan wine.

### LE DIFESE

T. San Guido 2003 Le Difese.....	\$29.50
----------------------------------	---------

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEW YORK, NY  
PERMIT #5506

# ITALIAN WINE MERCHANTS

ITALIAN WINE MERCHANTS ♦ APRIL - MAY 2006 ♦ VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 ♦ NEWSLETTER BY SERGIO ESPOSITO AND IWM

## SERGIO'S GUIDE TO THE WINES OF PIEMONTE

The Piemontese are obsessively devoted to their regional wines; they're so loyal—so convinced of the superior quality of their own wines—that they often refuse to consider the value of a wine from a different locale. Like most Italians, the Piemontese regard their wines as their pride and joy; unlike most Italians, they probably won't ever keep a bottle of wine from Toscana, Umbria, or Lombardia in their cellars; you won't find a Brunello di Montalcino or a Montepulciano in one of their restaurants. Then again, why should you? Piemontese wines are complex and spectacular, both in scope and quality.

The intricate, extraordinary tastes of many of Piemonte's wines are connected to its intricate, extraordinary grapes, varieties that are famously finicky and difficult to farm correctly. Dolcetto is an early-ripening varietal, prone to over-ripeness. Erbaluce grows on the base of the Alps in cold air and can easily become too tart and acidic. Nebbiolo is a late-ripening varietal, prone to under-ripeness. But when these grapes are cared for correctly, they can result in exceptional wines—Dolcetto makes a deep, structured red; Erbaluce becomes an herbaceous, crisp white; and in Barbarescos and Barolos, Nebbiolo realizes its potential to be the best translator of terroir in the world.

And the Piemontese know how to care for their grapes. The adept producers have been making wines for millennia, simultaneously learning from their ancestors and introducing innovations to the world of wine. Early on, they were the people who recognized the distinct quality of different vineyards, establishing Italy's first cru in Dolcetto di Dogliani. Long before the rest of the country began paying attention to the importance of aging, vintners in Barolo were making exceptional wines that developed with time.

Of course, despite the level of expertise that goes into their production, Piemontese wines aren't for everyone. Whereas Tuscan wines are easy to understand, enjoyable, and inviting, Piemontese wines are less sweet, less rich, tighter, and less generous. They won't give you a hit of immediate pleasure and they take time to evolve. But most true wine lovers who are patient and willing to allow themselves time to adjust—those who are willing to drink Piemontese wines several times before judging them—will soon comprehend that they are some of the world's best wines.

### BAROLO: THE KING OF ITALIAN WINE

Barolo, Italy's most esteemed wine, is a mystical drink capable of displaying new layers of depth and personality with each sip. For the budding enthusiast, Barolo can be overwhelming and difficult to comprehend; to begin to understand the wine, one should experience its unique flavor profile several times. This highly structured red displays elegance, depth, and a wealth of singular tastes and aromas that allow for few comparisons. Today, we're introducing Barolo the proper way: by selecting bottles of quality and drinkability, and providing a quick guide to this complex wine.

Until the early 1970s, Barolo was for the most part a non-cru wine made from an ideal blend of Nebbiolo grapes from different sites: the soft, fragrant la Morra; the graceful, earthy Barolo; the bold, rich Castiglione Falletto; the deep, powerful Serralunga; and the structured, concentrated Monforte. Due to the refined efforts of Angelo Gaja, Renato Ratti, and Bruno Ceretto, among others, single-vineyard designations are now a commonly accepted practice.

Today, eleven communes make up the Barolo DOCG, a prized area on the Langhe Hills of

Piemonte, south of Torino. The five key zones of la Morra, Barolo, Castiglione Falletto, Serralunga d'Alba, and Monforte d'Alba contribute 87% of the wine made in Barolo. Soil type divides the communes in two: to the west is the Tortonian soil of the Central Valley, which tends to create more approachable, soft, fragrant, and elegant wines; to the east is the Serralunga Valley, made of Helvetian soil, which generally creates long-lived, powerfully concentrated wines. Each commune is further differentiated from its neighbors by its distinct microclimate.

*(continued on page 2)*

### BAROLO STARTER KIT

Oddero 2001 Barolo .....	\$34.95
Joseffa Saffirio 2000 Barolo .....	\$39.05
Guido Porro 1999 Barolo Lazzairasco .....	\$46.58
Virna 1999 Barolo Cannubi Boschis .....	\$53.72
Conterno Fantino 2000 Sori Ginestra .....	\$69.92
Rinaldi 2000 Barolo Cannubi Ravera .....	\$69.95
<i>Starter kit (1 of each wine)</i>	
<i>plus an "11x17" detailed map of Barolo zones</i>	<i>\$.314.17</i>

### VINTAGE BAROLO

Roagna-I Paglieri 1990 La Rocca e La Pita .....	\$.94.95
Rinaldi 1990 Barolo Cannubi .....	\$169.00
Ceretto 1978 Bricco Rocche 'Brunate' .....	\$189.00
Prunotto 1990 Barolo .....	\$219.00
Seghesio 1985 Barolo .....	\$219.00
Vietti 1989 Barolo 'Rocche' .....	\$210.00

### AGE-WORTHY BAROLO

Scavino 2001 Barolo Cannubi .....	\$79.90
Bovio 1999 Barolo Riserva .....	\$82.50
Mascarello Bartolo 1996 Barolo .....	\$96.90
Sandrone 1998 Barolo Le Vigne .....	\$110.00
Aldo Conterno 1999 Barolo Granbussia .....	\$135.00
Scavino 1999 Barolo Rocche .....	\$139.90

## THE VINEYARDS OF MONTALCINO

The Montalcino production zone can be broken into a range of subzones. Within each there are variations in altitude, soil composition, and weather patterns. In fact, there are nine subzones and the Consorzio lists more than 24 distinct microclimates in the area, which can confuse even the educated consumer. To make it more manageable we have divided the region into three territories—central, north, and south—that provide a general guide to Brunello styles.

The differences in altitude and exposition throughout the zone are a major factor in wine style since they play a substantial role in the vegetal cycle of the vines. Compared to the Chianti zone that is its neighbor to the north, Montalcino enjoys a predominantly Mediterranean climate as well as high altitudes that cool the grapes and help prevent dis-

ease. To understand the topography of the region, we recommend looking at Montalcino as a cone with its peak just south of the town of Montalcino, which divides the square into four isosceles triangles with the center forming the apex of the cone. From the center, the slopes generally descend outward across the region.

High altitudes, evening temperature drops and cooling winds sustain a slower cycle in vineyards like Il Greppo at Biondi Santi (480m+ above sea level) than is found in lower altitudes such as the southwestern site of Col d'Orcia (115-300m above sea level), where sandier soils and the lower elevation both promote a more advanced cycle. This variation is captured by juxtaposing these two wines from the same vintage: you will experience a denser, low acid, approachable wine in the Col d'Orcia, for



In the Il Greppo vault, Franco Biondi-Santi showing Sergio the crystallization that formed on the priceless 1888 Brunello di Montalcino.

instance, while the less developed Biondi Santi is marked by the structured tannins and high acidity that are ideal for longevity. Adding a third wine to the comparison enhances this hypothesis: Il Poggione (200-400m) combines the finesse of Biondi Santi and the approachability of Col

*(continued on page 3)*

ITALIAN  
WINE  
MERCHANTS

108 East 16th Street  
New York, NY 10003

Between Park Avenue  
& Irving Place

www.italianwinermerchant.com  
Order By Phone: 212.473.2323

# SERGIO'S GUIDE TO THE WINES OF PIEMONTE

(continued from page 1)

## BARBARESCO: PERFORMING IN THE SHADOWS

If Barolo is the king of wines, Barbaresco is the queen. Barbaresco, which is also commonly referred to as Barolo's little brother, is Italy's third most collected wine. The Barbaresco DOCG sits ten miles northeast of Barolo in the hills of the Langhe. This small area, which is broken up into three subzones around the villages of Barbaresco, Neive, and Treiso, existed in complete obscurity until Bruno Giacosa and Giovanni Gaja (producer Angelo Gaja's father) began to market the high quality wines they made from the native Nebbiolo. But it wasn't until Angelo Gaja introduced single-vineyard efforts and canvassed the globe promoting his wines in the 1960s that Barbaresco began to emerge from the shadows and took its rightful place in cellars alongside the grands crus of Bordeaux, the cult wines of California, and its big brother Barolo.

Barbaresco tends to be slightly finer, less tannic, and more elegant and approachable than Barolo for a variety of reasons: its grapes grow in a cooler climate and ripen for a shorter period, and it has a lower alcohol level requirement (12.5% compared to Barolo's 13%) and less stringent aging requirements (Barbaresco ages for at least two years with at least one in barrel, while Barolo ages for at least three years with at least two in barrel). In contrast to the Helvetian soil found in the Barolo communes of Monforte and Serralunga, Barbaresco's soil is a calcareous marl of the Tortonian epoch that tends to yield softer, more aromatic wines, particularly in the Barbaresco subzone, home to Ceretto's Bricco Asili and Marchesi di Gresy. Though wines from Neive can be a little more tannic and powerful (as exemplified by Giacosa's creations), a producer's style can mask the characteristics of the area—Gaja's Barbarescos, for example, reveal rich fruit and more concentration than Giacosa's or Produttori di Barbaresco's classic, leaner wines, while La Spinetta's efforts reveal a more hedonistic side.

## BARBARESCO

Produttori del Barbaresco 1996 Barbaresco . . .	\$39.50
Roagna 1997 Barbaresco Paje . . . . .	\$44.95
Orlando Abrigo 2000 MonTERSINO . . . . .	\$56.10
*Roagna 1996 Crichton Paje Barbaresco . . .	\$59.95
Bruno Giacosa 1999 Barbaresco Falletto . .	\$79.00
Sebaste 1990 Barbaresco Montestefa . . . .	\$79.50
Roagna 1989 Barbaresco . . . . .	\$84.95
*Bruno Giacosa 1999 Barbaresco Falletto . .	\$79.99
Giuseppe Mascarello 1988 Barbaresco . . .	\$110.00
Giacosa 1998 Barbaresco Asili . . . . .	\$110.00
La Spinetta 2001 Barbaresco Valciraano . .	\$114.95
Prunotto 1986 Barbaresco Montestefano .	\$159.00
*Gaja 2000 Barbaresco . . . . .	\$167.99
*Gaja 2001 Barbaresco . . . . .	\$169.50
Oddero 1985 Barbaresco . . . . .	\$169.00
Bruno Giacosa 1983 Barbaresco Gallina . .	\$179.00
Prunotto 1990 Barbaresco Montestefano .	\$219.00
Gaja 1982 Barbaresco . . . . .	\$296.00

\*Represents future arrival

## SUPER PIEMONTE BLENDS: WHY SO SUPER?

Super Piemonte blends—Conterno Fantino's Monprà, Clerico's Arte, Rocche dei Manzoni's Bricco Manzoni, and Aldo Conterno's Quartetto among them—are Piemonte's answer to Toscana's Super Tuscan movement. While many Super Tuscans are now untouchable, Super Piemonte blends remain approachable and reasonably priced.

The Super Piemonte term was initially assigned to high quality wines that were made within established Piemontese wine zones using either varietals or techniques (or both) that did not comply with the zone's regulations. Because the category is understood to include excellent and innovative drinks, some stylistically non-traditional wines that do comply with regulations are now also being sold as Super Piemonte blends. These blends are often technically classified as Langhe Rosso DOC, Monferrato Rosso DOC, or Piemonte DOC, zones that act as umbrella appellations for wines that don't follow the rigid regulations of established DOCGs like Barolo and Barbaresco. A further extension of the Super Piemonte category encompasses wines that break all rules and are therefore simply labeled VINO DA TAVOLA or IGT.

Super Piemonte blends are perhaps most commonly classified as Langhe Rosso DOC, a zone that includes all the winegrowing municipalities of the Cuneo province. Langhe Rosso also refers to the Langhe Hills—home to Barolo and Barbaresco, located along the Tanaro River—and allows producers within this province to experiment outside the limitations set by the local *consorzi*. The Langhe Rosso label doesn't necessarily imply that the wine is made mainly from the Nebbiolo grape—in fact, wines in this rubric are often mixtures of Barbera, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Nero, and Merlot grapes. Certain producers, generally of the modern school, believe that these additional grapes can soften or add fruit to the more angular Nebbiolo, as is the case with Valentino's pioneering Bricco Manzoni and the rare 1990 Monprà offered below. Others believe that blending imbues a drink with more personality—especially in off vintages for Nebbiolo, as Gaja shows in his legendary trio of Sori Tildin, Costa Russi, and Sori San Lorenzo, all of which include a small percentage of Barbera along with Nebbiolo from the Barbaresco zone.

## SUPER PIEMONTE WINES

Valentino 1998 'Bricco Manzoni' . . . . .	\$30.94
Clerico 2001 'Arte' . . . . .	\$39.00
Gaja 2000 Sito Moresco . . . . .	\$59.95
Conterno Fantino 1990 Monprà . . . . .	\$69.00
Aldo Conterno 2001 Il Favot . . . . .	\$58.00
Valentino 1998 Quatr Nas . . . . .	\$53.50

## LANGHE ROSSO WINES OF GAJA

Gaja 1998 Conteisa . . . . .	\$129.95
Gaja 2001 Conteisa . . . . .	\$167.99
Gaja 2001 Darmaji . . . . .	\$189.95
Gaja 2001 Sito Moresco . . . . .	\$59.50
Gaja 2001 Costa Russi . . . . .	\$279.95
Gaja 2001 Sori San Lorenzo . . . . .	\$279.95
Gaja 2001 Sori Tilden . . . . .	\$279.95

## BARBERA'S ZIP: THE PERFECT FOOD CONTENDER

Barbera is widely considered the perfect pizza wine. Its jarring acidity, high alcohol, low tannin, and lush fruit make it an ideal accompaniment to food, adept at cutting through tomato sauce or the perfect complement to a t-bone. Barbera is often produced by Barolo and Barbaresco houses as a secondary, younger-drinking choice and is made from its eponymous grape. Though Piemonte is known for Nebbiolo, Barbera is actually the most planted grape in the region.

In Piemonte, five DOC zones produce the most noteworthy Barberas. The two most important of these are Barbera d'Alba and Barbera d'Asti, both of which require 100% Barbera—the Monferrato, Colli Toronesi, and Rubino di Cantavenna may produce blended wines.

In the early 1980s, Giacomo Bologna, the owner of the Braida estate, single-handedly raised the bar for Barberas when he released his Bricco dell'Uccellone. Bologna selected grapes from the best vineyard and aged them in new French barriques; the result of this endeavor—winemakers' realization that oak aging can soften the sharp acidity and add a dose of much-needed tannic structure to Barbera—launched a revolution.

## BARBERA

Rocche dei Manzoni 2001 La Cresta . . . . .	\$25.50
Clerico 2003 Barbera d'Alba . . . . .	\$29.50
Bartolo Mascarello 2003 Barbera . . . . .	\$29.99
Bovio 2000 Barbera Parussi . . . . .	\$33.00
Bruno Giacosa 2001 Barbera . . . . .	\$34.50
Eraldo Viberti 2001 Barbera Vigna Clara . .	\$35.06
Bovio 1999 Barbera Regiaveja . . . . .	\$36.83
Conterno 2003 Cascina Francia(1.5L) . . . .	\$72.60

## DOLCETTO: NOT ITALY'S BEAUJOLAIS!

Like Barbera, Dolcetto is often made by Barolo and Barbaresco producers as a secondary, younger-drinking choice. Because of its simplicity, low acidity, early ripening ability, and easy-going character, Piemonte's "little sweet one" has often been misrepresented as the Beaujolais of Italy. Compared to Beaujolais, however, Dolcetto tends to be deeper, more concentrated, and more structured. Over the last seven years, as people around the world have become more interested in Dolcetto, it has acquired a new reputation built on power.

## DOLCETTO

Valentino 2004 Dolcetto Matinera . . . . .	\$17.00
Clerico 2004 Dolcetto Visadi . . . . .	\$18.95
San Romano 2004 Dolcetto Pilone . . . . .	\$19.99
Sandrone 2004 Dolcetto d'Alba . . . . .	\$20.99
Pira 1998 Dolcetto Bricco Botti . . . . .	\$24.75
Eraldo Viberti 2004 Dolcetto d'Alba . . . .	\$35.06

# THE VINEYARDS OF MONTALCINO

(continued from page 1)

In fact, if you are looking for a balance between finesse and approachability, we recommend the elegant and structured wines of Il Poggione, Cerbaiona, and Poggio di Sotto, all of which are classically made Brunello.

## HIGH ALTITUDE DELIVERS WINES OF STRUCTURE

Brunello begins around the hilltop town of Montalcino. This central subzone (also known as Montalcino), along with La Croce just below it and Tavernelle to the west, forms the traditional heartland of the Brunello di Montalcino DOCG. These are among the most elevated zones, where the altitudes provide the perfect habitat for more perfumed and elegant wines of structure and longevity, as do the southern and eastern exposure and the producers' vinification technique. These characteristics are enhanced in many of the top wines because producers intentionally balance ample but mature tannins with elevated acidity. The Tuscan treasures from the central area include the historic estates of Biondi-Santi (480m), Fattoria dei Barbi, Conti Costanti, and Fuligni as well as more recent efforts from Il Palazzone and Cerbaiona. Continuing toward Tavernelle, you find the classic Brunellos from Poggio Antico (540m), Case Basse di Soldera, Pieve Santa Restituta, and Il Poggiolo (520m). While the 2001 from Biondi Santi is destined to become a cellar trophy, the more concentrated, approachable Cerbaiona is also among the highlights of the vintage. In addition to these outstanding wines, we look forward to Soldera's late release of the Case Basse 2001; in the meantime we are offering several past vintages of this top estate's normale and riserva.

## CENTRAL MONTALCINO'S LONG-LIVED BRUNELLOS

Fuligni 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . . .	\$64.95
Cerbaiona 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$94.95
Poggio Antico 2001 Brunello di Montalcino	\$49.98
Biondi-Santi 2001 Brunello di Montalcino	\$119.95

All wines listed above are future arrivals

## VINTAGE CASE BASSE DI SOLDERA

Case Basse di Soldera 1999 Brunello . . . .	\$198.00
Case Basse di Soldera 1999 Brunello . . . .	\$247.50
Case Basse di Soldera 1981 Brunello . . . .	\$289.00

## WHERE RIPENESS MEETS STRUCTURE

North of the Montalcino subzone the high elevation of the central region begins to taper and form the northern territory, which is made up of Canalicchio, Pianelli, and Montosoli (and also includes the western area of Camigliano for this exercise). These subzones have a diminished share in the warm, dry Mediterranean climate and high altitude of their neighbors to the south, and the slight differences in temperature, humidity, and elevation breed wines of both ripeness and structure. The minimized exposure to cooling winds also contributes to the ripeness of wines from this area. This is epitomized by the wines of Capanna and Altesino's Montosoli cru, which typically combine serious aromas and elegance with power and fruit.

Further west, the wine of Silvio Nardi expresses elegance and fruit with slightly less acidity at a price that places it among IWM's best values. Another standout from the vintage is the wine of Baricci, which is rarely available in this country but offers sophistication in both the Brunello and the Rosso (perhaps the most impressive Rosso of 2004). Continue the exploration with the recommended wines below.

## NORTHERN MONTALCINO'S BALANCE

Altesino 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . .	\$49.95
Altesino 2001 Brunello 'Montosoli' . . . . .	\$79.95
Baricci 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . . .	\$48.50
Canalicchio di Sopra 2001 Brunello . . . . .	\$59.95
Capanna 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . .	\$49.50
Caparzo 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . .	\$39.95
Castiglione del Bosco 2001 Brunello . . . .	\$49.99
Donatella Cinelli Colombini 2001 Brunello	\$46.95
D. Cinelli Colombini 2001 Prime Donne . .	\$55.95
Nardi 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . . .	\$49.95
Tenuta La Fuga 2001 Brunello . . . . .	\$59.95

All wines listed above are future arrivals

## APPROACHABILITY ON THE LOWER SLOPES

The southern region, like the others, features dramatic shifts in altitude from estate to estate. But the warmer climate shows through in all the wines. The vineyards that fan out eastward from Tavernelle into Sant'Angelo are exposed to a more unrestricted Mediterranean climate than the rest of Montalcino, with sandier soils, less wind, and lower altitude (similar to the more southerly exposed Maremma zone). The effects can also be seen in other crops: the olives from this region will turn black while olives found on Il Greppo are still green. And as with the olives, the climate contributes to a denser, less acidic, fruitier side of Brunello. The vineyards that spread west into Castelnuovo dell'Abate deliver similar characteristics. However, some estates, like Camigliano and Il Poggione (200-400m), have elevated vineyards with southern and western exposures that create potent wines with a spectacular combination of structure and ripeness.

## SOUTHERN SLOPE APPROACHABILITY

Agostina Pieri 2001 Brunello di Montalcino	\$54.95
Camigliano 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$49.98
Caprili 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . . .	\$39.99
Col d'Orcia 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$49.95
Il Poggione 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$47.93
La Poderina 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$54.95
Lisini 2001 Brunello di Montalcino . . . . .	\$49.95

## COLLECTIBLE: VINTAGE BRUNELLO

The most recognizable of all the collectible red wines of Italy is Brunello. Located south of Chianti, the Sangiovese grape thrives in this unique microclimate. It is in this dryer, hotter, Mediterranean climate of southern Toscana that the limestone and sand soil produce a more muscular grape capable of producing a rich, dark, concentrated red (heavier and more tannic than Chianti and thus known as the "little dark one"). Tongue-curling tannins and firm acidity allow

these wines to age, catching the eyes of Popes, Presidents, Kings, Queens, and well, wine collectors.

## VINTAGE BRUNELLO

Biondi-Santi 1970 Brunello Riserva . . . . .	\$349.95
Caparzo 1985 Brunello La Casa . . . . .	\$219.00
Argiano 1988 Brunello Riserva . . . . .	\$195.00
Banfi 1990 Brunello Poggio all'Oro . . . . .	\$195.00
Caparzo 1990 Brunello La Casa . . . . .	\$195.00
*Soldera 1990 Brunello Riserva . . . . .	\$449.95
Cerbaiona 1990 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$239.00
*Castel Giocondo 1990 Brunello . . . . .	\$149.50
*Mastrojanni 1990 Brunello di Montalcino	\$173.00
*San Felice 1990 Brunello Quericone. . . .	\$219.00
*Il Poggione 1997 Brunello Riserva . . . . .	\$98.50
*Uccelliera 1997 Brunello di Montalcino . .	\$98.98

\*Represents future arrival

## BRUNELLO'S SIBLING: ROSSO DI MONTALCINO

Brunello's baby brother was born in 1984 in an effort to provide producers in the region with flexibility in creating more accessible wines with less stringent aging requirements - as a result, the Rosso must be aged a minimum of one year as opposed to Brunello's four. The wines are made from the same grapes, territory, and producers, but the Rosso are generally fresher, lighter, and more approachable. However, from the right vintage and producer, the younger sibling is capable of outclassing his big brother. Experience these exceptional values below.

## ROSSO DI MONTALCINO

Capanna 2002 Rosso di Montalcino . . . . .	\$17.60
Tenuta la Fuga 2002 Rosso di Montalcino .	\$22.00
Fanti 2003 Rosso di Montalcino . . . . .	\$23.40
Il Poggione 2003 Rosso di Montalcino . . .	\$23.45
*Lisini 2004 Rosso di Montalcino . . . . .	\$27.00
*Fuligni 2004 Rosso di Montalcino . . . . .	\$29.95

\*Represents future arrival

## MONTALCINO: THEN & NOW



The zone of Montalcino actually built its winemaking reputation on the sweet wine Moscadello di Montalcino in the 1500s. The Moscadello pictured here at the Il Greppo estate, is one of the few remaining bottles from Biondi-Santi - produced by Tancredi in 1969.