

# bruculino

## Wine List

April 2019

### Bringing Your Own Wine: Corkage Fee

If you have a special bottle of wine you would like to drink here with our food the fee is \$40 per 750ml bottle. Please let us know if you would like the bottle decanted. Please understand we take no responsibility for the condition of such wines nor for the condition of the cork.

### WINE

### Regular, High-test, Organic, Biodynamic, Natural

### What's it all about?

Wine, real wine that is, is made by planting grapes, growing them well, picking them at the right time, squeezing out their juice by various means, and letting that juice--by a process that happens either entirely on its own or with a little help from its friends--ferment until much or all of the sugar in the juice has turned to alcohol. Other things oft' legally called wine--abominations actually--are made with grape extracts, concentrates, chemicals, machines, etc, etc, but they do not concern us here as they are little better than industrial poisons that sprang into existence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century from man's inexhaustible greed and stupidity and have no place in polite conversation.

**Regular** Good wines, as any winemaker can tell you, are made with as little intervention as possible. Indeed, in the beginning there were few options available as the grape grower/wine maker was mostly at the mercy of Nature. Nowadays, with our better grasp of biology, the array of possible interventions is vast, and some of them are not always in our best interests (even if they do save the crop and therefore the farm).

Because we all eat fruits and vegetables we are all familiar with this subject, as grapes are nothing other than an agricultural fruit product. In the world of fruit, as we all know, there is your average supermarket produce, your rare, high quality fancy produce, your even higher-end fancy organic produce, and rarer still, biodynamic produce (something that few of us ever see).

Wines run the same way. At the low end the plants are fed chemical fertilizers, sprayed heavily with pesticides and fungicides and so on. Wines produced from such grapes tend not to be very good, so while one cannot spot the excess of chemicals, one can easily detect the lackluster end product. The reason is simple, plants so abused don't tend to produce very tasty fruit, and it's the flavor of the fruit that makes the flavor of the wine. To remedy this lack of flavor and quality, sad to say, farmers who abuse their land and their grapes in this manner find it necessary to extend their chemical interventions into the cellar where they make all manner of chemical adjustments to the juice "to correct it" for what it may lack in itself. This is low-test wine, commercial wine, etc., and like all cheap comestibles, is not a good idea to ingest.

**High-Test** Next up there is wine of good to very high quality that is made with the occasional use of some chemical. The more conscientious the farmer the less likely the need will arise, but sometimes it cannot be avoided and rather than go out of business and see his family out in the street a farmer may resort to some limited intervention to save the day. Wines made like this can be extraordinary, as good as any, and the most conscientious farmers in this category practice what is called Sustainable Farming.

**Organic** Moving up the ladder of non-intervention and non-chemical intervention are those who practice Organic Farming, using only compounds and products on the land and plants that are harmless and are derived from nature—sea-weed, manure, compost, friendly bugs, etc.

Often farmers practicing Organic Farming decide to apply for Organic Certification. To be Certified as Organic they don't have to do anything new as they are already farming according to Organic Principles, but now they have to prove it and will be subject to inspection. They also have to pay the costs of the certification process.

**Biodynamic** Next up are those farmers who wish to go beyond Organic Farming Principles and to practice the rigorous system laid down by Rudolf Steiner in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In many ways this is like Organic Farming, but they can't just get some organic stuff for their land and be done with it. In Biodynamic Farming all the enrichments to the land must come from the farm itself, as must all the naturally derived substances they use to prevent insect, mold and rot damage. To become certified as Biodynamic Farmers they also have to plant and harvest and do everything else to their land according to a lunar calendar. (Steiner, by the way, is the same guy who created the Waldorf Schools.) Some people think Biodynamic Farming is a lot of hooley, but some of the world's most interesting wines are made by Biodynamic Farmers, so I will leave it at that.

**Ridiculous** Finally we come to the much ballyhooed subject of Natural Wine. Before going further I should categorically state that there is no such thing. Wine, from the moment we graft a stem onto a root-stock, is a joint effort of Man & Nature. The only wine that might be called "Natural" is when a native grape—not grafted, not cloned, not moved from one continent to the other—falls off a vine and somehow manages to lie there on the ground in the sun for long enough (a few days perhaps) to begin to ferment. If one were to prick the skin of such a grape and suck out the juice one would taste, for good or bad, a totally natural wine. Amen.

Sad to say, the proponents of the Natural Wine fad, are benighted sods who for lack of skill or "buds" produce and pass around vile tasting ferments as if they were Nature's gift to her beloved Homo sapiens. Food is natural only when it is found in nature, honey from a wild hive, for instance, or blueberries in the woods. But maple syrup is not, nor is blueberry jam. And wine, the result of centuries, millennia even, of careful husbandry of land and vine, of juice and fermentation, is possibly one of the most human labor and knowledge intensive agricultural processes on Earth. Vine growth and fermentation, if left to themselves will respectively produce riotous growth with poor grapes, and dreadful foul-smelling liquids fit for ni man nor beast.

Thank you for your support and appreciation.

Joe Bruno, chef and wine curator

## DESSERT WINE

|   |            |    |
|---|------------|----|
| Brachetto d'Acqui 2014 by Cascina Sant Ubaldo, Piedmont | 750 ml     | 45 |
| Moscato d'Asti 2015 by Santo Stefano, Piedmont          | 375 ml     | 45 |
| Vin Santo 2009 by Badia, Tuscany                        | 375 ml     | 80 |
| Vin Santo 2011 by Castellare San Niccolo, Tuscany       | 375 ml     | 60 |
| Vin Santo 2009 by Selvapiana, Tuscany                   | 500 ml     | 80 |
|   | 3 oz glass | 18 |

## SPARKLING WINE

Here's something that most people do not know: though Italy is the third largest producer of bubbly wines on Earth, Italians (not to be confused with Italian-Americans) import a staggering six millions bottles of bubbly from France each year. I guess that's what makes Italy such a party county. Be as an Italian and have a bubbly today.

|     |  |    |
|-----|--|----|
| 100 | (white) Prosecco Brut "5 grammi" 2016 by Malibran, Veneto, Italy<br>Prosecco at its finest; this dry offering is Malibran's top of the line product.   | 55 |
| 101 | (white) Champagne Blanc de Blanc Millesime 2012 by Jean Josselin & Fils, Champagne, France<br>Unlike the big producers of plonk, Jean Josselin produces wines only from his own grapes. The result is a fine Champagne of 100% chardonnay that rivals "big name" champs costing two and three times as much. JB June 2017  | 90 |
| 102 | (white) Vouvray Petillant Brut 2012/2013 by Domaine Huet, Loire Valley, France<br>Domaine Huet is famous for its still white wines made from the great Chenin Blanc grape, but a small amount of their Chenin goes into this incredible, lightly sparkly wine. It has all the force and power of a full-bodied Vouvray yet it sizzles on the tongue in a most delightful way. Fantastic! JB Sept 2017  | 63 |
| 104 | (rosé) Trento Brut Rosé riserva "piancastello" 2011 by Endrizzi, Veneto, Italy<br>As one of our patrons put it, this is better than Billecart Salmon for a third the price.  | 60 |
| 105 | (rosé) Champagne Brut Rosé Grand Cru NV by Henri Billiot Champagne, France<br>This is really fine rosé champagne; Billiot puts the big houses to shame.  | 90 |
| 319 | (red) Gibe Lambrusco 2016 by Tenuta Pederzana, Modena, IT<br>Though a seriously good wine Lambrusco is not so much about "serious" as it is about fun. Fizzy in the glass with little purple bubbles, this traditional Emilian red wine, made of 100% old vine Grasparossa from Castelvetro, offers vibrant fruit with notes of morello cherries and wild strawberry; the tannins are delicate and the palate is refreshed and entertained. Wonderful with cold cuts, pastas, fish and light meats, or just by itself. JB Oct 2017 | 47 |

## WHITE WINE

### CHARDONNAY North America

- 109 Chardonnay Niagara 2013 by Norman Hardie, Ontario (90 pts, Vinous Media) 60  
Extraordinary Chardonnay, ripe with the fullness of the grape but enlivened with the richness of the earth where it was grown, would be hard to beat with another North American Chard at any price. JB, Oct 2017  
Vinous wrote, "Bright, pale yellow. Lemon oil, flint and a whiff of candied pear on the nose. Enters rich and ripe, almost sweet, but then offers terrific energy and tension to the flavors of wet stones, honeyed apricots, and orange blossoms. I love the combination of minerality and sweetness of fruit here. Finishes long and nicely taut, with superb lift."
- 110 d Chardonnay "maresh vineyard" 2014 by Arterberry Maresh, Willamette Valley, OR (94 pts Vinous Media) 110  
The critic wrote, "Green-hued gold. Fresh, mineral-accented aromas of pear nectar and Meyer lemon; hints of smoky lees, iodine and anise emerge with air. Sappy, concentrated and seamless in texture, offering palate-staining orchard and pit fruit and brioche flavors sharpened by an intense mineral nuance. Finishes sappy, minerally and impressively long, with echoes of citrus zest and dusty minerals adding bite and focus." This is one outstanding American wine folks. JB June 2017
- 111 d Chardonnay Montebello Estate Vineyard 2016 by Ridge, Santa Cruz, CA (93 Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media) 95  
Galloni writes, "The 2016 is gorgeous. Rich, deep and pliant...with serious structure and textural resonance. Lemon confit, white flowers, chamomile, lightly honeyed notes and a touch of reduction all ring out in this super-expressive, inviting Chardonnay."  
Robert Parker wrote, "...lovely, opening in the glass with notes of fresh pear, preserved lemon, nutmeg and subtle spice. On the palate, it's medium to full-bodied, satiny and expansive, with a broad, textural attack, good balancing acidity and a pure, mineral-inflected finish."  
This is sublime California Chard folks. JB Jan 2018

### CHARDONNAY Italy

- 112 Chardonnay "vieris" 2015/2016 by Vie di Romans, Friuli, Italy (91+ Ian D'Agata, Vinous Media) 65  
Vinous Media, "Luminous pale straw. Ripe nectarine and soft citrus fruits on the nose... juicy and firmly built, with excellent intensity to the flavors of stone fruits and flowers. Finishes long and saline, with excellent grip."

### CHARDONNAY France

- 113 Chablis 1er Cru "montains vielle vigne" 2014 by Denis Raze, Chablis, Burgundy 63
- 114 Saint-Aubin 1er Cru "les champlots" 2014 by F & D Clair, Cote de Beaune, Burgundy (90 Burghound) 65  
The Hound wrote, "... cool citrus, apple and white flower scents...good verve and detail to the delicious and easy-to-like middle weight flavors that possess fine depth and length on the clean, focused and relatively dry but not austere finale."
- 115 Saint-Aubin 1er Cru "les murgers des dents de chien" 2014 by F & D Clair, Cote de Beaune, Burgundy 75
- 116 Savigny les Beaune "dessus les gollardes" 2014 by Domaine Pierre Guillemont, Cote d' Or, Burgundy 70  
Something unusual for Burgundy where the whites are almost always 100% Chard, this is a blend of 30% Chard and 70 Pinot Blanc. Fermented and aged in old barrels, the wines sees no new oak which permits it to sing of purity and minerality. Pears, butter cream, lemon zest all assert themselves in a bracing juice that bursts with flavor and salinity. JB Sept 2017

### CHEMIN BLANC - Loire Valley

- 117 Jasnières "Le Rosiers" 2016 by Domaine de Belliviere, Loire Valley, France 70  
Stunning wine from a tiny small appellation down river from Vouvray—I'm told the whole place measures a mere 160 acres, all producers combined! Few Americans know the Chenin Blanc grape—hung up on Chardonnay & Pinot Grigio as we are—so it's not a pop item here, but when I tasted this wine I had to grab a couple of cases from Connecticut's allotment of 5. That's right, 5 for the Whole State.  
Descriptors I've seen other writers use to describe this elixir include narcissus, iris, linden, grapefruit, lime, white peach, quince, shrimp shell reduction, oyster shell, creamy, mineral, complex, vibrant. I find them all apt. One critic said, "...will cause you to salivate uncontrollably and enter a trance-like, Jasnières-centric state from which you may require outside assistance to exit." LOL, but yes, it's that good. JB July 2018
- 118 Vouvray "Le Haut Lieu" sec 2017 by Domaine Huet, Loire Valley, France 65  
The 2017 Haut Lieu is a jumping, crowd-pleaser lush with tropical fruits and power, delightfully balanced by good acidity and structure. I love it and bought a bunch. Drink now or wait ten years, no problem. JB July 2018

## CHEPIN BLANC – continued

- 119 Vouvray "Le Mont" sec 2016 by Domaine Huet, Loire Valley, France (91 Parker) 70  
Stephan Reinhardt for Parker wrote, "From the pebbly flint and deep green clay soils of this exceptional eight-hectare vineyard, Huet's 2016 Le Mont Sec is lean, pure, fresh and aromatic... Round, lush and silky-elegant on the palate, this is a juicy and very aromatic Chenin Blanc with delicate mineral and tannic grip. Tasted February 2018."  
Everything a great Chenin Blanc can be, full & rich with opulent tree fruits, crushed wet stones, lemon and flowers and a long finish. JB Sept 2017
- 102 Vouvray Petillant Brut 2012/2013 by Domaine Huet Loire Valley, France 63  
Domaine Huet is famous for its still white wines made from the great Chenin Blanc grape, but a small amount of their Chenin goes into this incredible, lightly sparkling wine. It has all the force and power of a full-bodied Vouvray yet it sizzles on the tongue in a most delightful way. Fantastic! JB Sept 2017

## KERNER

- 121 Kerner "praepositus" 2016/2017 by Abb. Di Novacella, Alto Adige, Italy 57  
Kerner, grown in Italy near the Austrian border, yields a dry, bright, intensely flavored wine with rich minerality; the full bouquet offers hints of white fruit, grapefruit and even mango, the palate is rich & full but balanced by a mouth-cleansing blast of acidity.

## LUGANA

- 122 Trebbiano di Lugana "le creete" 2017 by Ottella, Lake Garda, Italy 53  
There is simply no other Lugana that comes close to this lush, full-bodied & mineral driven white from the shores of Lake Garda.

## PECORINO

- 123 Pecorino 2016/2017 by Torre dei Beati, Abruzzo, Italy 50  
Pecorino hails from Abruzzo, just as does my family. While there are some very good examples of Pecorino out there, I don't think anything says it like this one. Full and ripe, concentrated yet well-structured, this is my fave. JB Aug 2017

## PINOT GRIGIO

- 124 Pinot Grigio 'collio' 2015 by Castello di Spesa, Friuli IT 57  
Outstanding! Clean and delicious with plenty of fruit and the expected jolt of bright acidity typical of high-Q Italian Pinot Gris, especially those from the Collio DOC. JB April 2018

## SAUVIGNON BLANC

- 125 Sancerre 'comte lafond' 2017 by Ladoucette, Loire Valley, France 70  
A classic Sancerre expression of sauvignon blanc. Dry with aromas of wet stones, lime & pepper, full of nervous energy and minerals. Just wonderful! JB July 2017  
The 2017, just in, is a might higher-strung than the '16 with a firm vein of bright acidity running in front of minerals and ripe fruit. Overall an outstanding wine and one that will develop wonderfully in bottle. JB Sept 2018

## SICILY

- 126 Etna Bianco "GINESTRA" 2016 by Calconeus 55  
It is a real treat for us to finally—after 35 years—be able to offer a genuinely made, uncontrived, honest, NON-international. ORGANIC, Sicilian white from Mount Etna. Delicate, floral & mineral this outstanding white is lively and complex and offers staying power, so it will pair with the robust Southern cooking Sicily is known for. JB Aug 2018

## WHITE WINE

- 127 Vermentino 'taerra' 2016 by Tani, Gallura, Sardinia 55  
Not much need to say anything about this, it's one of our best selling whites and for good reason, everyone loves it. Wonderful aromas, full and rich on the palate with lots of stone fruit in a seductive mouth-coating style.

## VERNACCIA di San Gimignano

- 128 Vernaccia 'tradizionale' 2017 by Montenidoli, Tuscany 55  
Elisabetta Fagioli crafts her wines so meticulously she has redefined what Vernaccia is all about. In place of the lack-luster, boring wines we once knew from this area, her Vernaccia are intense and gripping with tree fruits, nuts and herbal notes, richness and fullness, enticing aromas, minerals, and pleasant lingering after tastes. One has to wonder what were people thinking before she came along. Her Certified Organic farm produces not only great whites but several world-class reds and olive oil too. Enjoy a bottle today and, as Elisabetta says, listen to what the soul of the wine says to you. JB Aug 2018

## VERDICCHIO – all by Lucio Canestrari, owner of the Coroncino estate

- 129 Verdicchio 'il coroncino' 2016 by Coroncino, Marche, Italy (94 pts Vinous Media) 55  
Long our fave Vedicchio producer Coroncino wines are remarkable for their richness and late-harvest weightiness. The 2016 got an amazing 94 points and the critic said it is one of the best Italian whites. "Pale golden-tinged yellow. Lovely, pure, refined aromas of guava, lime and white flowers, complicated by medicinal herbs and marzipan. Rich and rather viscous, this very suave, juicy, racy wine boasts white peach, lime cordial and almond paste flavors, outstanding intensity and subtle refinement. Impeccably balanced and wonderfully perfumed, offering a round, ripe, rich mouthful and captivating energy and lift on the very long aftertaste....an archetypal Verdicchio wine. Even better, it is one of the best Italian white wines I tasted in all of 2017." Ian d'Agata for Vinous Media, Feb 2018
- 130 Verdicchio 'gaiospino' 2014 by Coroncino, Marche, Italy 60  
Similar to the wine above but, as a single vineyard selection, adds a layer of lush, exotic fruit and richness.
- 131 Verdicchio 'gaiospino Fumè' 2012 by Coroncino, Marche, Italy 70  
Select grapes from the Gaiospino vineyard go into the "fume." This is off the charts Verdicchio and, because of the aging for 2 years in toasted oak barrels—hence "fume"—it develops a density and intensity of flavors that put it in a class by itself. Big, dark-golden and creamy, with notes of cooked apples, stewed fruits, toasted nuts and hints of the tropics, this bold white stands apart not only from all Verdicchio but from most other white wines.  
A true masterpiece and a wine that Lucio Canestrari makes only once in a while—like once every ten years or so. In fact, the current bottles (2014) are what's left of a single barrel produced by Lucio because, back in 2013, I pleaded with him to make a little more. Sip, meditate and enjoy as this could very well be the last time he made it.. JB March 2018

## ROSE WINE

or as the Italians say "ROSATO"

- |     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| 148 | Etna Rosato "Romice" 2017 by Calconeus, Mount Etna, Sicily<br><i>The 2017 awarded Best Rosé in Italy by Bibenda, the Italian Sommeliers' Wine Guide.</i><br>Just arrived this is full bodied rosato (rosé) with flavors of peach, melon and almonds in a crisp, dry, mineral driven but luscious juice. Outstanding. JB July 2018   | 55 |
| 145 | Canaiuolo Rosato 2017 by Montenidoli, San Gimignano, Italy (90 Galloni For Vinous)<br>One of the most hotly contested rosé wines in NYC. When the annual shipment hits the dock it gets snapped up in a couple of days. Critics have raved about it and brucolino patrons have enjoyed it long before the NYC glitterati knew it existed. JB Oct 2017   | 55 |
| 146 | Chiaretto Rosato 2017 by Le Fraghe, Veneto, Italy (90 pts Jan d'Agata of Vinous Media)<br>Pale orange pink, delicate aromas of apricot & strawberry, clean flavors of red berries and citrus, dry, well structured, strawberry aftertaste. JB Sept 17   | 47 |
| 147 | Cos' é 2016 by Perticaia, Umbria IT (90 pts, Vinous Media)<br>A unique, dry, dark, full-bodied rosé made from 100% Sagrantino grapes, a grape typically used to make big, dark reds. The critic wrote, "Aromas of red fruits, rosehip, apricot and musky soil tones. Tactile, even chewy in the mouth, but with lovely sappy energy to the ripe red fruit and spice flavors. Finishes long clean and juicy. Lovely rosato." JB Oct 2017 | 50 |

## RED WINE

### AGLIANICO & TAURASI (pronounced: ahl-ye-ahn-ee-koh)

Aglianico grows in the South where it is called, depending on where it is grown, by its grape name Aglianico, or by a wine name, as in Taurasi, or Terra di Lavoro. No matter what it is called, aglianico grape wines can be full-bodied and complex with great tannic structure and the capacity to age and improve in the bottle for many years. Taurasi, for instance, often called the Barolo-of-the-South, can live and develop for many decades in the bottle. For those who want to know this grape and to enjoy a quintessentially Italian, rich, full-bodied, dry red, there is no better place to start than the outstanding selection #300 from Grifalco, whose vineyards are certified organic and whose winery, constructed from an ancient Arab design, runs on very little energy. JB Jan 2017

- 300 Aglianico del Vulture 2011 'daginestra' by Grifalco, Basilicata, Italy (94 plus "editor's choice" by Kerin O'Keefe) 67  
Kerin O'Keefe wrote, "Baked plum, ripe berry, baking spice, violet and leather aromas unfold on this concentrated wine. On the delicious palate, velvety tannins support fleshy black cherry, crushed raspberry, cinnamon and licorice while a tobacco note backs up the finish...tempting but hold for added complexity. Drink 2018–2031."
- 301 d Terra di Lavoro 2010 by Roccamonfina, Campania, Italy (97+ Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media) 150
- 302 d Taurasi 'radici' 2006 riserva by Mastroberardino, Campania, Italy (95 Antonio Galloni) 115

### AMARONE & VALPOLICELLA

- 303 d Amarone 2014 by Le Salette, Veneto, Italy (90 pts From the Wine Spectator) 95  
This is a very high Q Amarone at a very fair price. Here's what the Spectator wrote, "Aromatic, with hints of pink peppercorn, orange peel and dried rosemary, this firm, savory version is framed by light, taut tannins, offering flavors of crushed currant, blackberry and game. Smoketinged finish."  
We found it intense with black berries, toasted almonds and cocoa. JB May 2018
- 304 d Amarone 2012 by Rocolo Grassi, Veneto, Italy (90 Ian d'Agata, Vinous Media) 140  
Vinous Media's Ian d'Agata wrote, "Very deep ruby. Smoky dark plums, allspice and tobacco on the nose, with herbal nuances. Moderately dense and sweet, with decent fat and outstanding intensity of flavor and very good acid-tannin balance...herb and pepper elements carrying through to the firm finish."  
While not as big as Grassi's previous vintages, this drinks wonderfully now, and like all of Grassi's wines, it avoids the tendency of Amarone to overpower the dinner. JB June 2018
- 305 Valpolicella 2013 by Rocolo Grassi, Veneto, Italy 70

### BARBERA

- 306 Barbera 2015 'priora' by Alessandria, Piedmont, Italy 55  
Full, dark and luscious, the 2015 priora is pure and honest Barbera. For a real treat, something you never knew, taste a bottle today before it's all gone. JB April 2018

### BOTTICINO – be the first on your block to drink a Botticino!

Botticino is a small production zone in Lombardy, famous for its amber colored Botticino marble—think Grand Central Station—that produces an all but forgotten full-bodied red wine of great depth and complexity, as these offerings ably demonstrate. Botticino wines are a blend of Barbera, Sangiovese, Marzemino and Schiava Gentile. The only producer we know of is the organic farm of Pierangelo Noventa. JB

- 307 Pia de la Tesa 2015 by Pierangelo Noventa 67  
Pia de la Tesa is a single cru Botticino. As a reserve level from Noventa this got a full three years in oak barrels before being bottled. It is full, rich, with deep flavors of black fruit—currants, blue-berries, et—and is especially suited for gamey meat dishes, cold cuts, cheese, etc. JB 8/2017
- 308 d Gobbio 2015 by Pierangelo Noventa 85  
Gobbio is just a little bit more concentrated, a little bit more intense and a little bit more amazing than Pia della Tesa. As such it stands out as among the finest wines I've tasted in my 35 year career as a wine buyer. As I've often said of Ridge Zinfandels, if there were only one wine to drink, for the rest of time, for me it would be Gobbio. JB April 2019

## CAB & MERLOT North America

- 309 d Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 'la maestra' by John Ruston, Napa, CA 100
- 310 d Taptiel 2013 by Cadence, Red Mountain, WA (93+ pts, Stephen Tanzer for Vinous Media) 85  
Cab Sauvignon, Merlot and Cab Franc  
(93+ pts, Stephen Tanzer for Vinous Media)  
"Deep ruby-red. Blueberry, licorice, violet, graphite and espresso on the high-pitched nose, along with the characteristic Taptiel dusty minerality. Broad, fine-grained and juicy, offering terrific inner-mouth lift to its blueberry and bitter chocolate flavors. This wonderfully pure, energetic wine really spreads out to saturate the palate. Big but ripe Taptiel tannins dust the front teeth. The wine's length and medicinal reserve suggest a long life ahead....Very impressive."  
(94 pts, Jeb Dunnuck for Robert Parker)  
"I've always loved the Taptiel from Cadence and the 2013 is no exception. A Cabernet Sauvignon dominated blend with 18% Merlot and 11% Cabernet Franc, it offers full-bodied, beautifully pure aromas and flavors of black and blue fruits, graphite, leafy herbs and distinct minerality. More voluptuous and sexy than the reserved Ciel du Cheval bottling, it certainly offers pleasure today, but will be even better in 2-3 years of bottle age and will keep for two decades after that."
- 311 d Cabernet blend 2011 "bel canto" by Cadence, Washington (94+ Vinous Media) (95 Wine Advocate) 95
- 312 d Cabernet blend 2012 "bel canto" by Cadence, Washington (93+ Vinous Media) (95 Robert Parker) 95  
(84% Cabernet Franc, 8% Merlot and 8% Petit Verdot)  
Of the 2011 Stephen Tanzer of Vinous Media wrote,, "Bright ruby-red. Exhilarating floral lift to the aromas of redcurrant and nutty oak; very Cabernet Franc. Perfectly integrated acidity energizes this somewhat muscular yet ultimately very suave wine, with the redcurrant and cherry flavors complicated by flowers, dusty dried herbs and minerals. Finishes with outstanding length and lift, harmonious smooth tannins, and a building sweetness to its floral perfume...remarkably classy....drink 2020 to 2030"  
Here's Parker on the 2012, "has a complex, perfumed style in its dried flowers, dried spices, vanilla and black cherry and black raspberry-like fruit profile...it's full-bodied, concentrated and structured on the palate, yet has perfect balance and a great texture. Few in the US are doing Cabernet Franc better this, and I suspect it will hold nicely for 15-20 years."  
At this time my opinion is that though the 2012 may be the greater of the two, the 2011 is the one to drink now. It's amazing. JB May 2019
- 313 d Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 by Quilceda Creek, Washington 100% Cabernet Sauvignon 350  
(95+ Stephen Tanzer, Vinous Media) (98 Jeb Dunnuck for Robert Parker)  
Dunnuck, writing in 2015: "[the grapes came} mostly from the famous Champoux Vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills...aged all in new oak...bottled unfined and unfiltered...captivating bouquet of black cherry liqueur and cassis...Asian spice, coffee bean and lead pencil shavings...with a full-bodied, ripe, seamless and hedonistic style...One of the more approachable, opulent examples of this cuvee, it has no hard edges, plenty of tannin and a massive, heady finish...enjoy bottles through 2032."  
Tanzer: "Boasts outstanding intensity without any rough edges, showing superb thrust and grip to its...powerful flavors of blueberry, minerals and spices. Finishes with huge tannins that dust the front teeth without coming off as dry."

## RED WINE

### CAB & MERLOT Italy

The hottest place for growin Cab and Merlot in Italy is west of Venice, where Bourdeaux grapes have been grown for centuries and where they are capable of developing the complexity that separates the powerful primaries of New World Cabs from the real deal. I believe the three selections below will bear this out. JB Oct 2017

- 314 d San Leonardo 2013 by Tenuta San Leonardo, Trentino, IT **[96 Robert Parker]** 115  
Parker, "the 2013 is large in scale and has immediate intensity, and I am somewhat surprised by the volume and seamless bouquet that appears this early in the game...balanced ripeness with plummy fruit aromas that are carefully contrasted against spice, leather and fine tobacco. The blend is Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère and Merlot, and San Leonardo is always aged in barrique for four years (of which only 25% of the barrels are new)."
- 315 Gemola 2011 by Vignalta, Veneto, IT 70
- 316 d Gemola 2004 by Vignalta, Veneto, IT 95  
Gemola, a Cab Franc / Merlot blend, has received over **10 Tre Bicchieri** awards  from Gambero Rosso, Italy's highest wine award. This level of recognition is unusual, but more amazing is that here in the USA these wines are scarcely heard of. And more amazing still is the sheer quality of these wines.  
At this time they are both drinking well, but the 2004 is close to its peak, whereas the 2011 has a ways to go. In either case you will be rewarded with oodles of dark ripe fruit supported by nuanced flavors of tobacco, mocha, mushroom & dried roses. Both are powerful, dark, traditional wines with elegance and refinement to spare—no modern manipulation here—and both will kick all but a few Bordeaux (at any price) right off the table. JB Oct 2017

### DOLCETTO and DOGLIANI Piedmont, IT

- 317 Dogliani "san luigi" 2016 by Pecchenino, Dogliani, Italy 50
- 318 Dolcetto 2015 'bricco botti' by Pecchenino, Dogliani, Italy 65  
Pecchenino's top—or reserve—bottling, Bricco Botti is their best grapes from their best parcel. Powerful and dark, intense and inviting, both these Pecchenino offerings show what Dolcetto can be. JB July 2017

### LAMBRUSCO

- 319 Gibe Lambrusco 2016 by Tenuta Pederzana, Emilia, IT 47  
Though a seriously good wine Lambrusco is not so much about "serious" as it is about fun. Fizzy in the glass with liitle purple bubbles, this traditional Emilian wine, made of 100% old vine Grasperossa from Castelvetro, offers vibrant fruit with notes of morello cherries and wild strawberry; the tannins are delicate and the palate is refreshed and entertained. Wonderful with cold cuts, pastas, fish and light meats, or just by itself. JB Oct 2017

### MONTEPULCIANO d'ABRUZZO

- 320 Coccipazza 2015 by Torre dei Beati, Italy 65  
Hands down our favorite Montepulciano and a consistent winner of awards in Italy. A big plummy wine with dark fruit and power but in a nice, well-balanced style. JB March 2018
- 321 d Mazzamorello 2014 by Torre dei Beati, Abruzzo, IT 75  
This is Beati's Grand Reserve level wine and once again, with the 2014 vintage, they've made a winner. Dark and powerful, super-rich, this Montepulciano bursts with ripe black fruit and intoxicating aromas. Fabulous and only a little was imported. JB April 2018

## RED WINE

### NEBBIOLO Boca DOC, Piedmont, IT

The Boca zone is in upper Piedmont, surrounded by the high Alps. Like Barolo to the south, Nebbiolo is the traditional grape, but in Boca it is blended with a small amount of other grapes, something that is not permitted in Barolo.

- 322 Mimmo (nebbiolo, Croatina, Vespolina) 2013 by Le Piane, Piedmont, Italy 60  
Elegant nebbiolo wine, very well structured, and extremely well-made, as is typical of the wines of Le Piane. Allow it some time in the glass to open and show its power and grace. JB March 2018
- 323 d Boca (nebbiolo, Croatina, Vespolina) 2012 by Le Piane, Piedmont, Italy (93 from Robert Parker) 99  
Le Piane's flagship wine, Boca, has been a bit austere in previous vintages—a wine for experts and sommelier. With the 2012 it's more open; without sacrificing any class or polish it's approachable and delightful now. The aromas are big and spicy with mushrooms, mint, wet forest, tobacco and red cherry, but what really establishes this as one of the great wines of Piedmont, alongside the best of Barolo, is its seamless texture and poise. If you love great nebbiolo this will knock your socks off. Simply dazzling! JB January 2018  
Parker wrote, "...immediately open and accessible. The bouquet is perfumed and floral with rose potpourri, lavender and rose hip. There is a slightly dry and perhaps more evolved quality to the inner fruit on hand with sun-dried cassis or cranberry. Pretty background tones of smoke, ash and tar add to the overall complexity of the aromas..."

### NEBBIOLO Valtellina DOC, Lombardy IT

- 324 Sassella 2013 'san Lorenzo' by Prevostini, Valtellina, Italy (92 pts Vinous Media) 73  
A light, elegant and very high-altitude expression of Nebbiolo, goes so well with so many foods, from meats to fish, that it is one of our most often recommended Nebbiolo wines. Of the 2011 Galloni wrote, "...striking in the way it melds together aromatic complexity and nuance while retaining a good deal of freshness. Sweet red cherry, rose petal, mint anise and wild flowers flesh out in a creamy, multi-dimensional Sassella that can be enjoyed now or cellared for a decade-plus. There is so much to like here." And that's just about the way most people feel about it. Bravo Prevostini! JB Oct 2017
- 325 Valtellina Riserva 2012 by Prevostini, Valtellina, Italy (91 pts Vinous Media) 70  
This is very similar to the Sassella (above) but is made with grapes from all three of the towns that comprise the Valtellina viticultural zone. While it is not quite as ethereal as the Sassella it makes up for it with more power and weight. Fantastic! And a good pairing for dark fleshed fish or almost any meat. JB July 2017
- 326 d Sforzato 'alberada' 2010 by Prevostini, Valtellina, Italy 115  
100% Nebbioli made from dried grapes achieves stunning depth & richness. By drying the grapes the juice is concentrated and the result is a high-alcohol explosion of dense flavors, from leather, truffles, licorice, game, smoke, tobacco, furniture polish, perfume...the list goes on. A great Sforzato is an experience worth having. JB

### NEBBIOLO Barbaresco, Piedmont IT

- 327 d Barbaresco 2013 "asili" by Cascina Luisin, Piedmont, Italy (93 pts Wine Spectator) 100
- 328 Barbaresco 2015 "paolin" by Cascina Luisin, Piedmont, Italy 75
- 329 d Barbaresco 2015 "rabaja" by Cascina Luisin, Piedmont, Italy (92 pts Vinous Media) 110

### NEBBIOLO Barolo, Piedmont IT

- 330 d Barolo 2013 'gramolere' by Alessandria (94 Galloni, Vinous Media) 110
- 331 d Barolo 2010 'baudana' by Baudana (95 Antonio Galloni) 120
- 332 d Barolo 2008 'baudana' by Baudana (94 Antonio Galloni) 140
- 333 Barolo 2013 'bussia Fantini' by Silvano Bolmida 79
- 334 Barolo 2013 'bussia' by Silvano Bolmida 87  
Rich and spicy with aromas of black fruit yielding to tobacco and chocolate. Very big and powerful Barolo typical of Bolmida's style. Outstanding. JB November 2017
- 335 d Barolo 2012 'bussia' riserva by Silvano Bolmida 125  
"Insane, off-the-charts, spectacular." That's what my tasting notes say from last spring at the pre-sell event. This is about as good as a wine can get without just rising up and floating away, ascending, perhaps, to heaven. LOL Sante, JB Dec 2018

## NEBBIOLO Barolo, Piedmont IT (continued)

- 336 Barolo 2012 'terlo' by Luigi Einaudi (92 Antonio Galloni) 95
- 337 d Barolo 2012 'cannubi' by Luigi Einaudi (93 Antonio Galloni) 150
- 338 d Barolo 2011 'vigna del gris' by Conterno Fantino (92 Vinous Media) 140
- 339 d Barolo 2013 "san giuseppe" by Pecchenino (94 pts Galloni, Vinous Media) 95  
Galloni said, "... a dark, brooding wine. Black cherry, hard candy, leather, herbs, smoke and licorice...Medium in body, with good depth and terrific balance...another compelling wine from Pecchenino... a bit wild and exotic, but it has so much to say." Hmmm, looks like the critic loved it, and so do I. JB Oct 2017
- 340 d Barolo 2012 "brunate" by Francesco Rinaldi (92+ Antonio Galloni) 90  
Galloni, "A dark, muscular wine...hits the palate with waves of fruit, tannin and acidity...suggestions of rose petal, cedar, iron, mint and smoke shape the finish."
- 341 Barolo 2012 'rocche di castiglione' by Roccheviberti, Piedmont, Italy (92 Galloni, Vinous Media) 87  
Soft tannins, red berries, rose petals, woody aromas make a fabulous, full-bodied barolo. JB Oct 2017
- 342 Barolo 2014 'rocche di castiglione' by Roccheviberti, Piedmont, Italy 80  
The 2014 offers a clean, elegant and understandably lighter wine than the 2012 (vintage differences), but in some ways I like this better as it avoids the weightiness of the 2012 in favor of more ethereal, floral notes. JB Dec 2018

## PINOT NOIR North America

- 343 d Clos Pepe 2011 by Arcadian, Santa Rita Hills, CA (93 Antonio Galloni) ["outstanding" Burghound] 105  
Antonio Galloni wrote, "Arcadian's 2011 Clos Pepe Vineyard is terrific... Bright red and purplish fruit, sweet spices, mint, licorice and lavender are front and center. Delineated and vibrant, but with striking mid-palate pliancy and purity of fruit, the 2011 Clos Pepe is a winner.
- 344 Dundee Hills 2017 by Arterberry, Willamette Valley, OR (91 Vinous Media) 59
- 345 d Maresh Vineyard 2014 by Arterberry, Willamette Valley, OR (95 Wine Advocate, 94 Vinous Media) 120  
The 2014 Maresh Pinot Noir has a beautiful bouquet with wonderful precision. The 44 year age of the vines shows through here with crisp detailed red berry fruit that just exudes Pinoté. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannin, very well-judged acidity, touches of truffle and undergrowth tincturing the red berry fruit that fans out wonderfully towards the long and satisfying finish. This is a great Pinot Noir...." Neal Martin for Parker..
- 346 Belle Pente Vineyard 2014 by Belle Pente, Willamette Valley, OR (94 Vinous Media) 77  
The critic wrote, "Deep red. Mineral-accented raspberry, cherry and incense aromas...Supple and concentrated yet lively ...intense red fruit preserve, floral pastille and spicecake flavors supported by a spine of juicy acidity. Sappy, appealingly sweet and strikingly long on the finish, which features lingering red berry and cinnamon qualities and sneaky tannins."
- 347 Mirabai 2015 by Kelley Fox, Willamette Valley, OR (92 Josh Reynolds for Vinous Media) 67  
"...red berry...candied rose...hints of star anise and herbs. Silky, sweet and focused on the palate...juicy strawberry, cherry and spicecake flavors that pick up a hint of blood orange. Subtle tannins add framework to a smooth, impressively persistent, nervy finish that leaves behind sappy red berry liqueur and mineral notes.

## PINOT NOIR Austria

- 348 Pinot Noir riserva 'grillenhugel' 2013 by Reinisch, Thermenregion, Austria (94 pts Anne Krebiehl MW) 70  
Ms. Krebiehl wrote, "Smoke and dark earth, soft red berry fruit...Insinuations of wild....strawberries tumble forth on the palate as they are framed by the softest hints of vanilla and aromatic clove. This echoes long and draws you in. There is very distinct fruit at the core, alternating from ripe cherry at one moment to smoky plum the other. It scintillates. Drink 2018–2025." JB, Dec 2016

## PINOT NOIR Italy

- 349 Blauburgunder Mazzon Riserva 2012 by Brunnenhof, Alto Adige, Italy (93 Antonio Galloni) 67  
Galloni wrote, "...a quintessential wine from this part of the appellation. Sweet red cherry, plum, mint, spice, game and dried herbs are pushed forward, while a dash of orange peel, star anise and cinnamon adds an exotic flair on the close..." Who would have thought an Italian Pinot Noir could be so good? Enjoy. JB Oct 2017

## PINOT NOIR France

- 350 Bourgogne 'vinge blanche' 2015, Domaine Tawse, Cote de Nuit, Burgundy 65  
--It's just one of those things, this property called "vigne blanche." Smack on the property line with Tawse's Gevrey vineyards, the wine made on this side of the fence has all the refinement of a fine Gevrey at half the price. Fabulous Pinot Noir, classic elegance, great depth. JB April 2018
- 351 d Fixin 2016 by Mongeard-Mugneret, Cote de Nuit, Burgundy (90 pts Burghound) 85  
--Burghound said, "lovely perfumed...very fresh red currant and newly turned earth scents where a trace of the sauvage creeps in....medium-bodied and lightly stony flavors....very good mid-palate density where once again there is a mild hint of rusticity. This is a particularly good Fixin villages." Feb 2019
- 352 d Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru 2014 by Maume-Tawse (92 pts Burghound) 125  
Burghound, the most serious Pinot Noir critic in the land, said, "A deeply pitched nose offers up ripe and fresh aromas of plum, violet, blue pinot fruit and plenty of earth. The supple and round middle weight flavors possess good intensity and minerality on the delicious and markedly firm finish." There are few Burgundys as good as Tawse' at anywhere near his prices. Enjoy a great Pinot today from the land of its origins. JB Nov 2017
- 353 d Givry 1er Cru 'servoisine' 2014 by Domaine Joblot, Cote Chalonnais, Burgundy (90-93 pts Burghound) 89  
Burghound is a very conservative reviewer so a 90-93 is serious praise. Here's what the Hound said, "most elegant wine (of Joblot's) 2014...cool, pure and airy nose that features a variety of red berry scents and a wide range of spice and floral characters. I very much like the intensity and detail of the medium weight flavors that possess firmer yet more completely integrated tannins on the balanced, long and highly complex finish. This is really a lovely effort and worth trying to find."
- 355 Savigny-les-Beaune 1er Cru "aux serpentieres" 2014 by Domaine Pierre Guillemont, Cote de Beaune, Burgundy 75
- 356 Savigny-les-Beaune 1er Cru "aux serpentieres" 2015 by Domaine Pierre Guillemont., Burgundy (95 Rob. Parker) 90  
Robert Parker, "The 2015 Aux Serpentières is a magical wine in the making, opening in the glass with a deep bouquet of cherry, red berries, cassis, rose hip and licorice that only hints at all the complexity to come. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied, ample and multidimensional, with fabulous depth, succulent acids, and immense reserves of hidden structure."
- 357 Savigny-les-Beaune 1er Cru "les serpentieres" 2015 by Patrick Javillier, Cote de Beaune, Burgundy (90 Burghound) 73  
A 90 from Burghound is like 110 from most others. Here's what the hound said, "... expressive nose is elegant and more complex with...spice and earth-inflected dark berry fruit liqueur aromas. The velvety and mouth coating medium-bodied flavors exude a subtle minerality on the sappy and well-balanced finish."
- 358 d Volnay 2012 by Domaine Henri Boillot, Cote de Beaune, Burgundy (90 pts Steven Tanzer of Vinous Media) 120  
Mr Tanzer wrote, "Bright, dark red. Sweet red berries, nutty oak and subtle soil tones on the nose. Fat, sweet and spicy, showing good fullness for village wine. Savory, serious Volnay with good vinosity and density and a saline complexity. Finishes with broad, building, ripe tannins and good savory persistence."

## SICILY: Nerello Mascalese

- 359 Etna Rosso 2016 "Feudo di mezzo" by Calcaeus (highly recommended, JB) 60  
Just arrived, the new releases from this winery are smashing (we have a white and a rosé as well). This is honest, transparent and clean, **organic** winemaking from old vines using meticulous modern techniques. The result is a lush but very well detailed Nerello Mascalese, Nerello Cappuccio blend from the Feudo vineyard high up on Mt Etna where the volcanic soil speaks through the elegant but full-bodied juice. Highly recommended. JB July 2018

## TUSCAN WINE: CARMIGNANO

- 360 Carmignano 2015 by Le Farnete 53  
As it says on the label '*Una bottiglie di vino per ogni ceppo di vite.*' ONE BOTTLE PER PLANT! Imagine that!  
Carmignano, just west of Florence, is unique in Italian wine history as the wines here have been made with a blend of Sangiovese and Cabernet for hundreds of years—long before the Super-Tuscan CRAZE that saw everybody adding Cabernet to traditional wines (with results, I might add, ranging from the occasional stellar to the too-off' abominable). No abomination this, Le Farnete's Carmignano 2015 is dark, rich, powerful, smooth, well-made, clean and delicious and a bargain to boot with sweet dark cherry fruit, herbs licorice, rose and spice. Though plush and ripe the wine is refined and well-structured. JB April 2018

## RED WINE

### TUSCAN WINE: CHIANTI

- 361 Chianti Classico 2015/2016 by Gabrielle Buondonno, Castellina in Chianti (3 glasses  Gambero Rosso) 53  
Tre Bicchieri, the highest award from Gambero Rosso and possibly the highest wine award in Italy, is usually given to reserve and other special wines. For an ordinary, or what in Italy is called a "normal," Chianti to receive the 3 Glasses award is very special. When you drink you will understand; this is definitive Chianti wine, full, rich and earthy. JB Oct 2017
- 362 Chianti Classico 2011 Riserva Caparsino by Caparsa, Radda in Chianti 60
- 363 Chianti Classico 2015/2016 by La Cappella, San Donato in Poggio 53
- 364 Chianti Classico 2012/2013 Riserva 'querciole' by La Cappella, San Donato in Poggio 63  
A robust, dark-fruited Chianti that bursts with personality as well as plummy fruit, chocolate, spice & tobacco. Love it! JB Jan 2018
- 365 Chianti Classico 2012 "rancia" riserva by Felsina, Castelnuovo Berardenga (94 Kerin O'Keefe, 94+ Antonio Galloni) 85  
O'Keefe, "Full-bodied...loaded with finesse, opens with aromas of ripe dark-skinned fruit, exotic spice, toast and a whiff of new oak. The firm palate delivers ripe black cherry, crushed plum, clove and ground pepper alongside fine-grained tannins."  
Galloni, "...ripe, powerful...Dark cherry, plum, spice, tobacco, menthol and licorice add shades of nuance as (it) opens up in the glass...a wine built on compelling overall harmony."  
Joe B. Fabulous, dark and compelling, this 100% Sangiovese Chianti equals and/or surpasses many a Brunello from nearby Montalcino.
- 366 Chianti Montalbano 2016 riserva by Pierazuoli 55  
Stellar new addition here. Pierazuoli's cellar is strictly about high-quality traditional wine-making. The wine is lush, rich & mineral with dark fruit, balance and a very good finish. And a veritable bargain to boot. (for another of their wines see "Tuscan Wine: Carmignano" above) JB April 2018
- 367 Chianti Classico 2015 by Castello dei Rampolla, Panzano in Chianti, IT (93 Galloni, Vinous Media) 63  
Galloni, "The 2015 Rampolla Chianti Classico is simply magnificent."
- 368 Chianti Rufina 2012 riserva 'buccheriale' by Fattoria Selvapiana, Rufina in Tuscany, IT (92 Kerin O'Keefe) 67  
O'Keefe, "Ripe berry, new leather, dark spice and a balsamic note are some of the aromas you'll find in this full-bodied red. The firm palate offers black cherry, fresh mint and clove set against a backbone of fine-grained tannins that lend polish and structure. It's already impressive but will continue to develop."

### TUSCAN WINE: VINO NOBILE di MONTEPULCIANO

Vino Nobile is always 100% Sangiovese by law.

- 369 Vino Nobile 2012 'querciatonda' by Le Casalte, Tuscany (5 grappoli Italian Sommeliers' Guide, 95 Wine Spectator) 70  
Big, dark and brooding 100% Sangiovese here with tons of black fruit, mushrooms, dried plums, licorice and earth. The flavors are explosive, the tannins dry and fine, with a long finish with notes of chocolate, blueberries, cocoa powder and spice. Organic too. Great stuff! JB Sept 2017  
Wine Spectator, "Rich aromas and sweet flavors of black cherry, blackberry, leather, spices and iron, this wine is powerful, clean and intense. The tar and the minerals become more pronounced at the end, which is linked by dense tannins. Shows an exceptional length." - Wine Spectator 95 pts

### TUSCAN WINE: BRUNELLO di MONTALCINO

Brunello is always 100% Sangiovese by law.

- 370 d Brunello 2013 by Canalicchio di Sopra (96 Ian D'Agata Vinous Media) 165  
Vinous Media said, "Vivid medium-dark red. Hints at black and red fruits on the delicate, refined nose, complicated by nuances of violet and flint...smooth and suave in the mouth...outstanding breadth to the blueberry, sour red cherry, potpourri and floral flavors. Penetrating minerality contributes to the lasting impression of precision and verve. The noble, mouth-coating tannins provide backbone and noteworthy aging potential to this extremely elegant, pure, dense wine. One of the top Brunellos of 2013."

## TUSCAN WINE: BRUNELLO di MONTALCINO (continued)

- 371 Brunello 2013 by Coprili [93+ pts Ian d'Agata For Vinous] [93 pts Kerin O'Keefe For Wine Enthusiast] 75  
 O'Keefe had this to say, "Aromas suggesting scorched earth, underbrush, new leather and balsamic notes pave the way. The tightly knit, polished palate delivers succulent Marasca cherry, cranberry, licorice and a blast of orange zest alongside firm refined tannins. Fresh acidity ensures balance. Drink 2023–2033."  
 D'Agata adds, "Blackberry, earthy spices, mint, minerals, game and violet on the very deep but youthfully reticent nose. Dense, energetic, large-scale and brooding on the palate, offering floral flavors of red and dark berries and underbrush. Finishes extremely long, scented and subtle, featuring very suave tannins. Cellar this beauty for at least another five years, as it will likely blossom into something special; the plus sign on my score indicates that I would not be surprised to find myself scoring this 95 or 96 in the years ahead." See what I mean about the Short Bus? JB April 2018
- 390 Brunello 2013 by Ciacci Piccolomini [95 pts Kerin O'Keefe For Wine Enthusiast] half bottle 55  
**Wine Enthusiast's Kerin O'Keefe rated this 95 points and gave it Editor's Choice**  
 "Underbrush, tobacco, ripe berry and balsamic aromas abound in this delicious red. Smooth, full-bodied and savory, the succulent palate doles out Marasca cherry, raspberry compote, licorice and white pepper. It's well balanced, with firm yet refined tannins and fresh acidity. Drink until 2033."
- 373 d Brunello 2013 by Costanti [96 Ian D'Agata Vinous Media] [97 pts Kerin O'Keefe For Wine Enthusiast] 135  
 D'Agata wrote, "Very deep red. Flinty, floral red cherry and underbrush on the enticing, very pure, precise nose. Then silky and suave, with ripe red cherry, underbrush and savory spices lingering nicely on the long creamy finish. Another classic, outstanding Brunello from Costanti, who has made a few in his time." I'll Say! One of my faves.  
 O'Keefe chose this as **the number 3 wine** of the vintage and wrote, "Delicately scented, this offers underbrush, pressed violet and wild berry aromas. It's medium-bodied and loaded with elegance, delivering crushed raspberry, Morello cherry, licorice and a hint of pipe tobacco set against taut, refined tannins. Bright acidity provides balance."
- 374 d Brunello 2012 Riserva by Costanti [98 Ian D'Agata Vinous Media] [100 Kerin O'Keefe] 320  
 D'Agata wrote, "Vivid deep red. Musky, deep, mineral-tinged aromas of red cherry, violet and crystallized orange peel. Sweet, lush and packed with red fruit, blood orange nectar and savory underbrush flavors; a step up in sheer size from Costanti's 2013 Brunello. At once powerful and refined, this seriously saturates the palate with flavor, vibrant minerality and noble tannins. This is everything a great Brunello ought to be." And all I want for Christmas too. JB April 2018  
 Nobody gets **100 points** but here it is from MW O'Keefe, "Heady scents of chopped herbs, woodland berry, forest floor, new leather, dark spice and violet are just some of the aromas you'll find on this fragrant wine. It's savory and loaded with finesse, delivering juicy Marasca cherry, raspberry compote, licorice, orange zest and pipe tobacco alongside firm yet polished tannins and fresh acidity. A tangy mineral note graces the lingering finish. It's still young and needs plenty of time to fully unwind and develop. Drink 2027–2042."
- 375 d Brunello 2013 by Fuligni [97 Ian d'Agata, Vinous Media] [95 Wine Enthusiast] 140  
 D'Agata, "This hauntingly beautiful wine showcases everything Brunello can be when made from an ultra-competent producer farming Sangiovese vines that grow in what is a real *grand cru* section of the...Brunello di Montalcino zone."
- 376 d Brunello 2012 Riserva by Fuligni [96+ Ian d'Agata, Vinous Media] 320  
 Ian d'Agata, "... Deep, pure aromas of raspberry, licorice and minerals; a whiff of white pepper and aromatic herbs ...Sweet, dense, chewy and powerful, offering superb depth and nuance to the rich red cherry, licorice and potpourri flavors. Tactile, serious and extremely long on the fine-grained, lifted finish...a knockout Brunello Riserva."
- 377 d Brunello 2012 by La Gerla [92+ Ian d'Agata] 100
- 378 d Brunello 2012 by La Poderina [92 Kerin O'Keefe For Wine Enthusiast] 90  
 Miss O'Keefe, "...dark-skinned berry, brown spice, leather & truffle scents lift out of the glass. The palate is polished and full-bodied, with licorice, clove and white pepper notes underscoring a juicy black cherry core. Firm, refined tannins provide structure."
- 372 d Brunello 2013 by Villa Le Prata [92 pts Ian d'Agata From Vinous Media] 95  
 Ian wrote in April of 2018, "Perfumed aromas of red currant, sweet spices and blood orange, taking on an increasing floral personality with aeration. Supple and sweet, but displaying very good lift and noteworthy finesse to the fruit-driven flavors of spicy red currant and raspberry. Offers lovely purity and intense aromatics, not to mention a light touch, on the long, juicy finish. Lovely Brunello."  
 JB says: from my own notes this February, "...aromas of almond cookies and purple flowers...dark cherry flavors...nicely detailed, seamless & elegant on the palate with a long distinctive finish of liquor, anise and fleeting impressions of absinthe..." JB

## TUSCAN WINE: BRUNELLO di MONTALCINO

- 379 d Brunello "la cerbaiola" 2011 by Salvioni (94 Antonio Galloni, 96 Robert Parker) 260  
Galloni, "...supple, open and quite pretty. Sweet red cherry, plum, hard candy and white flowers are all super-expressive. This is an especially lifted, gracious Brunello from Salvioni. In 2011, it is the wine's silkiness and inner perfume that stand out. The 2011 is a gorgeous wine to drink now and over the next decade or so"  
Parker, "The 2011 La Cerbaiole is an unexpected wine...shares very little with (other 2011's). The wine achieves the signature style and elegance that is so unique to Salvioni despite the warm vintage. The results are ethereal and deep with classic aromas of dark fruits and spice. But the bouquet is unusual in that it also offers very sophisticated layers of pressed flowers, cloves, dusty mineral and grilled rosemary. The tannins are enormously silky and polished. Hats off to Salvioni."  
FYI, retail price at Zachy's, before they ran out, was \$180.
- 380 d Brunello 2012 by Casanova di Neri, Tenuta Nuovo 175  
(96 pts James Suckling) (96 pts Robert Parker's Wine Advocate) (94 pts Wine Spectator)  
Suckling, "Lots of spice, balsamic and ripe-fruit character to this one. Walnut undertones. Full to medium body, a compressed structure of ripe tannins and packed-in fruit. Vibrant finish."  
Parker, "...opens to a luminous garnet color and exuberant fruit aromas...offers a lot to the bouquet, from sweet cherry aromas to savory tones of tobacco and leather...shows a powerful...flavor concentration and density that propels it forward (and) wraps thickly over the palate. This is a lasting wine of brawn and muscle."  
Wine Spectator "Precise balance sets the stage for cherry, black currant, violet and tobacco flavors in this smooth, intense red. The tannins are present yet well-integrated and this persists with echoes of fruit and tobacco. Reveals an element of spice on the aftertaste."

## TUSCAN WINE: ROSSO di MONTALCINO

- 381 Rosso 2016 by Canalicchio di Sopra (93+ Monica Lerner for Robert Parker) 65  
Monica says, "...opens to an extraordinary nose...tart and sweet, fruity and spicy all at once...full and generous...The mouthfeel is tight, compact and slightly sour or bitter, but the energy generated from all the volume on the bouquet is enough to win your heart and mind. This is one of the best Rossos I have ever tried...superb."
- 382 Rosso 2016 by Caprili (stunningly good. JB Jan 2018) 60
- 383 Rosso 2015 by Conte Costanti 60  
You'll think you are drinking a Brunello. Do not miss this Rosso. JB, Dec 2017

## TUSCAN WINE: SUPER-TUSCAN

- 384 d Sammarco by Castello dei Rampolla, Panzano in Chianti 125  
Sammarco was one of the first Super-Tuscan wines ever made, before the term Super-Tuscan was even used. Since then it has continued to be in the forefront of the genre with some bottles selling for over \$1000. It's a blend of Sangiovese, Cab & Merlot, but I think the mix changes from vintage to vintage, sometimes with Cab out front, and sometimes it's Sangiovese. Here are three vintages. The 2012 was a lighter vintage, hence the lower score, but the wine is wonderful and every bit worthy of the label. JB April, 2019  
2012 (92 Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media)  
Galloni, "...expect a floral, bright Sammarco built on mid-weight structure and finesse rather than power."
- 2013 (98 Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media) 180  
Galloni, "Super-expressive aromatics make a strong opening statement in a wine endowed with myriad dimensions of nuance and complexity...deep and fleshy...generous fruit, beautifully integrated tannins and exceptional finesse."
- 385 Corbezzolo 2010 by Podere La Cappella, San Donato in Poggio, Tuscany 80  
100% Sangiovese; dark and powerful, notes of tobacco, cedar, mint, dried cherries and leather; the style is silky and tremendously appealing. I have not seen anyone not love this forward and well made Super-Tuscan. JB Oct 2017
- 386 Sono Montenidoli 2009 by Montenidoli, San Gimignano, Italy 85  
100% Sangiovese, the dark, powerful black-fruited '09 exhibits spice, tobacco and earth and is, at ten years old, ready to drink. Enjoy this biodynamic wine from our friend Eli Fagioli. By the way, your food is being cooked in her olive oil which we ourselves import into the USA. JB Oct 2017

## ZINFANDEL USA (all by Ridge Vineyards)

Ridge makes many Zins; some are 100% Zinfandel but many are blends with Zin being the major component. My personal collection includes wines as old as 15 years; my experience is that these wines continue to improve over the years and I've seen them outlast many a Barolo or Brunello. I know this is practically sacrilegious to say, but I've been at the Ridge collecting thing for almost 25 years and have yet to have one go bad on me. Instead, they consistently delight and improve: when young offering bright, if a little gushing fruit, and as they mature becoming marvelously complex and supple with secondary flavors and nuances that seem far beyond the promise they held when young and brash.

For years the knowledge that Ridge Zins were able to improve with mid-term bottle aging was unreported (with prejudice, perhaps?) by the wine media until, in 2011, Wine Advocate critic Antonio Galloni declared that the 2009 vintage would mature from 2013 to 2029. This was a huge turn-around as only the previous year, his boss Robert Parker, as well as the critics at The Wine Spectator, had been telling people that these were five year wines at best. JB, Jan 2018

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| 389 | Geyserville 2014 by Ridge Vineyards, Alexander Valley, Sonoma, CA [93 Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media]  | 75 |
| 387 | Lytton Springs 2016 by Ridge Vineyards, Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma, CA [95 Antonio Galloni]<br>Galloni, "...powerful, dense...Black cherry, plum, lavender, new leather, cloves, licorice and menthol...Deep, plush and richly textured...packs a real punch. The 23% Petite Sirah is felt in the wine's darkness and overall gravitas. There is more than enough richness and structure to support many years of fine drinking. What a gorgeous wine this is." | 77 |
| 388 | Pagani Ranch 2014 by Ridge Vineyards, Sonoma, CA [92 Antonio Galloni]   | 70 |