

## QUINTARELLI NEW RELEASES

The wines of Giuseppe Quintarelli create fervor unlike any other wine from Italy. They are the most sought-after and difficult to obtain for most cognoscenti. A handful of restaurants and stores see but a few cases a year as their total allocation. All vintages sell out within a month or two of their release, creating a huge demand and almost ferocious appetite to fulfill.

Quintarelli is guided by his own traditionalist principles, not by the market. As he recently explained to me, "The fundamental problem in wine today is that too many producers 'hurry' to make their wines: they hurry the fruit in the vineyard and they hurry the vinification and rush to bottle. They rush to sell their product without allowing it the proper time to age. Patience – this is the most important attribute in winemaking. Patience in growing, patience in selection, and patience in vinification."

And it is patience that you must have to understand his wines. They are true thinking wines and are humbling because they are unlike any other in the world.

### NEW ARRIVALS FROM QUINTARELLI Rosso del Bepi

Since Giuseppe demands absolute top quality, he labels his Amarones only in exceptional vintages; in lesser vintages he refuses to produce any Amarone at all; but in fair years he declassifies it and calls it Rosso del Bepi. Forward, delicious, and already becoming a cellar addition for many collectors. The 1996 was released last year and became our fastest selling bottle in 2004. Made from the classic Amarone formula of Corvina, Rondinella, with Cabernet,

Nebbiolo, Croatina, traces of Molinara and Negrara.

1999 *Rosso del Bepi* \$ 114.99

1999 *Rosso del Bepi* \$ 249.99 (1.5L)

### Bianco Secco

The master of red makes a stunning white as well, an artful blend of Garganega, Trebbiano Toscano, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Saorin (believed to be a clone of the Tokay grape and meaning "flavor" in Veronese dialect). This marks the debut arrival of the 2004, providing a glimpse of what we can expect from Giuseppe in his standout reds. Deft balance on the floral nose and in the brisk but full palate. It finishes with a seductive hint of dried honey and minerals.

2004 *Bianco Secco* \$ 34.95

2004 *Bianco Secco* \$ 79.00 (1.5L)

### Alzero Cabernet

This predominantly raised blend consisting primarily of Cabernet Franc, produced from old vines and made by the same method used for Amarone (appassimento), is massive in its density, tannins, acids, and alcohol, and a hint of sweetness is left to corral them. The wine is unbelievably rich in color, aroma, and flavor. The unctuous texture reveals dried dark fruit, roasted meats, pepper, and exotic spices. It can be uncorked now but is one for the cellar. The Alzero is the one wine where he experiments with smaller barrels of French oak.

1997 *Alzero* \$324.99

1997 *Alzero* \$699.00 (1.5L)

1997 *Alzero* \$1,600.00 (3L)

### BOTTLE-AGED VALPOLICELLA

#### Ca' del Merlo

A single vineyard Valpolicella named

after a plot of land where a large Merlo (bird) sat perched in a tree. It differs from the Valpolicella only in that the grapes come from one specific site and thus the terroir and its influence on the wine are unique. Think of it as Quintarelli's other Valpolicella.

1997 *Ca' del Merlo* \$76.70

1995 *Ca' del Merlo* \$69.20

1993 *Ca' del Merlo* \$69.20

1992 *Ca' del Merlo* \$69.20

### Valpolicella 'Monte Ca' Paletta'

Old vine Corvina and Rondinella join Molinara and Negrara for this blend that is passed through the sediment of Quintarelli's Amarone. The second fermentation from the ripasso method gives the wine even more decadence and a glycerol punch. This is one of the greatest Valpolicellas produced and is even superior to many Amarones. If you want to understand the wines of Quintarelli, it begins here!

1997 *Valpolicella 'Monte Ca' Paletta'* \$76.70

'97 *Valpolicella Monte Ca' Paletta* \$189.00 (1.5L)

### Primofiore

Corvina Veronese, Corvinone, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Cabernet Franc complete their ripening in wooden boxes after picking, a technique that creates a more full-bodied, voluptuous wine. 'Primofiore,' here meaning first press, receives treatment from the fresh Amarone to provide rich flavors of cherry, olives, spices, and oak. To be consumed young.

2002 *Primofiore* \$39.67

### QUINTARELLI'S SIGNATURE WINES

#### Amarone della Valpolicella

Giuseppe's is the benchmark for all Amarone. This collector's wine comes primarily from the indigenous Corvina along with Rondinella and traces of

Cabernet Sauvignon, Nebbiolo, Croatina, and Sangiovese. Truly stunning, with great potential for long-term aging. The 1990, 1995, and 1997 were all historic vintages in this region.

1997 *Amarone della Valpolicella* \$299.00

1997 *Amarone della Valpolicella* \$699.00 (1.5L)

1990 *Amarone della Valpolicella Ris* \$468.67

### Recioto della Valpolicella Classico

Quintarelli creates miracles in off vintages and legends when Mother Nature shines – and in 1995 and 1997 she did just that, rivaling her efforts of 1990 and perhaps 1976 or 1985. For Giuseppe, like his father, the challenge of Recioto is a labor of love. After arrested fermentation, which provides Recioto's distinctive sweetness, vinification follows the same pattern as for the Amarone. The 1995 and 1990 Riserva are a collector's dream.

1995 *Recioto della Valpolicella* \$290.00

1995 *Recioto della Valpolicella* \$149.00 (375ml)

1990 *Recioto della Valpolicella Riserva* \$435.02

### Amabile del Cere Bandito

The white passito wines of the Veneto have long faded behind the evolution of Amarone and Recioto. However, Quintarelli keeps the tradition alive with his Amabile del Cere Bandito. Originally made as an accident, the sweet white wine is made from botrytis-affected Garganega, Trebbiano, and Saorin. The gem is only created in great vintages and is then "banished" (as the name Bandito suggests) for a decade or so before making an appearance on our shelves! A bright, golden amber. Aromas of candied fruit are greeted on the palate by boundless layers of tropical fruit. Exceptional, seamless balance of tannins, acidity, and sweetness. A marathon finish.

1990 *Amabile del Cere Bandito* \$195.50 (375ml)



ITALIAN WINE MERCHANTS ♦ DECEMBER 2005 ♦ VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1 ♦ NEWSLETTER BY SERGIO ESPOSITO

## SERGIO'S GUIDE AND MAP TO BRUNELLO

Brunello (the little dark one) is a Tuscan dialect name for a particular Sangiovese clone most often grown in Montalcino, south of both Chianti and Siena. With its growth, Brunello became recognized as the ultimate expression of the Sangiovese grape in that it combines power, concentration, complexity, and personality that few Chiantis or Vino Nobile di Montepulciano can match. However, it is not the clone itself that is responsible for this. Among the contributing factors are soil composition, climatic conditions, altitudes, and aging requirements set by the DOCG. In Montalcino the soil generally contains more sand and limestone than soils farther north in the region of Chianti. The climate is another decisive factor, as there is a significant shift from the damper, cooler continental climate of Chianti Classico to a more dry, heat-infused Mediterranean environment that is cooled by air currents formed by the Montalcino hills and shelter provided by Toscana's highest peak, Mount Amiata. It is these influences that enhance the muscularity of the Sangiovese grape, in turn making a more rich, dark, concentrated, and delicious red (heavier and more tannic than Chianti).

For all of these reasons, no other red

Italian wine has captured the attention of American wine enthusiasts over the past two decades like Brunello di Montalcino. Unfortunately, this has led many wine buyers to purchase Brunello based on media hype and rating systems (which I believe to be plagued with errors and outside influences); luckily, there are also those who purchase Brunello intelligently either based on a drinking objective (approachability, investment, gift-giving) or to experience the nuances of the region and understand why this is Italy's second most collected wine. If you are of this latter grouping, then my seminar and buying recommendations below are for you. Some of the wines listed here are new arrivals, and others are rare vintage wines that are being offered for the first time.

While vineyards are believed to have graced the rolling hills of Montalcino as early as the 10th century, the history of Brunello di Montalcino is relatively short by Italian wine standards. Many of the estates in the region trace their lineage back several centuries, but Brunello is just 150 years old. Up until the 1500s the wine of the region was a sweet white from the Muscat grape labelled Moscadello di Montalcino and was followed by wines

made from the traditional Tuscan varieties Sangiovese, Canaiolo, Trebbiano, and Malvasia. The birth of Brunello dates to the mid-1800s when Clemente Santi took an isolated Sangiovese clone and planted the vines on what would become the legendary family estate, Il Greppo. As I have done in the past with the Barolo zone, I am now providing a unique look at Montalcino's vineyards and how each position/region, with an emphasis on altitude, can create similarities and contrasts among the wines. This is best explained with the assistance of a map (see center pages) that was prepared specifically for this exercise.

It is important to note that all variables are not constant, and generalizations can oversimplify a complex subject. Individual site soil, exposure, viticulture and vinification technique, producer style, and vintage conditions can change typical vineyard characteristics. Use the map and the wines on page two as a guideline to enhance your Brunello experience. For more specific questions or to purchase the wines below, please contact Perry Porricelli at 212.473.2323.

### HIGH ALTITUDE DELIVERS

### WINES OF STRUCTURE

Brunello begins around the hilltop town

(continued on page 2)

## GIACOMO CONTERNO & ALDO CONTERNO

Giacomo Conterno's 'Monfortino' Riserva and Aldo Conterno's Granbussia Riserva are perhaps the two greatest Barolos produced today. For more than five generations the Conterno family has helped the Langhe hills grow and develop, becoming a staple in the heritage of Piemonte Barolo. In the early sixties, Aldo and his brother, the late Giovanni Conterno, worked with their father Giacomo at his eponymous estate to create some of the most long-lived and highly regarded Barolos. However, with a split in views over the style of their wines, Aldo left the unwavering traditionalist Giovanni at their father's cellar in 1969 and founded the "Favot" cellar. To understand the wines of each estate is to understand their history.

Cantina Conterno began in 1908 when Grandfather Giovanni Conterno started making wines. While not technically

labeled Monfortino at the time, the now legendary riserva was born in 1915 when Giovanni placed emphasis on premium quality Barolo made only in great vintages with long fermentation and aging periods to create the best aging potential. This philosophy was inherited and taken to astronomical heights by his son Giacomo. The Conternos managed to stay afloat and even prosper over the years thanks to the Italian tradition of giving Barolo as a prestigious Christmas gift (the practice was quelled when Champagne became an international symbol for celebration): like just a few other producers, they had substantial orders from the likes of Fiat and Pirelli to feed their success. When his own work was done and the family operation had reached great heights, in the early sixties, Giacomo decided to pass the winery to his sons. The credo they were taught: "Only premium quality can bring prestige

to the Langhe."

### ALDO CONTERNO

You might say Aldo's spirit was shaped by his father, the land, and his military service. In the early fifties, Aldo was stationed for three years in the U.S., where he acquired more worldly views than those of his compatriots who never really experienced life outside the Langhe Hills. But when his uncle Franco died, Aldo found himself back in the Langhe working alongside his father and brother. The expansive outlook he had gained stayed with him, though, and he brought some of that special character to his wines when he split off to form his own winery.

### Barolo 'Bussia Soprana'

From Bussia Soprana in Monforte d'Alba. Three years in Slavonian oak are followed by twelve months in bottle before release.

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# SERGIO'S GUIDE AND MAP TO BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

(continued from page 1)

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 (indicated next to the estates) 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, and Conti Costanti. Continuing toward

Tavernelle, the classic Brunellos of Poggio Antico (540m), Case Basse, Pieve Santa Restituta, and Il Poggio (520m) round out the seven estates with the most renowned Brunellos.

### 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 moderated 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 Livio Sassetti "Pertimali" (330m) and Altesino's Montosoli cru, which typically combine serious aromas and elegance with power and fruit. Further west, the wines of Silvio Nardi express elegance and fruit at prices that place them among IWM's best values.

### APPROACHABILITY IN THE SOUTH (LOWER SLOPES)

The southern region, like the others, is contoured so that there is a dramatic shift from estate to estate with regard to altitude. 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 full-on 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: look at the olives from this region at this time of year and they will be turning black, as opposed to olives found on Il Greppo that are still green. As with the olives, these attributes contribute 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 Talenti and Poggio di Sotto, have elevated vineyards with southern and western exposures that create potent wines with a spectacular combination of structure and ripeness.

## FEATURED BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO BY TERRITORY



### Central: Long-Aging, Structured Brunello

- Biondi-Santi 1970 Brunello Riserva ... \$349.00\*
- Biondi-Santi 1977 Brunello Riserva ... \$225.00\*
- Case Basse di Soldera 1980 Brunello ... \$289.00\*
- Case Basse di Soldera 1981 Brunello ... \$289.00
- Case Basse di Soldera 1982 Brunello ... \$365.00
- Case Basse di Soldera 1985 Brunello ... \$390.00
- Case Basse di Soldera 1999 Brunello ... \$198.00
- Case Basse di Soldera 1997 Riserva ... \$299.00
- Case Basse di Soldera 1998 Riserva ... \$198.00
- Case Basse di Soldera 1999 Riserva ... \$247.50
- Conti Costanti 1985 Brunello ... \$200.00
- Conti Costanti 1988 Brunello ... \$170.00
- Conti Costanti 1990 Brunello ... \$210.00
- Poggio Antico 1988 Brunello ... \$165.00
- Poggio Antico 1999 Brunello Riserva ... \$89.50
- Pieve Santa Restituta 1998 'Rennina' ... \$105.00
- Pieve Santa Restituta 1999 'Rennina' ... \$105.00
- Pieve Santa Restituta 1999 'Sugarille' ... \$125.00
- Il Palazzone 1998 Brunello ... \$72.60
- Il Palazzone 1999 Brunello ... \$84.95
- Il Palazzone 2000 Brunello ... \$69.98
- Il Palazzone 1997 Brunello Riserva ... \$89.10
- Il Palazzone 1998 Brunello Riserva ... \$80.16
- Il Palazzone 1999 Brunello Riserva ... \$106.92
- Fuligni 1990 Brunello (1.5L) ... \$210.00\*
- Cerbaiona 1983 Brunello ... \$207.00
- Cerbaiona 1999 Brunello ... \$94.70
- Le Potazze-Gorelli 1999 Brunello ... \$70.13

### North: Ripe Yet Structured Brunello

- Altesino 2000 Brunello di Montalcino ... \$46.50
- Altesino 1999 Brunello 'Montosoli' ... \$82.50
- Altesino 1985 Brunello 'Vigna Altesi' ... \$225.00
- Altesino 1993 Brunello 'Vigna Altesi' ... \$98.00
- Altesino 1983 Brunello Riserva ... \$160.00
- Altesino 1990 Brunello Riserva ... \$195.00\*
- Altesino 1999 Brunello Riserva ... \$88.50
- Tenuta Caparzo 1982 Brunello ... \$198.00
- Tenuta Caparzo 1999 Brunello ... \$39.50
- Tenuta Caparzo 1988 'La Casa' ... \$189.00
- Tenuta Caparzo 1990 'La Casa' ... \$195.00\*
- Val di Suga 1988 Brunello 'Spuntali' ... \$165.00
- Val di Suga 1985 Brunello 'Vigna Lago' \$195.00
- L. Sassetti 'Pertimali' 1985 Brunello ... \$265.00
- L. Sassetti 'Pertimali' 1986 Brunello ... \$145.00
- L. Sassetti 'Pertimali' 1997 Brunello ... \$129.00
- L. Sassetti 'Pertimali' 1999 Riserva ... \$98.95\*
- Donatella Cinelli Colombini '97 Brunello \$74.50
- Donatella Cinelli Colombini '00 Brunello \$44.50\*
- Donatella Cinelli Colombini 1998 Ris. ... \$49.67\*
- Donatella Cinelli Colombini 1999 Ris ... \$52.00\*
- Canalicchio di Sopra 1985 Brunello ... \$245.00
- Silvio Nardi 1999 Brunello ... \$49.50
- Castiglion del Bosco 1999 'Campo del Drago' \$79.95
- La Rasina 1999 Brunello ... \$57.48
- La Serena 1998 Brunello (1.5L) ... \$94.00
- Castelgiocondo 1999 Brunello ... \$61.60
- Castelgiocondo 1988 Brunello Ris ... \$149.00\*

### South: Approachable Brunello

- Argiano 1997 Brunello di Montalcino ... \$69.95
- Argiano 1999 Brunello di Montalcino ... \$42.96\*
- Argiano 1988 Brunello Riserva ... \$195.00\*
- Argiano 1990 Brunello Riserva ... \$215.00\*
- Castello Banfi 1997 Riserva 'Poggio all'Oro' ... \$98.50
- Castello Banfi 88 Ris 'Poggio all'Oro' ... \$175.00\*
- Castello Banfi '90 Ris 'Poggio all'Oro' ... \$195.00\*
- Casanova di Neri 1999 Brunello ... \$56.50
- Casanova di Neri 2000 Tenuta Nuova ... \$59.95\*
- Casanova di Neri 2000 Tenuta Nuova (1.5L) \$139.00\*
- Ciaci Piccolomini 1999 Brunello Riserva ... \$89.50
- Ciaci Piccolomini 1997 Brunello ... \$125.00
- Ciaci Piccolomini 1999 Brunello ... \$56.00
- Ciaci Piccolomini 1999 Brunello Riserva ... \$89.50
- Ciaci Piccolomini 2000 Brunello ... \$49.99
- Colosorbo 1999 Brunello ... \$47.99
- Mastroianni 1990 Brunello ... \$173.00
- San Felice-Campogiovanni 1990 Brunello ... \$198.00
- San Felice-Campogiovanni 1997 Brunello ... \$98.50
- S Felice-Campogiovanni '90 Ris 'Quercione' ... \$219.00\*
- Talenti 1985 Brunello di Montalcino ... \$210.00
- Talenti 1998 Brunello di Montalcino ... \$58.44
- Talvio 1988 Brunello Riserva ... \$200.00
- Talenti 1997 Brunello Riserva ... \$85.00
- Talenti 1998 Brunello Riserva 'Paretai' ... \$71.99
- Poggio di Sotto 1998 Brunello ... \$99.90
- Poggio di Sotto 1999 Brunello ... \$94.95

\*future arrivals

For a complete stock list, call our Portfolio Managers at 212.473.2323 or visit us online at [www.italianwinemerchant.com](http://www.italianwinemerchant.com)

# GIACOMO CONTERNO & ALDO CONTERNO (CONT.)

(continued from page 1)

Ruby with garnet undertones. Classic floral aromas intertwine with tobacco, earth, and licorice which lead into a full-bodied palate of red berries, dried flowers, and sweet spice. Young tannins are balanced by keen acidity. *Bussia Soprana 2001* ... \$74.00\*  
*Bussia Soprana 1990* ... \$209.00\*  
*Bussia Soprana 1990* ... \$399.00 (1.5L)\*  
*Bussia Soprana 1990* ... \$995.00 (3L)  
*Bussia Soprana 1989* ... \$199.00\*  
*Bussia Soprana 1989* ... \$425.00 (1.5L)\*  
*Bussia Soprana 1989* ... \$895.00 (3L)  
*Bussia Soprana 1988* ... \$179.00\*  
*Bussia Soprana 1988* ... \$787.00 (3L)\*

### Barolo 'Cicala'

A second "cru" from Bussia Soprana. Following the same aging program as the Barolo 'Bussia Soprana,' this is the most tannic of the trio. Ruby/garnet like the others. The potent nose sings with dried roses, underbrush, lead, and cherries. Thickly textured with concentrated forest fruit, while layers of mineral, licorice, and smoke add complexity. A fine, lingering finish.  
*Barolo Cicala 2001* ... \$89.00  
*Barolo Cicala 2001* ... \$199.00 (1.5L)\*  
*Barolo Cicala 2000* ... \$199.00 (1.5L)  
*Barolo Cicala 1990* ... \$299.00\*  
*Barolo Cicala 1990* ... \$689.00 (1.5L)\*  
*Barolo Cicala 1989* ... \$247.00\*  
*Barolo Cicala 1988* ... \$289.00\*  
*Barolo Cicala 1988* ... \$395.00 (1.5L)\*

*Barolo Cicala 1985* ... \$269.00\*  
*Barolo Cicala 1985* ... \$550.00 (1.5L)\*

**Barolo 'Colonnello'**  
The third "cru" from Bussia Soprana. Deeper in color and fruit intensity than the two above and consistently the most approachable. The nose is fresh with dried flowers and fennel, while the palate is juicier with ripe red plums, strawberries, and kirsch liqueur. Good structure, bright acidity, and velvety tannins make the 'Colonnello' suave, elegant, and superbly drinkable at any age.  
*Barolo Colonnello 2001* ... \$89.00\*  
*Barolo Colonnello 2000* ... \$89.00  
*Barolo Colonnello 1990* ... \$247.00\*  
*Barolo Colonnello 1989* ... \$247.00\*  
*Barolo Colonnello 1988* ... \$279.00\*  
*Barolo Colonnello 1979* ... \$299.00\*

### Barolo Riserva Granbussia

The estate's special reserve bottling, produced only in great vintages. The grapes are selected from the prime Bussia plots of Cicala (15%), Colonnello (15%), and Romirasco (70%). Aged three years in Slavonian oak casks and another 1 1/2 years in stainless steel tanks before resting in bottle for another year. The wine is a favorite of Sergio and has garnered 95+ points from Steve Tanzer. This is truly wine of patience. Please allow

another 10-20 years of cellaring.  
*Granbussia Ris 1999* ... \$135.00\*  
*Granbussia Ris 1990* ... \$359.00\*  
*Granbussia Ris 1989* ... \$425.00\*  
*Granbussia Ris 1988* ... \$389.00\*  
*Granbussia Ris 1985* ... \$389.00\*  
*Granbussia Ris 1982* ... \$859.00 (1.5L)\*

**GIACOMO CONTERNO**  
Until recently, this famed estate was run by Giacomo's eldest son, Giovanni Conterno. With Giovanni's recent passing, his son Roberto continues the traditional wine-making of the Langhe that has always been practiced here, resulting in the earthy kinds of wines with notes of roses and tar that made Barolo what it is.



west exposure and is about 400 meters above sea level. Grapes gathered here offer deep tannins, creating ideal cellaring wines.

### Barolo 'Cascina Francia'

The difference between the two wines is not in the vineyard but in the vinification. The Monfortino will undergo a longer maceration period - five weeks on the grape skins with no effort to control the high temperatures (a risk worth taking based on his results). The Cascina Francia undergoes a shorter maceration period at a controlled temperature.  
*Cascina Francia 2001* ... \$89.80  
*Cascina Francia 2000* \$249.00 (1.5L)  
*Cascina Francia 1999* ... \$115.00  
*Cascina Francia 1988* ... \$189.00\*  
*Cascina Francia 1990* ... \$325.00

### Barolo Riserva 'Monfortino'

The cream of Giacomo's crop is the Barolo Ris. 'Monfortino,' crafted only in the very best vintages and aged the longest, lending superior structure to this ethereal wine. At its best, no other can match this highly sought wine.  
*Monfortino Riserva 1998* ... \$299.00  
*Monfortino Riserva 1997* ... \$299.95  
*Monfortino Riserva 1996* ... \$299.00  
*Monfortino Riserva 1971* ... \$559.00\*  
\*Future Arrivals

## FOUR IMPORTANT WINES UNDER \$50

### Le Difese: Sassicaia's Third Wine

Sassicaia is the most collectible wine of the Boot! This now historic wine is single-handedly responsible for launching the Super Tuscan movement and remains one of the most sought-after wines in the world.

The legend continues... First Sassicaia, then Guidalberto, and now Le Difese. The label bears a wild boar and the name 'difese' indicates 'defenses.' The wine is a departure from international varietals with Sangiovese as its base accompanied by 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. This cousin of the mythical Sassicaia was quietly released with the 2001 vintage in 2003. Only 500 cases were distributed to local wine bars near the Bolgheri estate.

"The defenses are the teeth of the boar and the boar, when he is attacked, counter-attacks with his teeth, his 'defenses' to be exact." What this means we leave to you. Expect the best from Tenuta San Guido.  
*Tenuta San Guido 2003 Le Difese* \$29.50

### A Piemonte Original

In 1974 Valentino Migliorini and his wife Jolanda snatched up the old Rocche dei Manzoni winery and its prize vineyards. The couple began by cultivating the traditional Nebbiolo along with a little Barbera and Dolcetto. Their great extraction and full-force use of barriques did not detract from the elegance of the wine or the inherent character of Nebbiolo. Over the years, Migliorini expanded his production, which now spans traditional and international varietals and includes two sparkling wines.

Bricco Manzoni appeared in 1976 and was among the first Nebbiolo & Barbera (or Super Piemonte) blends produced in the Langhe. Roses and almond flowers. The playful Barbera (20%) sends a bolt of fresh acidity through the firm, round palate that distinctly shows Nebbiolo (80%). Well balanced, with moderate tannins. Decant 30 minutes.  
*Valentino 1998 Bricco Manzoni* \$30.94  
*Valentino 1998 Bricco Manzoni* \$68.98 (1.5L)

### Classic Cru Barolo

This rare opportunity to taste a traditional Barolo that is peaking now is ideal for those looking to understand Barolo and to avoid prematurely uncorking 2001.

Great-grandfather Giovanni Massolino began the Vigna Rionda-Massolino winery in 1896. Today, three generations of the family work side by side: Grandfather Giuseppe oversees the younger generations, providing advice and guidance. Brothers Giovanni and Renato run the vineyards and cellar, respectively. Grandson Franco crafts the wines, adhering to tradition while experimenting with modern techniques. Their efforts result in well structured, robust Barolos.

The single-vineyard Barolo 'Margheria' was produced for the first time in the 1980s. The cru imparts woodland notes that are accentuated by traditional vinification methods.  
*Massolino 1998 Barolo 'Margheria'* \$45.00

### A Rosso Better Than Most Brunello!

The famous Brunello di Montalcino is often out of reach due to high prices, but Piero Palmucci's (of Poggio di Sotto) decision to declassify his 2002 Brunello - meaning grapes for his Brunello were used for his Rosso instead - opens the door for quality at an exceptional price. This Rosso di Montalcino is often better than most Brunello, making it a must buy!

Piero employs the services of Giulio Gambelli, Italy's most respected wine taster who is known as "Maestro Assaggiatore" (Master Taster). Gambelli's methods and ideas emphasize the importance of ripe, clean fruit and cleanliness in all phases of production. Gambelli's Sangiovese wines have redder and less saturated coloration than most, more brilliant and volatile red fruit aromas, higher alcohol levels, higher acidity, and tannins that are harder and more persistent on the finish. These multidimensional wines age gracefully.  
*Poggio di Sotto 2002 Rosso* (please call)

For a complete stock list, call our Portfolio Managers at 212.473.2323 or visit us online at [www.italianwinemerchant.com](http://www.italianwinemerchant.com)

## BRUNA

For more than three decades Riccardo Bruna has worked the native Ligurian varietal Pigato on steep terraces that rise out of the Mediterranean. Here the Azienda Bruna, highlighted by the Russeghine vineyard, enjoys exceptionally conducive climate conditions for the production of the Pigato grape, which is enhanced by the gravelly subsoil of the dry, permeable red earth that allows for deep root development.

Though undoubtedly ancient, this grape is said to be many things, from a Greek import to a native of the Castelli Romani, planted by Caesar's legions, to a relative of Vermentino. In fact, some experts posit that Pigato and Vermentino are inherently one and the same, their apparent differences born of distinct terroir and treatment in the vineyard and cellar. In tourist country the wine is often used simply as a table wine for the local seafood. But Riccardo's mission is different. He makes three Pigato wines, each with different intentions. Unlike their neighbors, Riccardo and his daughters refuse to mask the grape's true character with the hocus-pocus of technological "innovations." They limit technical input in vinification and aging to the bare necessities, especially in the case of the U Baccan, their signature wine which has only been produced since 1999 and is not created in off years. As a result, and with only 180 cases produced, this is one of the year's most highly sought-after wines.

**Riviera Ligure di Ponente Pigato U Baccan**

The term Baccan is Ligurian dialect for the boss or the most charismatic person in the family. Produced entirely from late harvest Pigato grapes primarily from the old vines on the Russeghine vineyard. Intensely floral nose with accents of ripe tropical fruit that are greeted on the palate by honey, peach, herbs, and an almond finish. Extremely well-defined, structured, and balanced for longevity.

*Bruna 2004 Pigato U Baccan \$59.97*

**Riviera Ligure di Ponente Pigato 'Le Russeghine'**

Like the U Baccan, this wine is produced entirely with Pigato grapes, here coming from the Russeghine vineyard. This standout wine brought prestige to the estate. Slightly less dense and defined than the U Baccan, this is another exceptional interpretation of the Pigato grape that displays flavors of apricot, peach, and aromatic herbs.

*Bruna 2004 Pigato 'Le Russeghine' \$24.93*

## CONTERNO FANTINO: GINESTRA &amp; MORE

The team of Claudio Conterno and Guido Fantino manage to incorporate innovation and technology without eliminating the personality of the Nebbiolo grape. This is because they believe in the strength of their land and its influence on their grapes and therefore only the finishing touches are applied in the cellar. Today, I am featuring small quantities of their 2000 and 2001 Barolos from two plots on the historic Ginestra hillside (Sori Ginestra and Vigna del Gris) and their softer and more approachable Parussi from the Castiglione Falletto township (commune). In addition to these limited production Barolos, I am pleased to offer Monprà from the historic 1990 vintage – an exclusive offer from IWM and must-have experience for the connoisseur!

**Conterno-Fantino Sori Ginestra**

It is rare among the individualistic personalities that exist in the Langhe Hills to find two young winemakers with such a strong willingness to work together. In 1982, at the tender age of 18, Claudio Conterno and family partnered with Guido Fantino (ex-cellar master at Prunotto and another young rising star) to form the Conterno-Fantino estate. The nucleus of their efforts was cru Ginestra, which grew to include Vigna del Gris located on the same hilltop in the commune of Monforte d'Alba (known for austere, structured Barolos). Early ambitions incorporated the traditional approach set by their parents. But in 1985 the duo decided to experiment with a Nebbiolo/Barbera blend in what is now the legendary Super Piemonte, Monprà, which included the use of barrique. In 1994 they built a state-of-the-art winery in the Bricco Bastia area where they brought innovation and technology to the Nebbiolo vines they had mastered. The pair remains at the forefront of advancement in quality winemaking, and they firmly believe that vigilant viticultural practices are the essence of great wine.

This house's flagship Ginestra has received critical acclaim from Veronelli, Gambero Rosso, and Wine Spectator. While I don't endorse the rating system, I agree this is an exceptional wine. Combined with an altitude of 300 meters, the southern exposure on the historic vineyard plot provides ideal sunlight through the early morning and afternoon. The marly, calcareous terrain here is conducive to remarkable structure and cellar life.

With the 2000 vintage experiencing warm weather year round, harvest took place early, on September 29, with a temperature-controlled fermentation lasting just six days to produce an approachable blockbuster, as opposed to the more structured and austere 2001 vintage which demands patience and cellaring.

*2001 'Sori Ginestra' ..... \$89.95*

*2000 'Sori Ginestra' ..... \$69.92*

*See featured six-packs.*

**Vigna del Gris & Parussi**

The 'Vigna del Gris' vineyard lies just 100 meters from the more famous Sori Ginestra plot within the 'Ginestra' vineyard in Monforte. "The subsoil in 'Vigna del Gris' is slightly more sandy, but is mostly calcareous like 'Sori Ginestra' and the exposure is to the southeast," explained Guido Fantino. The Barolo 'Vigna del Gris' is dark ruby red-granite. Cigar box, spice, red and blackberries on the nose, it is full-bodied and concentrated with a nice balance of acidity and tannin.

*2001 Barolo 'Vigna del Gris' ... \$89.95*

"Parussi' is a vineyard that we rent in Castiglione Falletto (wines produced here typically land in the middle ground between the austere, concentrated wines of Monforte and the aromatic, elegant wines of the Barolo-Alba road and share Helvetian-era subsoil (which makes for wines that tend to come around more slowly than those made to the west), this pairing perfectly illustrates the marvelous differences between Barolo crus.

*2001 Barolo 'Parussi' \$69.95*

*2001 Barolo 'Sori Ginestra' \$89.95*

*2000 Barolo 'Parussi' ..... \$64.95*

*See featured six-packs.*

**Conterno-Fantino 1990 Monprà**

Conterno-Fantino began making Monprà, a Langhe Rosso blend, in 1985, their first experiment with barrique-aged wines. The 1990 bottling was among the last vintages where they did not add any Cabernet to the blend. "In the olden days, they used to add small amounts of Barbera to the Nebbiolo to give it more color," says Guido Fantino. "Until 1993, we made this wine with 50% Nebbiolo and 50% Barbera grown in the township of Monforte. We gave it a fantasy name, Monprà, which means 'the hill in the pasture' in our dialect." The 1990

Monprà was classified as a Vino da Tavola (the Langhe Rosso DOC did not go into effect until 1994). Fermentation lasted 10 days with repeated pumping over (the winery had not yet installed rotary fermenters). The wines were aged separately for 18 months in French oak before being blended and bottled.

The wine is granite red in color, medium-bodied with great depth. As it begins to aerate in the glass, it presents notes of currant, raspberry, and blackberry preserves, sweet tobacco, licorice, black pepper and hints of mint. After a few minutes, stronger notes of mint, herbs, anise, cocoa, and yeast begin to emerge. Powerful and elegant in the mouth, the wine shows the richness of Nebbiolo's soft, supple tannins. The finish is persistent, with notes of anise and licorice.

*1990 Monprà ..... \$69.00*

**FEATURED SIX PACKS****Conterno-Fantino 2001 Six Pack**

The Barolo 'Sori Ginestra,' 'Vigna del Gris,' and 'Parussi' Six Pack offers Barolo lovers the opportunity to taste two Monforte wines and a Castiglione Falletto wine side-by-side. While both townships lie to the east of the Barolo-Alba road and share Helvetian-era subsoil (which makes for wines that tend to come around more slowly than those made to the west), this pairing perfectly illustrates the marvelous differences between Barolo crus.

*2001 Barolo 'Parussi' \$69.95*

*2001 Barolo 'Sori Ginestra' \$89.95*

*2001 Barolo 'Vigna del Gris' \$89.95*

**6 pack (2 of each): ..... \$499.70**

**Legendary Ginestra Cru Six Pack**

Ginestra is one of Barolo's historic vineyards that has captured the eyes of Domenico Clerico, Paolo Conterno, Elio Grasso, and Seghesio. Located in the Monforte d'Alba, in close proximity to Serralunga, this area gives wines that tend to be dark in color, potent in structure and highly concentrated. However, producer style does have a substantial impact on the final product especially through the innovative eyes of Clerico and Conterno-Fantino. Here are three prized wines from the legendary Ginestra vineyard that will provide a better understanding of producer variance:

*Paolo Conterno 1999 Barolo 'Ginestra' \$88.00*

*Conterno-Fantino 00 Barolo 'Sori Ginestra' \$69.92*

*Clerico 01 Barolo 'Ciabot Mentin Ginestra' \$64.95*

**6 pack (2 of each): ..... \$445.74**

## NEW ARRIVALS FROM MAREMMA'S TUA RITA



We've featured this house favorite before, but with the recent arrivals it is worth highlighting again. There are tremendous values in these wines, especially in the Rosso dei Notri if you are looking for an ideal everyday wine. However, if you are looking for a standout collectible Merlot here is one of the elite.

Redigaffi... the critics rave about it, collectors scour the earth for it, and we love it as well. Next to Ornellaia's Masseto, it is perhaps Italy's greatest 100% Merlot. This ripe, succulent wine laced with tobacco-scented fruit is just one of the hedonistic reds produced from this small Tuscan estate located in the medieval town of Suverto. The estate gained legendary status beginning in 1984, when Rita Tua and Virgilio Bisti purchased it; a major advance came in 1988 when they introduced Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot to the land, which is rich in clay and silt. Their first breakthrough came when the 1992-1994 vintages of Giusto di Notri, a Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot blend, were unanimously deemed spectacular.

Tua Rita's rich, full-bodied reds are made under winemaker Stefano Chioccioli, whose resume includes Allegrini, I Giusti e Zanza, and Fanti. He and the owners have reached cult-like status and established this estate as the leader in a second generation of Super Tuscans that builds on the foundation developed by early pioneers.

**Redigaffi:****Tua Rita's Masterpiece**

The perennial Tre Bicchieri winner and Parker favorite is made entirely of the finest Merlot grapes and is completely unfiltered and unfiltered. A mere 400 cases are produced annually, placing it among Toscana's most sought-after cult wines. Named after a small river near the Tua Rita estate, Redigaffi is aged in French barrels for a period of sixteen months. Deep ruby in color with garnet hues. Powerful aromas of blackberries, spices, smoke, and licorice entice the senses, as succulent and elegant fruit rewards the palate. With harmonious balance, this is a smooth, delicate wine with a long finish.

*2002 Redigaffi ..... \$249.00*

**Giusto di Notri:****Tua Rita's Flagship Red**

With just over 1,600 cases produced annually, this is a must-have for any true Tuscan wine lover. Named after the homonymous vineyard and the patron saint of Suverto, San Giusto, this Bordeaux-style blend is 65%

Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and 5% Cabernet Franc. Deep purple color with phenomenally intense aromas of blackberries, espresso, vanilla, and licorice. Abundant black fruit and earthiness explode on the palate. Full-bodied and concentrated with rich, sweet tannins that signal aging potential. A resonant, lingering finish.

*2002 Giusto di Notri ..... \$79.69*

**Perlato del Bosco:****Tua Rita's Tribute to Terroir**

Produced in the Perlato del Bosco vineyard, this wine is 100% Sangiovese. A long maceration of the skins and must, typically 15-18 days, is the key behind maximum extraction. Following maceration the wine is aged for 20 months in oak barrels and then for another 6 months in the bottle. Deep purple color with dark and very intense aromas of blackberry, cocoa, and spice. Mouthfeel that is rich, soft, and smooth. Full-bodied, dense, and spicy on the palate with a finish that lingers.

*2003 Perlato del Bosco ..... \$39.69*

**Rosso dei Notri:****Tua Rita's New Child**

70% Sangiovese, 15% Merlot, and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. This is the latest addition to Tua Rita's family. A younger, more approachable version of the estate's flagship red, Giusto di Notri, this wine displays lovely ripe red fruit on both the nose and the palate.

*Rosso dei Notri 2004 ..... \$24.69*

## SOLAIA: HISTORIC FLASHBACK FOR 2002

Where Sassicaia opened the door for Italy, Piero Antinori, with the guidance of Giacomo Tachis, set the wine world ablaze with the introduction of Tignanello in 1971 and Solaia in 1978. The great winemaker believed it was wrong to imitate a Bordeaux. He was convinced that Italy could make great wines using its own noble varietals. This is the heart and soul of Solaia.

Giovanni di Piero Antinori joined the Florentine Guild of Vintners in 1385, beginning an enological legacy that has lasted over 26 generations. Throughout the company's history, it has remained family-owned and operated. Today, Marchese Piero Antinori directs the long-lived family vision, and his three daughters participate in various activities with the firm.

Through carefully planned invest-

ments and research programs, the firm is devoted to improving the quality of its wines. Marchese Piero Antinori summarizes the family's core values by saying, "Age-old roots play an important role in our philosophy, but they have not served to inhibit our innovative spirit."

Solaia, the flagship wine of Italy's best known producer, is the golden child of Piero Antinori and esteemed enologist Giacomo Tachis, whose magic touch has graced the greatest of Super Tuscans. The wine was born in 1978 as a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc; in 1982 the winemaker began to include Sangiovese. The grapes are grown exclusively in the eponymous vineyard, a 10-ha plot on the Tignanello estate. Antinori only makes the Solaia wine in good vintages (for example, the 1980, 1981, 1983,

1984, and 1992 vintages were not released).

Historically, Solaia has been made using 75% Cabernet Sauvignon (which gives the wine its famed potential for aging), 20% Sangiovese (which gives the wine its finesse), and 5% Cabernet Franc (which imparts aroma). The 2002 is a rare vintage with no Sangiovese (since it did not ripen as hoped). The result is an opportunity to taste and cellar a Solaia that harkens back to its earliest vintages. This unique vintage is sure to be among the most collectible in recent memory.

*Antinori 2002 Solaia ... \$109.50*

**Also available:**

*Antinori 2001 Solaia ... \$164.91*

*Antinori 2000 Solaia ... \$789.00 (3.0L)*

*Antinori 1990 Solaia ... \$389.00*

*Antinori 1988 Solaia ... \$269.00*

## GIFT IDEAS

**BIG WINES OF ITALY PASSPORT****A Wine Club For the Enthusiast...**

IWM's most popular wine club, the "Big Wines Passport" includes single vineyard selections and some of Italy's major powerhouse wines. These massive wines, which are drinkable now but may improve with age, are first-class choices to share with friends.

**Includes:**

- \* Three Wines per Month
- \* Prices Below Market Value
- \* Producer/Tasting Notes
- \* *Vino Italiano*
- \* Six Brunello Wine Glasses

**"Big Wines" Prices:**

- \* 3 months: \$ 534.00
- \* 6 months: \$ 984.00
- \* 12 months: \$1,884.00

To give a wine club membership as a gift or to register yourself, get in touch with Chris Deas at 212.473.2323 or at [cdeas@italianwinemerchant.com](mailto:cdeas@italianwinemerchant.com).

**CLASSIC WINE GIFT BASKET****Vintage Brunello & Barolo**

Italy's two most collected wines side by side in a beautiful woven wood gift basket! Experience the historic 2000 vintage of the Langhe with a Barolo from Enrico Scavino, the distinguished "Grand Master" of this "King of Wines," and try a ripe 1999 Brunello di Montalcino from Talenti, a Tuscan estate run by one of Brunello's founding fathers.

**Gift Includes:**

- Talenti 1999 Brunello
- Scavino 2000 Barolo
- Woven Gift Basket

**Price: \$133.45**

# MAP: KEY ZONES & GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MONTALCINO



- Camigliano**
- Castiglion Del Bosco (350m+)
  - Nardi - Casale del Bosco (270m+)
  - Castello di Camigliano (284m)
  - Castelgiocondo (Frescobaldi) (250-450m)
  - Tenuta La Fuga (400m)
  - Pian delle Vigne (Antinori)

The apex of the four triangles forms the highest point at Poggio Civitella at 661 meters and descends outwards

- Tavernelle**
- Poggio Antico (540m)
  - Case Basse di Soldera (370m)
  - Il Poggiolo (520m)
  - Gaja - Pieve Santa Restituta

- Sant'Angelo**
- Argiano (250m)
  - Banfi (150m+)
  - Campogiovanni (San Felice) (250m)
  - Collemattoni
  - Lisini (350-370m)
  - Talenti - Pian di Conte
  - Tenuta Col d'Orcia (115-300m)
  - Tenuta Il Poggione (440m)



- Montosoli**
- Altesino
  - Capanna
  - Livio Sassetti "Pertimali" (330m+)
  - Tenuta Caparzo (La Casa) (300m)
  - Tenuta Valdicava (250m+)
  - Donatella Cinelli Colombini

- Pianelli**
- La Fornace
  - La Rasina
  - La Serena
  - Solaria

- Canalicchio**
- Canalicchio di Sopra
  - Val di Suga
  - Casanova di Neri

- Montalcino**
- Conti Costanti (460m+)
  - Fulgini (360m+)
  - Gorelli
  - Il Palazzone (480m)
  - Salvioni-La Cerbaiola (400m)

- La Croce**
- Biondi Santi - Il Greppo (480m+)
  - Cerbaiona
  - Fattoria dei Barbi

- Castelnuovo dell'Abate**
- Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona (240-360m)
  - Mastrojanni (250m)
  - Poggio di Sotto (200-400m)
  - Tenuta di Collosorbo
  - Tenuta La Poderina (350m)
  - Uccelliera

**Monte Amiata 1,700m**  
This important mountain provides a natural protection against climatic conditions of extreme intensity.



### SOIL COMPOSITION NOTES:

The subzones of Montalcino, though in close proximity, were formed at different times and therefore display varied soil and terrain. The areas with the lowest altitudes tend to have a deep, loose active layer of alluvial soil deposited in the Quaternary period. Sites on higher ground generally feature a much smaller active layer consisting mostly of marl and limestone. Some vineyards benefit from an occasional streak of volcanic ash. A considerable amount of lime can be found throughout the zone, and the ground in most areas is sandy. Other soil types can be found interspersed with these but are not suitable for cultivating vines.

Note: characteristics by zone can be blurred by producer style, clone, vintage, exposure, altitude, and more

### ALTITUDE AND LOCATION IN MONTALCINO

One way to look at Montalcino is as an inverted cone with its peak just south of the town of Montalcino (think of dividing the square into four isosceles triangles as shown on the map, with the center forming the apex of the cone). From the center, the slopes generally descend outward across the region. It thus becomes apparent that one of the most influential variables in the character of these wines is altitude. This wine zone enjoys a Mediterranean climate as well as high altitudes that provide a cooling effect that is beneficial to the grapes and prevents disease.

The differences in altitude and exposition throughout the zone play a substantial role in the vegetal cycle of the vines. Due to high altitudes, cooling conditions from winds and evening temperature drops 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 where Argiano (250m above sea level) undergoes a more advanced cycle assisted by the sandier soils. This variance is captured by juxtaposing these two wines from the same vintage: you will experience a denser, low-acid, approachable wine in the Argiano, for instance, while the less developed Biondi Santi is marked by structured tannins and high acidity ideal for longevity.

It is important to note that all variables are not constant and generalizations can oversimplify a complex subject. Individual site soil, exposure, viticulture and vinification technique, producer style, and vintage conditions can change these characteristics. Use the map and the wines below as a guideline to enhance your Brunello experience. For more specific questions or purchasing the wines below, please contact Perry Porricelli at 212.473.2323.

### UNDERSTANDING BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

**Approachable Six Pack: Brunello di Montalcino**

Ciacci Piccolomini 1999 Brunello di Montalcino	\$.56.00
Argiano 1999 Brunello di Montalcino	\$.42.96
Nardi 1999 Brunello di Montalcino	\$.49.50
Lisini 2000 Brunello di Montalcino	\$.49.99
Tenuta La Fuga 1998 Brunello di Montalcino	\$.59.00
Casanova di Neri 1999 Brunello	\$.56.50

**Approachable Brunello Six-Pack (1 each): ... \$313.95**  
**Approachable Brunello Case (2 each): ... \$592.54**  
 Note: Free delivery in Manhattan

**Cellar Worthy Six-Pack: Brunello di Montalcino**

Altesino 1999 Brunello Montosoli	\$.82.50
Case Basse/Soldera 1999 Brunello di Montalcino	\$198.00
Il Palazzone 1999 Brunello Riserva	\$.106.92
Livio Sassetti "Pertimali" 1999 Brunello Riserva	\$.98.95
Pieve Santa Restituta 1999 Brunello "Sugarille"	\$.125.00
Il Poggiolo 1999 Brunello Beato	\$.84.00

**Cellar Worthy Brunello Six-Pack (1 of each): \$695.37**  
**Cellar Worthy Brunello Case (2 of each): ... \$1,377.30**  
 Note: Free delivery in Manhattan