

JamesSuckling.com Presents

**GREAT
WINES
OF ITALY**

**San Francisco & New York City
January 2015**

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GREAT WINES OF ITALY

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THE EMOTION OF GREAT ITALIAN

Wines

Americans love Italian wine. In fact, we are the biggest buyers in the world of the best wines of Italy considering all the great bottles we consume on these shores as well as everywhere else in the world.

For example, I estimate that we consume as much as one in every three bottles of Brunello di Montalcino produced each year. That's about 3 million bottles of the 9 million or so made each year. And it's probably the same situation with Super Tuscans, Barolos, Barbarescos, Amarones and the rest.

The fact that Italy released some amazing top wines in the last year is only going to increase the demand. Brunello di Montalcino's 2010 vintage is its best year ever. I have been reviewing the wines of Montalcino since the early 1980s and have never encountered such beauty and balance in a young vintage of Brunello. It sets a new standard for the famous sangiovese-based red of Tuscany. The 2010 Barolos released last year are

almost as compelling. The marketplace has embraced the harmony and structure of these legendary young nebbiolos.

And it can't stop there with only the two iconic wines of Italy offering excitement to wine lovers. There are so many superb bottles just recently released on the market highlighting the fabulous work and dedication of Italian winemakers in the vineyards and cellars. Never have grapes been grown with such knowledge and rigor. Never have wines been produced with such precision and craftsmanship.

*It doesn't seem that long ago when I was first traveling to Italy in the early 1980s as a young wine critic with **The Wine Spectator** – walking in the vineyards and visiting the cellars of the key wine regions of Italy. I was with my friend and mentor Philip Di Belardino, who died a few months ago but who will be remembered by many as one of America's great Italian wine ambassadors. I was in awe of Italian wine back then. However, to be honest, my*



enthusiasm was founded very little in the actual quality of the wines. Most were still slightly flawed from overproduction in the vineyards and unsanitary and archaic winemaking methods. Of course, great wines were on offer from such people as Angelo Gaja, Giacomo Conterno, Bruno Giacosa, Piero Antinori, Nicolò Incisa della Rocchetta and others. But for the most part, the wines of Italy were still produced in a historical and less than perfect way. They were still made as a staple for the average Italian's daily diet and not as quality bottles of wine. But I loved them anyway.

To me, I felt something when I drank Italian wines. It was more than just wine as there was an actual message in the bottle. Each time I sipped an Italian wine from a great Barolo to a simple Chianti or Sicilian nero d'avola, it reminded me of being in Italy. It evoked experiences and people. It was almost hard to believe that a consumable product like wine satisfied in just about every way – even in an emotional and vivid way. And I feel the same way today, but of course even more so.

Today's Italian wines are still as evocative as during my first days of discovery, but the message nowadays is simply clearer. Premium Italian wines have the same soulfulness as before, but the improvements in viticulture and in winemaking make them even more exciting and much better to drink. Drinking a bottle of fine Italian wine is a unique experience.

I hope you feel the same way about Italian wines, and I hope you enjoy the Great Wines of Italy.

James Suckling

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WHAT IS A

Great Wine?

LOCAL CHARACTER, DEDICATED OWNERS AND RELIABLE DRINKABILITY – THAT’S WHAT THE BEST WINES HAVE IN COMMON, SAYS JAMES SUCKLING

You know a great wine when you taste it. This might seem obvious, but I find that people who love wine understand that a particular wine is great the moment they stick their nose in the glass. It’s an experience I expect everyone who attends this event to have.

Great wines, regardless of whether they are red or white, have a number of characteristics in common. One is that each is unique. They come from a unique place that offers unique style and character. Otherwise they are just simple wines, a straightforward beverage.

Of course, unique places to make great wines are not that easy to find, especially when you consider the millions of hectares of vineyards planted around the world. France has the largest number of great vineyards, followed by Italy, Spain and Germany, but the total quantity of great vineyards around the

world is by definition limited – although I suspect we still don’t yet know about all the great places that can make wine. Recent trips to Australia, Argentina and Chile have underlined this: I discovered so many excellent wines from wonderful vineyards and wineries in these countries.

This leads to another common feature of great wines: they are usually great no matter the vintage, with consistently outstanding quality even in the most challenging years due to their vineyards’ pristine soils and exposure to the sun. The great names of Bordeaux such as Latour, Margaux and Mouton Rothschild, for example, make excellent wines year in, year out.

Great wines like these normally have great winemakers or owners, people with an unswerving dedication to making the best wines possible. They understand that owning one



of the world's great vineyards comes with a responsibility to make great wine. I remember years ago listening to Christian Moueix speak about his family's ownership of the legendary Château Pétrus and how they were only "care keepers" of a great terroir with a long history that would continue into eternity. He felt he was not the owner, just a custodian of greatness through history. Even great wines can go through bad periods due to bad management of vineyards and winemaking; ownership is critical to making great wines.

Finally, and most importantly, great wines offer incredible drinkability, to everyone. Great wines are great from the barrel, great when first in bottle and great years later. The idea that a wine difficult to taste young will evolve into a great wine with age is a fallacy.

So go out and find these great wines. As the saying goes: Life is too short to drink bad wine.

James Suckling

THE TOP 100 WINES OF

2014

My colleague Nick Stock and I posted more than 10,000 tasting notes on JamesSuckling.com in the past year; with all the great wines among them, it was difficult to pick the best.

The Top 100 Wines of 2014 below are based primarily on ratings. I considered all wines that scored 96 points or more during the past 11 months, and that had at least 6,000 bottles in production. Finally, I ordered the wines according to what I thought were the most exciting - the ones with the wow factor.

I obviously didn't consider price: Most are expensive and it's a shame that high quality in winemaking mostly has such a high price tag. New World regions such as New Zealand, Australia, Chile and Argentina seem to have a better handle on great wines for reasonable prices.

That said, my Wine of the Year is Viña Cobos Malbec Perdriel Luján de Cuyo Cobos 2011. It's not only a perfect wine, but also represents the greatness of the wines of Argentina, which offer incredible excitement at every

level of wine drinking. I went to Argentina twice this year and I was amazed what I discovered. This is a country that is clearly on the fast track to making wines that compete with the best of the world. The country is no longer just making cliched blockbuster reds but also wines that show structure, tension and harmony, with unique character from the soils and climates associated with the Andes. Combine this with the malbec grape, and you have a special character that can't be replicated anywhere else.

Drinking a bottle of the Viña Cobos Malbec Perdriel Luján de Cuyo Cobos 2011 is certainly a unique experience. What intrigues me is how it is so rich and intense while remaining lively, almost electrifying. It is so aromatic and not just super-fruity, with floral and wet-earth character buttressing the pure fruit. Its structure reminds me of great vintages of Napa Valley's Harlan while an underlying tension gives it form and liveliness. It's already closing down since the first time I tasted it but this is a good sign for any great wine at this stage in its evolution.



I could have easily picked a perfect bottle of Penfolds Grange like the 2010, and almost did. The No. 2 wine in the list remains the pinnacle in Australian winemaking. And it could be the best ever. Its density and power is unequalled among recent vintages of Grange.

The same could be said of my No. 3 wine of 2014, Masseto 2011. There is no wine more collectible from Italy, and the 2011 is a 100-point beauty that could outshine the legendary 2001 in the long term. The pure merlot's depth of fruit and character is unparalleled this year in Italy.

I also considered as my Wine of the Year the glorious Château Guiraud 2011. This is clearly an amazing wine for the money, with bottles costing about US\$50. And it shows all the depth, richness and structure one could possibly expect in a great sweet wine. Then, of course, there was the pinot noir of Peter Michael Winery of California. Some people probably think that PM only makes great cabernets, but its pinots are equally compelling.

No. 6, Domaine de Chevalier Blanc, illustrates how great 2011 is for dry white Bordeaux, while No. 7, Aldo Conterno Barolo Romirasco, highlights the wonderful possibilities of the 2010 vintage for Barolo. The vintage made some harmonious nebbiolos that have excellent structure but remain balanced and refined, giving them drinkability.

Felton Road Pinot Noir Central Otago Block 5 2012 and Seña Valle de Aconcagua 2012 are at No. 8 and No. 9, and they are equally drinkable but are both true to the greatness of their respective countries. Pinot noir is a standout in New Zealand, as is cabernet sauvignon in Chile. Both wines show great complexity and elegance.

And finally, at No. 10, Champagne Billecart-Salmon Extra Brut 2006 is one of the best 2006 champagnes yet released, with layers of character and bone-dry intensity.

James Suckling

No.1**Viña Cobos Malbec Perdriel Luján de Cuyo Cobos****2011**

The nose of this wine is phenomenal. It makes my head spin, with so much beautiful perfume of violets, lavender, sandalwood, minerals, dried fruits and figs. Full body with phenomenal depth of fruit that gives layers of structure and richness. I am amazed. This is a wine to try in 2020, but so impressive now. This is the Harlan of Argentina, but from malbec instead of cabernet sauvignon. 500 cases made. This is a good as it gets for malbec. (100 points)

No.2**Penfolds Shiraz South Australia Grange Bin 95****2010**

The 2010 Grange arrives with much expectation and does not disappoint. This is a powerhouse, structurally superior to both the 2009 and 2008 vintages and breathtakingly dense, long and precise. The nose has cola, blackberry, vanillin, hard brown spices of all kinds, coal smoke, meaty charcuterie elements and a strong tarry, savoury note. The palate has super-deep tannins that fan out through flavoursome black fruits. These are purposeful tannins that bristle on the palate, tantalising and assertive but playful: strong, not aggressive. Mouth-coating density and terrific drive. So tightly coiled, it gives enough away to suggest very long cellaring potential. This is a classic Grange that will please serious collectors. Better in 2026. (100 points)

No.3**Masseto Toscana****2011**

Wow. Fabulous aromas of currants, rosemary, mint and orange peel. Perfect nose. Full body with perfectly integrated tannins. It's long and incredible with tangerine, toasted-oak, berry, terracotta and chocolate flavours. It lasts for minutes on the palate. This needs at least five years to soften, but so spellbinding now. (100 points)

No.4**Château Guiraud Sauternes****2011**

This wine has exceptional clarity, balance and freshness, with lots of spicy botrytis character. Full-bodied and medium-sweet with a crisp finish. It's racy and refined. What's impressive is the intensity of noble rot, which makes the wine feel almost dry. This is the greatest wine ever made here. Made from organic grapes. Try in 2017, but already delicious to drink. (99 points)

No.5**Peter Michael Winery Pinot Noir Fort Ross-Seaview
Sonoma County Le Caprice****2012**

The purity of fruit here is impressive, with raspberry, iodine and hints of mussel shell. Crème de framboise. Full body with firm, silky tannins and a long finish. The aromatics are crazy. Great tannin structure. The finish comes out of nowhere with aniseed. (98 points)

No.6**Domaine de Chevalier Pessac-Léognan Blanc****2011**

A white that is dense and structured with amazing honey and dried-fruit character. Mango, pineapple and papaya. Chalky undertones from the soil. Full and chewy with phenomenal depth of fruit and intensity. So much going on here. Why drink grand cru Burgundy? Better in 2017. (99 points)

No.7**Aldo Conterno Barolo Romirasco****2010**

This is a big, powerful wine with incredible depth and power. Full body with fabulous texture. It lasts for minutes on the finish. It shows dark fruits, hazelnut, chocolate and minerals. This is a monopole vineyard of 3.8 hectares. One of the wines of the vintage. So energetic and tangy. All in the finish. Better in 2018. (99 points)

No.8**Felton Road Pinot Noir Central Otago Block 5****2012**

Block 5 is in a class of its own. It shows an immensely powerful style with elegance and poise. A swirling array of spice and fragrance here. There's a chalky, stony layer underlying the whole thing, plus dense, dark pinot noir fruit with super-bright cherry aromas and gently earthy nuances. A hint of cola, too. The palate texture is impeccably dense and there's an athletic, lithe, juicy personality. A wealth of compact tannins layer up impressively and deliver a surge of energy through the finish. Plenty of pure cherry and boysenberry. Rarely do you find wine with this much tension, power and poise. Better in 2016. (97 points)

No.9**Seña Valle de Aconcagua****2012**

A phenomenal red with aromas of blackberry, liquorice, sandalwood and hot stones, turning to cigar box with hints of sweet tea. Full body with incredible depth and concentration but agile and playful. Long and fascinating. It talks to you. The greatest Seña ever; the winemaker and owner agrees. Perhaps it was the touch of malbec in the blend, but there's wonderful purity and beauty. Made from biodynamically grown grapes. Better in 2017. (98 points)

No.10**Champagne Billecart-Salmon Extra Brut****2006**

This shows depth and richness without being heavy. Complex aromas of sliced apple and peach follow through to a full body with ultra-fine tannins and a long, layered finish. This is so vinous and flavourful. One-third fermented in-barrel with no dosage. What a great champagne. The winemaker says it looks you straight in the eyes. 80 per cent pinot noir and 20 per cent chardonnay. 60,000 bottles made. (97 points)

No.11**Trinity Hill Syrah Hawke's Bay Homage****2010**

The wine by which all other top-tier New Zealand syrahs have always been judged, this has impressive depth and ripeness, tapping into a spectrum of concentrated dark and red fruits more deeply and more profoundly than most. It is bathed in Moroccan spice and pepper, with a decent serving of toasty oak. The palate scoops deep and wide, delivering luscious, ripe dark-berry, pomegranate and plum flavours, plus liquorice and spice. Mouth-coating tannins hold the finish long. Drink now. (98 points)

No.12**Salon Champagne Brut Blanc de Blancs****2002**

A subtle, intense champagne that shows a complex character of lilac, minerals, sliced lemon, apple and white pepper. It's full-bodied and dense but racy and agile with a lightness and freshness. It has a gloriously long finish. It changes every moment in the glass, and has such clarity. It's magnificent to drink now, but shows great texture and structure for ageing. Best since 1982. (99 points)

No.13**Elio Grasso Barolo Runcot Riserva****2008**

This is an absolutely fabulous red, with incredible concentration but also polish and refinement. It's full-bodied, with wonderful depth of fruit and length. Complex, with minerals, dark fruits, plums and currants. Speechless. It sends chills up my spine. What a wine. It goes on for minutes. Hard to believe that it's better than the 2007, but it is. Better in 2020 but so amazing now. Available in February 2015. (99 points)

No.14**Wendouree Cabernet Sauvignon Clare Valley****2012**

A striking wine with creeping allure and an expression of cabernet sauvignon that is as unique as it is profoundly great. Reticent leafy Aussie bush notes, redder cabernet berries and very discreet oak spice. Some sweet earth, too. Subtle complexity here. It smells gentle and mellow. Terrific fine-tannin spread and a lithe, juicy core. This floats and fills the mouth effortlessly. The depth is deceptive. Incredibly elegant cabernet with a profound, long, even web of tannins. Very pure and bright. Full of energy and drive. The greatest young Wendouree I have tasted. Try in 2019. (99 points)

No.15**Giacomo Conterno Barolo Cerretta****2010**

This shows such power and richness, but remains polished and silky. Deep from the beginning: on the nose there are mushrooms, some sweet tobacco, opulent dark fruit, meat, black olives and earth. It's full-bodied, dense and surrounded by ultra-refined tannins. Goes on for minutes. This is the first Barolo from here and will only be bottled in 2,000 magnums. From 20-year-old vines bought in 2008. (100 points)

No.16**Screaming Eagle Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley****2011**

Mind-blowing nose with spearmint, cloves and blackberries. Floral, too. Full body with phenomenal detail featuring delicate but intense blackberry, espresso, toasted oak, caramel and dark chocolate. Cedar and sweet tobacco. Finesse all over. The wine of the vintage? Everything is there. Great energy. Best in 2018. (99 points)

No.17**Château La Mission Haut-Brion Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2011**

The purity of fruit in this white is phenomenal. It's like looking through a thin, perfectly clear crystal. Aromas of sliced apples, lemons, fresh pineapples and lilacs. Full body but perfectly balanced between fruit and acidity. Mineral and intense. Lightly salty and bitter like a peach stone. Electrifying wine. Greatest white ever from here. It lasts for minutes on the palate. 73 per cent sauvignon blanc and 27 per cent sémillon. (100 points)

No.18**Penfolds South Australia St Henri****2010**

A rare vintage of pure shiraz, this comes from Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale, Coonawarra, Adelaide Hills, Wrattontully and Clare Valley. A very handy vintage of this classically styled Penfolds red. Bright, hearty fruit dominates amid earth, tar and dark, nutty elements. Boot polish, too. Really deep. The palate has seamless flow and build, and immense concentration, with dark liquorice, blackberry and plum. This is swathed in deeply ripe, smooth but strong tannins. The finish holds and holds – terrific length and depth. This will go down as one of the greatest ever St Henri releases. Drink in 2016. (98 points)

No.19**Kumeu River Chardonnay New Zealand Maté's Vineyard 2011**

The flagship Kumeu chardonnay delivers Montrachet-like richness and deep complexity. The weight is staggering but the poise and balance make it all seem effortless. Ripe peach and pear, citrus, gently toasty oak, chalk and nougat. The palate has terrific concentration and impressive layering and build. It crescendos with impressive energy then fades with sizzling acidity holding it in place. Grilled-hazelnut finish. Drink now. (97 points)

No.20**Tua Rita Toscana Redigaffi****2012**

Compelling aromas of chilli pepper, nuts, beeswax, dark fruits and dried strawberries. Hints of black olives and meat. Full body with extremely thick, silky tannins and a long, flavourful finish. This is layered and so structured, with fabulous length and density. Savoury. Chocolate powder at the end. This needs at least three or four years of bottle age. A triumph for the vintage. Pure merlot. (98 points)

No.21**Pavillon Blanc du Château Margaux Bordeaux****2011**

This is very lively and intense, with wonderful energy and brightness. Full body with wonderful finesse. It goes on for minutes. What an amazing finish. It shows dried mangoes, lemons, apples and pineapples, but so lively. Fresh honey. Such energy. As always 100 per cent sauvignon blanc, and amazing. Best ever. Drink or hold. (98 points)

No.22**Achaval Ferrer Malbec Luján de Cuyo Finca Bella Vista 2011**

Extraordinary aromas of blackberry and liquorice with violets. Full body with incredible depth of fruit and tension. Phenomenal mouthfeel. Minerals and dried flowers, too. Drink or hold. (98 points)

No.23**Roberto Voerzio Barolo Fossati Case Nere Reserve 10 Anni 2004**

This is a Barolo that shows such depth and complexity with dried-berry, mushroom and cedar character. It's full-bodied with chewy tannins and incredible structure and length: it goes on for minutes. Everything is in proportion. This is aged for 10 years before release and shows mindblowing depth and finesse. Drink or hold. (98 points)

No.24**Vietti Barolo Villero Riserva****2007**

Mindbending aromas of tar, incense, nutmeg, dried rose petal and dark fruit. Full body, incredibly chewy tannins and fabulous depth of fruit. It is so polished but muscular. It needs at least five to six years of bottle age to soften. (98 points)

No.25**Peter Michael Winery Chardonnay Knights Valley
Ma Belle-Fille****2012**

A dense, phenolic character with green apple, lemon, lime, mango and papaya. Full body with intense fruit and centre palate, and a long, long finish. Why drink Laguiche Montrachet? Drink or hold. (98 points)

No.26**Bibi Graetz Toscana Testamatta****2011**

This smells like great Burgundy with strawberry, flowers and hints of incense. Full body with wonderful, ultra-refined tannins and amazing depth and length. So layered and so fine. It goes on for minutes. Magical red. Better in 2017. (98 points)

No.27**Château d'Yquem Sauternes****2011**

Crazy minerality to this, with lots of dried mango, pineapple and papaya on the nose. Botrytis-spice and nutmeg undertones. Full-bodied and very sweet, with superb depth of fruit and richness. It goes on for minutes. Turns dense and concentrated on the palate. Speechless. Better in 2019. (98 points)

No.28**Clonakilla Shiraz Viognier Canberra District****2013**

A stellar edition of this flagship wine from Clonakilla. The florals are entrancing: beautifully perfumed red and pink notes, cherries, impossibly complex spice, nicely pitched oak and a pepper-dusted plum core – this is magnificent for the complexity that's already in place. The palate has layers and fine-etched but deceptively strong tannins; they frame up perfectly ripe red- and dark-cherry and plum flavours, laced with baking spices, and finishing vivacious, balanced and lip-smackingly fresh. Better in 2020. (98 points)

No.29**Larkmead Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Solari****2010**

This is like Mouton 1982 on the nose, with lead pencil, blackberry, mint, asphalt, iodine, iron, blood, toasted oak and coffee. Full body with an incredible depth of fruit and structure. The texture of velvet is compelling. A pinnacle of pure Napa cabernet. Reserved opulence. Give this at least three to four years to soften with bottle age: try in 2018. (98 points)

No.30**Leeuwin Estate Chardonnay Margaret River Estate Art Series****2010**

A very assertive nose that has a gently flinty edge, some nicely handled oak and hints of pithy lemon across more peachy stone fruits, tropical hints and a chalky element. Very fresh and tightly wound. The palate is very composed in style, with great depth and oak integration. Long and powerful but quite sleek through the middle. This is tightly coiled for now and releases a slow-burning grilled-nut flavour through the finish. The Aston Martin of chardonnay, with sleek lines and plenty of power under the bonnet. Better in 2018. (98 points)

No.31**Emiliana Los Robles Estate Valle de Colchagua Gê****2010**

The nose shows the syrah character, with hints of dried meat, dark fruits and spice. A blend of carmenere, syrah and cabernet sauvignon. Superb finish – so beautiful. Made from biodynamic grapes. 6,000 bottles made. Drink now. (97 points)

No.32**Araujo Estate Wines Cabernet Sauvignon Eisele Vineyard Napa Valley****2011**

Compelling aromas of black fruits such as brambleberries, plus blueberries and fresh mushrooms. Asphalt, too. Forest fruits. The tannins just melt into the wine as you taste it. Aristocratic and regal in style and length. A powdery, fascinating texture. From biodynamically grown grapes. Drink now, but better in 2017. (98 points)

No.33**By Farr Pinot Noir Geelong Sangreal****2012**

This 2012 Sangreal pinot noir is a cryptic wine on the nose, showing dark fruits. Gently opulent, it has fresh, foresty complexity with a very attractive core of dark cherry, hints of maraschino, red plum, boysenberry and an array of sappy, fresh-cut herbs. This has commanding presence. The palate starts out silky and gentle, and the tannins are wrapped in smooth fruit flesh. The concentration of flavour is striking and there's a true sense of space, light and shade, detail and definition. This is Australian pinot at its very finest. Drink in 2018. (98 points)

No.34**Montes Valle de Colchagua Purple Angel****2011**

This is a crazy red with chipotle and red-chilli-pepper character, plus hints of dark fruits. Blueberry concentration. Full body with fabulous fruit and an underlying firm, silky tannin structure. This is the best carmenere-based red from Chile. 92 per cent carmenere and 8 per cent petit verdot. (97 points)

- | | | |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| No.35 | Zuccardi Malbec Altamira Valle de Uco Aluvional | 2012 |
| | <i>The aromas to this are ethereal, with dark berries, flowers and hints of salt and chalk. Full body with incredible texture and purity. Dark berries and blueberries. Superb mouthfeel. Amazing quality from relatively young vines. Silky. Drink now or hold. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.36 | Tenuta Sette Ponti Toscana Oreno | 2012 |
| | <i>Fabulous aromas of blackberries, orange peel, raspberries and citrus. Violets, too. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a light, dusty texture. It's so fine, beautiful, racy and refined. Very structured but also soulful and inspiring. There's a new refinement to this wine as the winemakers search for a truly beautiful expression of the terroir. Better in 2017 but a joy to taste now. (97 points)</i> | |
| No.37 | Viñedo Chadwick Valle del Maipo | 2012 |
| | <i>This is a superb red with currant, white truffle, sandalwood and stone. Full body, chewy tannins and a powerful finish. Turns to iodine. Gravel and hints of liquorice, too. Very, very long. This is the La Mission Haut-Brion of Chile. A phenomenal cabernet sauvignon. 800 cases made. Needs a few years to soften: wait until 2018. (97 points)</i> | |
| No.38 | Dunn Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Howell Mountain | 2010 |
| | <i>Fabulous aromas of currants, liquorice and eucalyptus. Full body with an intense backbone of acidity and tannins. Chewy but wonderfully polished. Turns to terracotta. Firm and silky. Great wine. Try it in 2018. 3,000 cases made. (98 points)</i> | |
| No.39 | San Polino Brunello di Montalcino Helichrysum | 2009 |
| | <i>This is crazy wine for the vintage, with incredibly perfumed aromas of cherries and flowers. Full body with fine tannins and a flavourful finish. Stunning. Wine of the vintage. From biodynamically grown grapes. (97 points)</i> | |
| No.40 | Oakridge Chardonnay Yarra Valley 864 Willowlake | 2012 |
| | <i>A scintillating wine that fuses concentrated fruit presence and power with assertive structure and bracing acid drive. The nose has chalky notes with fresh hazelnut and a flinty, attractive, reductive edge, stone fruits and citrus. The palate has commanding weight, neatly crafted shape and impressive length, winding white peach and an array of citrus fruit flavours long into the finish. Enlivening, modern Aussie chardonnay at its finest. (98 points)</i> | |
| No.41 | Romano Dal Forno Amarone della Valpolicella | 2008 |
| | <i>Wonderful aromas of rose petal, blackberry, sugared walnut and hints of sea salt. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a warm, enticing palate with dried fruits, blackberry, black olive and freshly cracked slate. Fabulous Amarone. (97 points)</i> | |

No.42**Renzo Marinai Chianti Classico Gran Selezione****2010**

This is as solid as a rock with incredible structure and power. Full body, intense structure and wonderful depth of fruit. What a long, long finish. Amazing wine. Better in 2016. (97 points)

No.43**Henschke Shiraz Hill of Grace Vineyard Eden Valley****2009**

One of the most triumphant top-tier South Australian reds from the 2009 vintage, this has a layered, luxurious feel to it. A trademark array of spice and fruit characters with a lot of sage, fresh blackberry and toasty oak, some meaty, fermentation-derived notes and a graphite edge. Smoky, too – there's plenty going on here. The palate is supple and even, with good fleshy berry fruits and genuine depth. The tannins have a polished sheen to them, layered and supple, with great fleshy volume and drive. It is deeply ripe and resonates long. Deep, enduring, supple and fleshy with a sapid, purring finish. Better in 2019. (97 points)

No.44**Riecine Toscana****2010**

The winemaker's dream was to make a sangiovese in a Burgundy style. Amazing aromas of flowers and strawberry fruit. Full body with a lovely, almost powdery texture of ripe, silky tannins. Full-bodied but agile and refined, with a gorgeous berry and cherry finish featuring just a hint of acidity. Single-vineyard wine. About 2 1/2 years in used barrels and casks. 6,000 bottles made. Best wine ever from here. Drink now or hold. (97 points)

No.45**Viña Cobos Malbec Marchiori Vineyard Luján de Cuyo Bramare****2011**

A red with wonderful, subtle depth on the nose and palate. Aromas change all the time, with cloves, pepper, tar, nutmeg, slate and more. Full body and a powerful palate with incredibly rich fruit, but reserved. Muscular and opulent but held-back, giving the wine form. World-class. Better in 2018 but so impressive now. (97 points)

No.46**Penfolds Chardonnay South Australia Yattarna Bin 144****2012**

A blend of Derwent and Coal River Valley in Tasmania, Henty in Victoria and the Adelaide Hills, this is living up to its early nickname of "White Grange". The nose has an airy brightness, showing cool fruit tones of lime, lemon and grapefruit. This has a fine flint and chalk edge to it, as well as a subtle, praline-like oak and lees influence. Nicely poised. The palate is cut like a diamond, an exercise in clarity and purity, beautifully focused and elegant but also powerful. Mouth-watering citrus and white-peach fruit flavours abound, and there's a scintillating thread of acidity that pins everything precisely in place. Better in a couple of years, but why wait? (98 points)

No.47 Dandelion Vineyards Shiraz Red Queen of the Eden Valley 2012

This has an immensely complex, dark, brooding character with dark, stony, savoury elements, pepper and spice. Fragrant, deep and bold. Plums and black fruits with liquorice and tar. The aromatic depth is striking. On the palate there's an incredibly deep arc of flavour, and the tannins are muscular and long, carrying spice-wrapped dark-plum and blackberry fruit very deep and even, holding the finish in place, smouldering long and fading slowly. Old-vine presence at its best, nicely delivered with complexity and balance. Better in 2024. (98 points)

No.48 Pol Roger Champagne Sir Winston Churchill 2002

Fabulous aromas of dried apple, cream, mango and ginger follow through to a full, dense palate, but it's very fine. The bead is so, so fine. The texture is like silk. Truly superb. I love the contrast between richness and freshness. It builds slowly on the palate and finishes so long and rich. This was 10 years on the lees. Mostly pinot noir. This follows the 2000, 1999, 1996 and 1995. (97 points)

No.49 Peter Michael Winery Chardonnay Knights Valley Mon Plaisir 2012

This is fabulous, with incredibly Californian intensity but also finesse. Full body with bright fruit and a depth of minerals, white peaches and light honey. Wonderful length. Salty aftertaste with fruit. Oyster shell. Drink or hold. (97 points)

No.50 Niepoort Douro Robustus 2009

Amazing aromas of dried strawberries, lemon rind and spices. Full body with ultra-fine tannins and a juicy finish. It's tight, refined and structured. Better in 2017. (97 points)

No.51 Cantina Terlano Alto Adige Porphyriserva 2011

Glass-staining, with plum, hints of anise, red flowers, gravel and dark olive. Layered, complex and hard to resist. Full-bodied. Perfectly integrated, melted tannins. A real triumph. Greatest lagrein out there. Drink now. (97 points)

No.52 Zenato Amarone Classico della Valpolicella Sergio Zenato Riserva 2008

Very high, perfumed red with flowers, clovers, cedar and lots of blackberry. Full-bodied, round and lightly raisiny with a Christmas-cake and dark-chocolate undertone. Big and juicy, but firm and racy. Gorgeous now, but built for ageing. (96 points)

No.53 Roberto Voerzio Barolo La Serra 2010

A red with lovely balance of fruit and ultra-fine tannins. Full body with strawberry, spice and chocolate character. Chewy finish. This is tight and powerful. Pure. Needs time to soften: better in 2016. (96 points)

No.54

San Fabiano Calcinaia Chianti Classico Cellole Gran Selezione Riserva 2010

Incredible depth of fruit here with blackberry and blueberry character plus hints of sandalwood. Full body, firm, silky tannins and a long, intense finish. Greatest wine ever from here. Drink or hold. (97 points)

No.55

Paul Hobbs Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer Dr Crane Vineyard St Helena Napa Valley 2010

This has a very spicy, dried-fruit character with blackberries and blueberries. Full body with chewy, powerful tannins. Gravelly and intense. Big and powerful. I love the contrast in this wine. Smells so ripe and intense. Crazy wine. Try in four or five years. (97 points)

No.56

Orma Toscana 2011

A gorgeous, sleek wine with super-polished tannins and fabulous fruit. It's full but so refined and sexy. It goes on for minutes. Really fine. This Bordeaux blend is the best ever from here. Better in 2016 but great now. (97 points)

No.57

Cullen Wines Margaret River Diana Madeline 2012

A phenomenal dark-coloured red with crazy aromas that mesmerise you, showing cumin, lemon grass, Thai basil, lime and dark fruits. Red-pepper character, too. Full-bodied, yet so fresh and delicate. Wonderful fruit and tannins; so intense. Delicious now, yet has a wonderful future. Needs three or four years to soften, but gorgeous already. Screw cap. (96 points)

No.58

Lapostolle Clos Apalta 2010

The aromas in this wine are phenomenal, with slate, blackberries, blue granite and lead pencil. Violet, too. Full body, seamless tannins and a dense, reserved structure. It needs about three or four years to soften. Aged 26 months in 100 per cent new wood. From 71 per cent carmenere, 18 per cent cabernet sauvignon and 11 per cent merlot. Made from biodynamically grown grapes. (97 points)

No.59

La Spinetta Barbaresco Vigneto Gallina 2010

A Barbaresco that shows unique dried-fruit and warm-stone aromas, like a warm summer afternoon in the vineyards. Full body with velvety tannins and fresh acidity. It's long and intense. Lots going on here. Powerful. One of the best Gallinas ever from here. Better in 2018, but wonderful now. (97 points)

No.60

Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona Brunello di Montalcino Santa Caterina Vigna di Pianrosso d'Oro Riserva 2007

A red with sliced meat, dark chocolate, berry and spice. Full body, silky tannins and a tangy finish. A harmonious, beautiful wine. This is so layered and fabulous. These riserva Brunellos from Ciacci are always phenomenal. Drink now. (97 points)

No.61**Dana Estates Cabernet Sauvignon Hershey Vineyard
Howell Mountain Napa Valley 2011**

Amazing aromas of blackberries, blueberries, mushrooms and violets. Full body with a dense, precise palate and a firm, intense finish. Masculine but formed and polished. This needs at least four or five years to come together even more. (97 points)

No.62**Peter Lehmann Riesling Eden Valley Wigan 2014**

A wildly exciting single-site bottling that shows superior fruit purity and rocky notes ahead of pristine fragrance and fine, piercing citrus fruit. The palate is exhilarating, launching with intense energy and power, and super-fine acid-driven power and direction. This is wild but contained, finishing with long, piercing focus. One of the greats, and made for the long haul: best from 2020. (98 points)

No.63**FX Pichler Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Wachau
Dürnsteiner Liebenberg 2012**

Wonderful aromas of lychee and citrus with some fresh herbs such as rosemary. Sweet figs, too. Full body, rich fruit and incredible minerality with slate and sliced pears. Some petrol. Flavourful and intense on the finish. Absolutely superb. (97 points)

No.64**Ferrari Trento Metodo Classico Giulio Ferrari Riserva
del Fondatore 2002**

Light gold colour with a fine bead of bubbles. Dried-pineapple and nectarine aromas with hints of cream and apples. Some light toffee. Full body with a round, velvety texture with a bread-dough and crust undertone. Long and flavourful with wonderful toasted complexity. This is one of the greatest sparkling wines ever made in Italy. (97 points)

No.65**Catena Zapata Chardonnay Adrianna Vineyards
Gualtallary Valle de Uco White Bones 2010**

Breathtaking aromas to this white of white pepper, dried apple, flowers and aniseed. Full body with wonderful acidity and a tangy finish. Subtle, reserved and intense. Thoughtful wine. Best white of Argentina? 300 cases made. (96 points)

No.66**Foradori Teroldego Vigneti Delle Dolomiti Sgarzon 2012**

This is so deep and powerful with layers of ripe fruit, minerals and blackberries. Full body, round, juicy tannins and a mineral, sliced-mushroom, liquorice and bark aftertaste. Bright acidity with impressive length. From biodynamically grown grapes. Soulful red. Finish goes on for minutes. Drink or hold. (97 points)

No.67**Elio Altare Barolo Cerretta****2010**

Fabulous aromas of stones, meat and smoke. Full body and super-integrated tannins. It goes on for minutes with a deep, dense palate of ripe fruit. So refined but structured. So much depth to this. Some balsamic and dark fruit. Better in 2017. (97 points)

No.68**Colgin Napa Valley Cariad****2011**

Extremely aromatic with lead pencil and hints of currant undertone. Full body with silky tannins and a very long finish. This is so racy and refined with fabulous texture. I love the savoury character. A wine with a solid core of fruit and super-silky tannins. It is beautiful and dense but refined. 49 per cent cabernet sauvignon, 35 per cent merlot, 10 per cent petit verdot and 6 per cent cabernet franc. (97 points)

No.69**Renato Corino Barolo****2010**

This is a rich, wonderful Barolo with dried fruits, spices and light meat character. It's full-bodied, with round, velvety tannins and a fresh, clean finish. So beautiful now but will be even better in years ahead. (96 points)

No.70**Shafer Vineyards Stags Leap District Napa Valley Hillside Select****2011**

Extremely minty with dried flowers, dark berries and currants. Full-bodied but refined with super-integrated tannins. The wood, ripe fruit, tannin and acid balance is beautiful. Wonderful potential here. (96 points)

No.71**Il Palagio Toscana Sister Moon****2011**

This is so refined and polished with dusty tannins and shaved-chocolate and dried-berry character. Full-bodied but fresh and lively. Long, long finish. Trudy and Sting's best wine ever. A blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot and sangiovese. Made from biodynamically grown grapes. Very drinkable now but better in 2017. (96 points)

No.72**Petrolo Toscana Galatrona****2012**

Very racy and refined with bright acidity and a blueberry and dark-chocolate character. Love the interplay of acidity and ripe fruit. Minerals and dark fruits, too. Very Pomerol. Pure merlot. Better in 2016 when it softens. (96 points)

No.73**Marchesi Antinori Toscana Solaia****2011**

A big, rich wine, but there's lots of brightness and beauty at the same time. Shows liquorice and asphalt. Full body with chewy tannins and a long finish. Terracotta, Tuscan dust, spice and balsamic. Intense finish. This needs three to five years to soften. (96 points)

No.74**Harlan Estate Napa Valley****2011**

Fabulous floral aromas of currants, flowers, stones and rosemary stem. Purity. Full body with a fabulous backbone of chewy tannins and a gorgeous austerity. Elegance with power. This needs at least three or four more years. (97 points)

No.75**Pio Cesare Barbaresco Il Bricco****2010**

This is extremely floral, with violets, roses and hints of ripe fruit. Full body with an intensely savoury, succulent fruit-acid combination. Mineral and earthy. Powerful. Try in 2017. (96 points)

No.76**Petrolo Sangiovese Val d'Arno di Sopra Bògginanfora** 2012

Aromas of cherry and blackberry with hints of cedar and walnut. Full body with fine tannins, a pretty fruit-acid balance, chocolate, currants and almonds. Plenty of strawberry and cherry character, too. Needs another two or three years to come completely together but already very fine indeed. A small-production sangiovese made in amphorae. (96 points)

No.77**Errazuriz Valle de Aconcagua Don Maximiano Reserva** 2012

This is fabulous, with currant, blackberry, raspberry, oyster-shell and iodine aromas and flavours. Full body, super-fine tannins and a gorgeous austerity and seriousness. So fine-grained. 75 per cent cabernet sauvignon, 12 per cent carmenere, 8 per cent petit verdot and the rest malbec. Better in 2017. (96 points)

No.78**Duemani Cabernet Franc Costa Toscana****2011**

This is layered and beautiful with dark berries, hints of chocolate and hot stones. Full-bodied with beautiful clarity, density and depth of fruit. 18 months in new wood, then in cement. A beautiful, focused red. Better in 2018 but a joy to taste now. (96 points)

No.79**Marchesi di Barolo Barolo Coste di Rose****2010**

An impressive red with layers of soft, velvety fruit, plus blueberry and hazelnut character. Cocoa, too. Full body, ripe tannins and a long, long finish. This is a single-vineyard wine near Serralunga. Best ever from here. Try in 2017 but so great now. Decant two hours if you need to drink it soon. (96 points)

No.80**Alta Vista Valle de Uco Alto****2010**

This blend of 75 per cent malbec and 25 per cent cabernet sauvignon shows so much violet, blueberry and aniseed. Classy aromas. Full body with fine tannins and ultra-silky texture. Hints of berry, walnut, flower and cedar character on the finish. Very refined and elegant. Drink now or hold. (96 points)

No.81

Tenuta di Biserno Toscana Biserno

2011

This is the best ever from here, with fabulous, silky refinement and length. It's full-bodied, with a balance of fruit and spice, chocolate and berry. The texture is so gorgeous. Polished and long: goes on for minutes. Try in 2017. (96 points)

No.82

Montepeloso Toscana Gabbro

2011

Fresh red fruits, marshmallow and a mixture of basil, rose and olive oil on the nose. Developing silky tannins with slight fresh wood and a layer of elegant velvet. Sexy finesse. Layers of fruit and tannin. All about texture and structure. Needs time in bottle: better after 2016. (96 points)

No.83

Barone Ricasoli Chianti Classico Castello di Brolio
Gran Selezione

2011

A big, powerful Chianti Classico with incredible blackberry, currant and mineral character. Full-bodied, chewy and rich. Goes on for minutes. (96 points)

No.84

Ornellaia Bolgheri Superiore

2011

This shows incredible concentration with dark-berry, dark-chocolate, mint and rosemary character. Full body with a superb depth of fruit and polished tannins. It's chewy but caressing. This needs at least four or five years to come around. Powerful and intense, but it remains fresh and bright. (96 points)

No.85

Damilano Barolo Cannubi

2010

Subtle, complex aromas and flavours of chocolate, hazelnut, plum and orange peel. Full body with super-refined tannins and a long, long finish. Shows the finesse and density of a truly great Cannubi. Drink or hold. (96 points)

No.86

Marchesi Antinori Umbria Cervaro della Sala

2012

Extremely rich and attractive aromas of cooked apple, toasted oak, meringue and yogurt. Full-bodied, rich and round with a fabulous balance between acidity, toasted oak, coconut and dried fruit. Lovely apple tart and custard pie. A blend of chardonnay and grechetto. This is so beautiful now. Drink or hold. (96 points)

No.87

Concha Y Toro Cabernet Sauvignon Valle del Maipo
Don Melchor

2010

Pretty aromas of blueberries with hints of sandalwood and cedar. Full body with very integrated tannins and a wonderfully polished texture. The finish is extremely long and intense. Serious density and class to this. A blend of 97 per cent cabernet sauvignon and 3 per cent cabernet franc. A beauty already but better in 2016. (96 points)

No.88**Fontanafredda Barolo La Rosa****2010**

Beautiful velvet, ripe strawberry and rose on the nose. Sophisticated. Well-balanced texture harmonised with a hint of leathery, meaty character. Long, rounded finish. Greatest wine ever from here. Reminds me of the great 1958. Drink now, but better in 2016. (96 points)

No.89**Château Mouton Rothschild Pauillac****2011**

This shows lots of opulent aromas of ripe fruit, light toasted oak, walnut and dried meat. It's full-bodied, with chewy tannins and plenty of fruit. A muscular, solid wine. A baby 1986. Try in 2020. (96 points)

No.90**Pio Cesare Barolo Ornato****2010**

This has amazing character on the nose, with tar, earth and floral character. Fruit, too. Pure. Full body with fantastic, polished, ripe tannins and a great finish that goes on for minutes. Serious wine. Try in 2017. (96 points)

No.91**Numanthia Toro Termanthia****2011**

This is very sexy on the nose with ripe fruits such as plums and berries, and hints of walnuts and Spanish cedar. It's full-bodied, with soft, silky tannins and a nutty, rich finish. A wine from vines of more than 120 years old. Delicious to drink now. (96 points)

No.92**Cordero di Montezemolo Barolo Enrico VI****2010**

Wonderful aromas of crushed berries and flowers here, particularly roses. Full body with fine but chewy tannins and a long, intense finish. Best wine ever from here? Needs four or five years to open: better in 2018. (96 points)

No.93**Cheval des Andes Las Compuertas Luján de Cuyo****2011**

An elegant, refined red with plum, berry, cedar and hazelnut. Full body with fine tannins and a clean, pretty finish. 69 per cent malbec, 21 per cent cabernet sauvignon and the rest petit verdot. Needs about three to four years to soften. Very much like the 2006 in style. (96 points)

No.94**Château Lafleur Pomerol****2011**

Complex aromas of blackberries and whole white truffles with hints of wet earth and stones. Full-bodied and structured with gorgeous, velvety tannins, but reserved and polished. Very long finish with fabulous fruit. Goes on for minutes. This is all class: the red wine of the vintage. Better in 2019. (97 points)

No.95**Castello dei Rampolla Toscana Sammarco****2010**

Wow. The nose to this wine is truly wonderful with currant, berry, orange peel and minerals. Full body with firm, chewy tannins and an intense, beautiful finish. It goes on for minutes. So complex. A blend of cabernet sauvignon and sangiovese. Better in 2017. (97 points)

No.96**Château Smith Haut Lafitte Pessac-Léognan Blanc****2011**

This is truly great Smith white, with electrifying fruit and structure. It sends shivers down my back. Complex aromas of sliced lemon, minerals, stone, candied fruit and cream. It's full-bodied, with bright acidity and a lively finish. It goes on for minutes. A wine for the future, but who can wait? Drink or hold. (96 points)

No.97**Ceretto Barolo Bricco Rocche****2010**

A young Barolo with complexity and style. Reserved and held-back. Full body with layers of lightly chewy but polished tannins. It unfolds on your palate. All in finesse. Better in 2018. (96 points)

No.98**Cantina Terlano Alto Adige Terlaner I****2011**

I can't think of a greater pinot bianco, or pinot blanc, than this. The aromas and flavours are so subtle but complex with minerals, flint, hints of flowers, sliced pear and apple. Full-bodied with creamy acidity and a long finish. A perfect fruit-acid balance. A selection of the best grapes from here: about 85 per cent pinot bianco and the rest chardonnay and sauvignon blanc. Only 2,450 bottles made. Speechless. One of the greatest Italian dry whites released recently. (97 points)

No.99**Château Suduiraut Sauternes****2011**

The dried-mango and pineapple character is so delicious. It's full-bodied and medium-sweet, with a pretty density and a fruity finish. Wonderful balance to this super Sauternes. This is a little in reserve now, with so much for the future: try in 2017. (96 points)

No.100**Almaviva Puente Alto****2012**

A young red that shows dark, intense fruits overflowing from the glass in aromas that diffuse into spice, nut and iron. Dusty like the Puente Alto vineyards on a hot summer's afternoon. It's full-bodied, with ultra-fine tannins and a gorgeous wet-clay, currant and blackberry aftertaste. Very refined, pretty texture. Bordeaux blend. Better in 2017. (96 points)

GREAT WINEMAKERS ON

Great Wines

A selection of leading Italian winemakers tell us what they think makes a great wine, and what they consider to be the greatest wine they've ever tasted.



Pio Boffa

Pio Cesare



What is a great wine?

It is the result of passion; the result of dedication; and the result of the determination of the grower. We are used to making the wines in the [Piedmont] region, which is a region of great soil, but also a region of great challenges – so we need a lot of determination.

The greatest you've tasted?

It was a 1902 Barolo that my mother opened for my father's birthday. Drinking it was full of emotions. The wine was a part of the family. It was created by the founder of our family, my great-grandfather. So there was also a little bit of mystique.

Diego Cusumano

Cusumano



What is a great wine?

A wine is great when aroma and taste are in perfect harmony. It charms you and continues to change, always bringing in new sensations. A wine is great when it takes you on a journey. When you taste it, it takes you to the place of its production, and the scents are those of the places where the vines are grown, layered with years of ancient knowledge from the winegrowers. A great wine leaves you with its aromas and flavours and also, most importantly, the emotions it evokes. A great wine is never forgotten.

The greatest you've tasted?

*Domaine de la Romanée-Conti
La Tâche 1999.*

Luca Sanjust

Petrolo



What is a great wine?

A great wine must have elegance, grace and identity. It should put you in heaven, like when you are in love; above all, it should be beautiful and give you pure pleasure. A great wine should also speak the language of the little piece of land it comes from: It should have identity.

The greatest you've tasted?

Sassicaia 1985 was the first great Tuscan wine I ever drank in my life. It has been an inspiration; we understood through Sassicaia that it was possible to make a great wine in Tuscany. It's still one of my favourite wines. Also, Vieux Château Certan 1998 is simply a perfect wine, incredibly beautiful to drink. It's a perfect combination of elegance and balance, and a perfect fusion between the piece of land it comes from and the man who makes it, Alexandre Thienpont. Also, when it was released, it was not stupidly expensive, which makes it even greater.

Bibi Graetz

Bibi Graetz



What is a great wine?

Five years ago, I tasted a wine from 150 year-old vineyards on the Amalfi Coast, and this wine is still crystal-clear in my mind. That's a great wine.

The greatest you've tasted?

Wow, that's a tough one – there are so many great wines. Great wine is like a lover: You are always in love with the last one you tasted.

Lamberto Frescobaldi

Marchesi de' Frescobaldi



What is a great wine?

Defining a great wine is more difficult than defining a great car or a great work of architecture. A great wine is a mix of things, but more than anything it must be lovely to taste both when young and after 30 years.

The greatest you've tasted?

I love wine and I am always searching for great wines. I will never forget some years ago, when my uncle Leonardo had me taste a lovely Cos d'Estournel 1990 – really inspiring.

THE TOP 100 ITALIAN WINES OF

2014

My Top 100 Italian Wines of 2014 focus heavily on the wonderful 2010 vintage for Barolo, plus plenty of excellent 2011 Tuscans and many other outstanding wines from other areas. The 2010 vintage is a unique year for Barolo that highlights how an exceptional, long growing season in the Langhe can produce balanced but structured nebbiolos that are beautiful to drink now but will improve for years ahead.

This is why I gave my top wine, the Giacomo Conterno Barolo 2010, a perfect score. The first commercial release of the winery's Barolo from the Ceretta vineyard, it epitomises the brilliance of the 2010 vintage with stunning richness but an ethereal polish and finesse. The character is incredibly multi-layered, offering an array of aromas and flavours. It really is like listening to a perfectly executed rendition of Tchaikovsky from one of the great symphony orchestras of the world: subtle but

mind-expanding. It's clearly 100 points. I only wish more than 2,000 magnums had been made.

The legendary pure-merlot Masseto 2011 follows at No. 2; it was also my No. 3 Wine of the Year in 2014 (see page 18). It shows extraordinary depth of fruit and structure for a young red and rivals the phenomenal 2001 Masseto, one of the most collectible Italian wines.

The next five wines, No. 3 to No. 7, are all 2010 Barolos. Like my Italian Wine of the Year, they show phenomenal richness and depth of fruit. It's their purity of fruit and balance that makes them so very special.

Bibi Graetz, at No. 8, is no newcomer to my annual list of Top 100 Italian wines. His 2011 Testamata was one of the best Tuscan wines that I tasted this year. The wine continues to intrigue me each vintage with its stealth character of ultra-fine tannins and deep, rich fruit. It's a joy to taste now, but also one to cellar for the future.



No. 9 is from a standard bearer for Italian wine, Banfi. The American-owned winery makes and sells more outstanding Brunello di Montalcino than anyone, carrying the flag for Brunello around the world. The Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino Poggio All'Oro Riserva 2007 is exceptional quality, a reminder of just how superb the vintage was for Brunello. It's a late release, so you're lucky if you buy one. There's no need to cellar it.

At No. 10 is a red that might be obscure to many people but deserves much more attention, made from lagrein, the unique grape of Alto Adige. Cantina Terlano Alto Adige Porphyris Riserva 2011 is hard to describe, with its inky colour and complex aromas of plums, liquorice and minerals. It's so rich but remains sleek and agile.

There are 90 more outstanding Italian wines in this list. Just like the Top 100 Wines of 2014, my list of the Top 100 Italian Wines of 2014 was based primarily on ratings; I was less concerned

with the number of bottles produced, or with prices. The wow factor was very important; I hope these wines have the same effect on you.

James Suckling

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| No.1 | Giacomo Conterno Barolo Cerretta | 2010 |
| <p><i>This shows such power and richness, but it remains polished and silky. Deep from the beginning, on the nose there are mushrooms, some sweet tobacco, opulent dark fruit, meat, black olives and earth. It's full-bodied, dense and surrounded by ultra-refined tannins. Goes on for minutes. This is the first Barolo from here and will only be bottled in 2,000 magnums. From 20-year-old vines bought in 2008. (100 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.2 | Masseto Toscana | 2011 |
| <p><i>Wow. Fabulous aromas of currants, rosemary, mint and orange peel. Perfect nose. Full body with perfectly integrated tannins. It's long and incredible with tangerine, toasted-oak, berry, terracotta and chocolate flavours. It lasts for minutes on the palate. This needs at least five years to soften, but so spellbinding now. (100 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.3 | Aldo Conterno Barolo Romirasco | 2010 |
| <p><i>This is a big, powerful wine with incredible depth and power. Full body with fabulous texture. It lasts for minutes on the finish. It shows dark fruits, hazelnut, chocolate and minerals. This is a monopole vineyard of 3.8 hectares. One of the wines of the vintage. So energetic and tangy. All in the finish. Better in 2018. (99 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.4 | Roberto Voerzio Barolo Sarmassa | 2010 |
| <p><i>This shows incredible depth of fruit and intensity for the vintage with a full body but super-integrated, refined tannins. The texture is spellbinding. It caresses every inch of your palate. Fabulous. Only magnum. Try in 2019. (99 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.5 | Vietti Barolo Villero Riserva | 2007 |
| <p><i>Mind-bending aromas of tar, incense, nutmeg, dried rose petal and dark fruit. Full body, incredibly chewy tannins and fabulous depth of fruit. It is so polished but muscular. It needs at least five to six years of bottle age to soften. (98 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.6 | Elio Grasso Barolo Runcot Riserva | 2008 |
| <p><i>This is an absolutely fabulous red, with incredible concentration but polish and refinement. It's full-bodied, with wonderful depth of fruit and length. Complex, with minerals, dark fruits, plums and currants. Speechless. It sends chills up my spine. What a wine. It goes on for minutes. Hard to believe that it's better than the 2007, but it is. Better in 2020 but so amazing now. Available in February 2015. (99 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.7 | Andrea Oberto Barolo Brunate | 2010 |
| <p><i>Wow. Great aromas of plums, cedar, chocolate and spices. Tar, too. Full body, soft, round tannins and a long, long finish. Exceptional. Best wine ever from Oberto? Better in 2018. (98 points)</i></p> | | |

No.8	Bibi Graetz Toscana Testamatta	2011
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This smells like great Burgundy with strawberry, flowers and hints of incense. Full body with wonderful, ultra-refined tannins and amazing depth and length. So layered and so fine. It goes on for minutes. Magical red. Better in 2017. (99 points)

No.9	Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino Poggio All'Oro Riserva	2007
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A fabulous nose of liquorice, fennel, cherries and ripe strawberries. Full body, firm tannins and a vivid, intense aftertaste. Beautiful to taste but better to wait two or three years more. Try in 2017. (98 points)

No.10	Cantina Terlano Alto Adige Porphyris Riserva	2011
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Glass-staining, with plum, hints of anise, red flowers, gravel and dark olive. Layered, complex and hard to resist. Full-bodied. Perfectly integrated, melted tannins. A real triumph. Greatest grein out there. Drink now. (97 points)

No.11	Petrolo Toscana Campo Lusso	2011
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A cabernet sauvignon with fabulous purity and fineness but a dense centre palate with amazing silky tannins. It reminds me of a top Diamond Creek from Napa with its mountain cab style and hot-stone and iodine undertones. It's full-bodied, with mind-blowing integrity and polish. A wonderful expression of cabernet in central Tuscany. Only 600 bottles made. Drink or hold. (98 points)

No.12	Roberto Voerzio Barolo Fossati Case Nere Reserve 10 Anni	2004
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This is a Barolo that shows such depth and complexity, with dried-berry, mushroom and cedar character. It's full-bodied with chewy tannins and incredible structure and length: it goes on for minutes. Everything is in proportion. This is aged for 10 years before release and shows mind-blowing depth and finesse. Drink or hold. (98 points)

No.13	Tua Rita Toscana Redigaffi	2012
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Compelling aromas of chilli pepper, nuts, beeswax, dark fruits and dried strawberries. Hints of black olives and meat. Full body with extremely thick, silky tannins and a long, flavourful finish. This is layered and so structured, with fabulous length and density. Savoury. Chocolate powder at the end. This needs at least three or four years of bottle age. A triumph for the vintage. Pure merlot. (98 points)

No.14	Elio Altare Barolo Cerretta	2010
<i>Fabulous aromas of stones, meat and smoke. Full body and super-integrated tannins. It goes on for minutes with a deep, dense palate of ripe fruit. So refined but structured. So much depth to this. Some balsamic and dark fruit. Better in 2017. (97 points)</i>		
No.15	Giacomo Conterno Barolo Francia	2010
<i>The aromas are crazy, with tangerines, mandarins, candied citrus fruit and ginger. Full body, amazing depth and remarkable finesse. So elegant and balanced. I love the firmness and beauty. Precise and clear. Laser-guided structure and flavour. (97 points)</i>		
No.16	La Spinetta Barbaresco Vigneto Gallina Riserva	2004
<i>This is very racy and linear, in a fantastic way. It's racy and silky with a beautiful backbone of tannins and fresh acidity, but it's dense and sexy with all the dried-strawberry, mineral and cedar character you could hope for. Magnums only. A triumph. (97 points)</i>		
No.17	Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona Brunello di Montalcino Vigna di Pianrosso Santa Caterina d'Oro Riserva	2007
<i>A red with sliced meat, dark chocolate, berry and spice. Full body, silky tannins and a tangy finish. A harmonious, beautiful wine. This is so layered and fabulous. These riserva Brunellos from Ciacci are always phenomenal. Drink now. (97 points)</i>		
No.18	Tenuta Sette Ponti Toscana Oreno	2012
<i>Fabulous aromas of blackberries, orange peel, raspberries and citrus. Violets, too. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a light, dusty texture. It's so fine and beautiful, racy and refined. Very structured indeed but also soulful and very, very inspiring. There's a new refinement to this wine as the winemakers search for a truly beautiful expression of the terroir. Better in 2017 but a joy to taste now. (97 points)</i>		
No.19	Riecine Toscana Riecine	2010
<i>The winemaker's dream was to make a sangiovese in a Burgundy style, hence the Burgundy bottle. Amazing aromas of flowers and strawberries. A lovely, almost powdery texture of ripe, silky tannins. Full-bodied but agile and refined, with a gorgeous berry and cherry finish featuring just a hint of acidity. Single-vineyard wine. About two and a half years in used barrels and casks. 6,000 bottles made. Best wine ever from here. Drink now or hold. (97 points)</i>		
No.20	Fattoria Galardi Roccamonfina	2011
<i>Complex aromas of blackberries, stones, cracked black pepper and tar. Full body with soft, round tannins and a juicy, fruity finish. Soulful and refined. This is a magical wine from Southern Italy. (97 points)</i>		

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| No.21 | Ferrari Trento Metodo Classico Giulio Ferrari
Riserva del Fondatore | 2002 |
| <p><i>Light-gold colour with fine bead of bubbles. Dried-pineapple and nectarine aromas with hints of cream and apples. Some light toffee. Full body and a round, velvety texture with a bread-dough and crust undertone. Long and flavourful with wonderful toasted complexity. This is one of the greatest sparkling wines ever made in Italy. (97 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.22 | Romano Dal Forno Amarone della Valpolicella | 2008 |
| <p><i>Wonderful aromas of rose petal, blackberry, sugared walnut, and hints of sea salt. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a warm and enticing palate with dried fruits, blackberry, black olive and freshly cracked slate. Fabulous Amarone. (97 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.23 | Foradori Teroldego Vigneti delle Dolomiti Sgarzon | 2012 |
| <p><i>This is so deep and powerful with layers of ripe fruit, minerals and blackberry. Full body, round, juicy tannins and a mineral, sliced-mushroom, liquorice and bark aftertaste. Bright acidity with impressive length. From biodynamically grown grapes. Soulful red. Finish goes on for minutes. Drink or hold. (97 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.24 | Castello dei Rampolla Toscana Sammarco | 2010 |
| <p><i>Wow. The nose to this wine is truly wonderful, with currant, berry, orange peel and minerals. Full body, firm, chewy tannins and an intense, beautiful finish. It goes on for minutes. So complex. A blend of cabernet sauvignon and sangiovese. Better in 2017. (97 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.25 | Parusso Barolo Bussia Riserva Gold Label | 2004 |
| <p><i>This Barolo shows so much funky dried-flower and cedar character. It's like going into a humididor, with tobacco and berries. It's full-bodied, with powerful tannins and a floral, berry and Spanish-cedar aftertaste. With time in the glass, it becomes an incredible wine, with such depth and complexity. Decant two or three hours before. Only in magnum. (98 points)</i></p> | | |
| No.26 | Cantina Terlano Alto Adige Terlaner I | 2011 |
| <p><i>I can't think of a greater pinot bianco, or pinot blanc, than this. The aromas and flavours are so subtle but complex with minerals, flint, hints of flowers, sliced pears and apples. Full-bodied with creamy acidity and a long finish. A perfect fruit-acid balance. About 85 per cent pinot bianco and the rest chardonnay and sauvignon blanc. A selection of the best grapes from here. Only 2,450 bottles made. Speechless. One of the greatest Italian dry whites released recently. (98 points)</i></p> | | |

No.27**La Spinetta Barbaresco Vigneto Gallina****2010**

A Barbaresco that shows unique dried-fruit and warm-stone aromas, like a warm summer afternoon in the vineyards. Full body with velvety tannins and fresh acidity. It's long and intense. Lots going on here. Powerful. One of the best Gallinas ever from here. Better in 2018, but wonderful to taste now. (97 points)

No.28**Renzo Marinai Chianti Classico Gran Selezione****2010**

This is as solid as a rock with incredible structure and power. Full body, intense structure and wonderful depth of fruit. What a long, long finish. Superb. Amazing wine. Better in 2016. (97 points)

No.29**San Fabiano Calcinaia Chianti Classico Cellole Gran Selezione Riserva****2010**

Incredible depth of fruit here with blackberry and blueberry character plus hints of sandalwood. Full body, firm, silky tannins and a long, intense finish. Greatest wine ever from here. Drink or hold. (97 points)

No.30**Orma Toscana****2011**

A gorgeous, sleek wine with super-polished tannins and fabulous fruit. It's full but so refined and sexy. It goes on for minutes. Really fine. What a wine. This Bordeaux blend from here is the best ever. Better in 2016 but great now. (97 points)

No.31**San Polino Brunello di Montalcino Helichrysum****2009**

This is crazy wine for the vintage, with incredibly perfumed aromas of cherries and flowers. Full body with fine tannins and a flavourful finish. Stunning. Wine of the vintage. From biodynamically grown grapes. (97 points)

No.32**Zenato Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Sergio Zenato Riserva****2008**

Very perfumed red with flowers, clovers, cedar and lots of blackberry. Full-bodied, round and lightly raisiny with a Christmas-cake and dark-chocolate undertone. Big and juicy but firm and racy. Gorgeous now but built for ageing. (96 points)

No.33**Petrolo Toscana Galatrona****2012**

Very racy and refined with bright acidity and a blueberry and dark-chocolate character. Love the interplay of acidity and ripe fruit. Minerals and dark fruits, too. Very Pomerol. Pure merlot. Better in 2016 when it softens. (96 points)

No.34**Azelia Barolo Margheria****2010**

This is a dense, powerful Barolo with so much fruit-tannin tension, but there is balance and refinement, with dried-berry, flower and mineral character. Full body with chewy tannins and a long finish. Muscular wine for Azelia. Best ever from this vineyard? Try after 2017. (96 points)

No.35**Barone Ricasoli Chianti Classico Castello di Brolio Gran Selezione****2011**

A big, powerful Chianti Classico with incredible blackberry, currant and mineral character. Full-bodied, chewy and rich. Goes on for minutes. (96 points)

No.36**Roberto Voerzio Barolo La Serra****2010**

A red with lovely balance of fruit and ultra-fine tannins. Full body with strawberry, spice and chocolate character. Chewy finish. This is tight and powerful. Pure. Needs time to soften. Better in 2016. (96 points)

No.37**Bibi Graetz Toscana Colore****2009**

I love the balance and beauty to this red, with dried-strawberry, cherry and flower character. Full-bodied but reserved and polished. Ultra-fine tannins. Lively, creamy acidity. I like the volcanic-salt undertone to the fruit. Drink or hold. (96 points)

No.38**Renato Corino Barolo****2010**

This is a rich, wonderful Barolo with dried-fruit, spice and light meat character. It's full-bodied, with round, velvety tannins and a fresh, clean finish. So beautiful now but will be even better in years ahead. (96 points)

No.39**Bosco Agostino Barolo Neirane****2010**

What gorgeous aromas of sliced strawberries and flowers. Full body with silky tannins and a fabulous intensity. Such incredible depth and length. Best ever from here. A small producer you should know. Better in 2016. (96 points)

No.40**Marchesi Antinori Toscana Solaia****2011**

A big, rich wine but there's lots of brightness and beauty at the same time. Shows liquorice and asphalt. Full body with chewy tannins and a long finish. Terracotta, Tuscan dust and spice, plus balsamic, too. This needs three to five years to soften. Intense finish. (98 points)

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| No.41 | Bruno Rocca Barbaresco Rabaja | 2010 |
| | <i>What fabulous purity of aroma here, with dark fruits, minerals and truffles. Changes all the time as you smell it. Full body with fine tannins and a silky, polished-textured finish. It goes on for minutes. This is one of the best Bruno Rocca Barbarescos in years. Better in 2017 but very pretty now. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.42 | Damilano Barolo Cannubi | 2010 |
| | <i>Subtle, complex aromas and flavours of chocolate, hazelnut, plum and orange peel. Full body with super-refined tannins and a long, long finish. Shows the finesse and density of a truly great Cannubi. Drink or hold. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.43 | Castellare di Castellina Toscana I Sodi Di San Niccolò | 2010 |
| | <i>Ripe cherry kirsch, crème de cassis, spice, warm wood and panna cotta. A rich mouthfeel and a creamy texture. Hedonistic, full-bodied and robust. Drink in 2016. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.44 | Petrolo Sangiovese Val d'Arno di Sopra Bogginanfora | 2012 |
| | <i>Aromas of cherry and blackberry with hints of cedar and walnut. Full body, fine tannins and a pretty fruit-acid balance with chocolate, currants and almonds. Plenty of strawberry and cherry character, too. Needs another two or three years to come completely together, but very fine indeed. A small-production sangiovese made in amphorae. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.45 | Tenuta di Biserno Toscana Biserno | 2011 |
| | <i>This is the best ever, with fabulous, silky refinement and length. It's full-bodied, with a balance of fruit and spice with chocolate and berry. The texture is really so gorgeous. Polished and long. Goes on for minutes. Try in 2017. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.46 | Marchesi Antinori Umbria Cervaro della Sala | 2012 |
| | <i>Extremely rich, attractive aromas of cooked apple, toasted oak, meringue and yogurt. Full-bodied, rich and round with a fabulous balance between acidity, toasted oak, coconut and dried fruit. Lovely apple tart and custard pie. A blend of chardonnay and grechetto. This is so beautiful now. Drink or hold. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.47 | Pio Cesare Barbaresco Il Bricco | 2010 |
| | <i>This is extremely floral, with violets, roses and hints of ripe fruit. Full body with an intensely savoury, succulent fruit-acid combination. Mineral and earthy. Powerful. Try in 2017. (96 points)</i> | |

No.48 Ceretto Barolo Bricco Rocche 2010

A young Barolo with complexity and style. Reserved and held back. Full body with layers of lightly chewy but polished tannins. It unfolds on your palate. All in finesse. Better in 2018. (96 points)

No.49 Ornellaia Bolgheri Superiore 2011

This shows incredible concentration with dark-berry, dark-chocolate, mint and rosemary character. Full body with a superb depth of fruit and polished tannins. It's chewy but caressing. This needs at least four or five years to come around. Powerful and intense, but it remains fresh and bright. (96 points)

No.50 Cordero di Montezemolo Barolo Enrico VI 2010

Wonderful aromas of crushed berries and flowers here, particularly roses. Full body with fine but chewy tannins and a long, intense finish. Best wine ever from here? Needs four or five years to open. Better in 2018. (96 points)

No.51 Cantina Andrian Lagrein Riserva Alto Adige Tor di Lupo 2011

Glass-staining black, with black olive, peppercorn, crushed granite, lavender and cranberry. Firm, great tannins. Full-bodied. Amazing finish of dark fruit including blueberry. Great stuff. Drink now. (96 points)

No.52 Duemani Cabernet Franc Costa Toscana 2011

This is layered and beautiful with dark berry, hints of chocolate and hot stones. Full body with beautiful clarity, density and depth of fruit. 18 months in new wood, then in cement. A beautiful, focused red. Better in 2018 but a joy to taste now. (96 points)

No.53 Pio Cesare Barolo Ornato 2010

This has amazing character on the nose, with tar, earth and flowers. Fruit, too. Pure. Full body with fantastic, polished tannins. A great finish with ripe tannins and fruit that goes on for minutes. Serious wine. What a finish. Try in 2017. (96 points)

No.54 Montepeloso Toscana Gabbro 2011

Fresh red fruits, marshmallow and a mixture of basil, rose and olive oil on the nose. Developing silky tannins with light fresh wood and a layer of elegant velvet. Sexy finesse. Layers of fruit and tannin. All about texture and structure. Needs time in bottle: better after 2016. (96 points)

No.55**Elvio Cogno Barolo Vigna Elena Riserva****2007**

The perfume to this is so beautiful with lilacs, nutmeg and ripe fruits. Full to medium body, bright acidity and fine tannins. This is incredibly melted and there's a dustiness here, too. The texture is marvellous. Why wait? (96 points)

No.56**Fontanafredda Barolo La Rosa****2010**

Beautiful velvet, ripe strawberry and rose on the nose. Sophisticated. Well-balanced texture harmonised with a hint of leathery, meaty character. Long, rounded finish. Greatest wine ever from here. Reminds me of the great 1958. Drink now, but better in 2016. (96 points)

No.57**Il Palagio Toscana Sister Moon****2011**

This is so refined and polished with dusty tannins and shaved-chocolate and dried-berry character. Full-bodied but fresh and lively. Long, long finish. Trudy and Sting's best wine ever. A blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot and sangiovese. Made from biodynamically grown grapes. Very drinkable now but better in 2017. (96 points)

No.58**La Spinetta Barbaresco Vigneto Staderi****2010**

This is a red with fascinating aromas of strawberry skin, dried flowers and truffles. Full body with silky tannins and wonderful balance and finesse. It caresses every inch of your palate. Try in 2017. (96 points)

No.59**Fabrizio Dionisio Syrah Cortona Cuculaia****2010**

A fabulous wine with layers of ripe-fruit, spice, dried-meat and berry character. Full and intense with so much fruit and richness. One of the greatest syrahs ever. Drink now or hold. (96 points)

No.60**Luciano Sandrone Barolo Le Vigne****2010**

A gorgeous young wine with flowers, sandalwood and berries on the nose. Full body with ultra-fine tannins and a long, long finish. Wonderfully harmonious. A blend of wines from different vineyards. So attractive to drink now but better in 2017. (96 points)

No.61**Castelli del Grevespa Chianti Classico Panzano Gran Selezione****2010**

This is so dense and beautiful and has such amazing depth of fruit and power. Full body with massive intensity and length. Chewy but polished and balanced. This is just a baby still: try in 2018. (96 points)

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| No.62 | Marchesi di Barolo Barolo Coste di Rose | 2010 |
| | <i>An impressive red with layers of soft, velvety fruit, plus blueberry and hazelnut character. Cocoa, too. Full body, ripe tannins and a long, long finish. This is a single-vineyard wine from near Serralunga. Best ever from here. Try in 2017 but so great now. Decant two hours before if you need to drink it soon. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.63 | Castello di Ama Toscana Haiku | 2010 |
| | <i>A very powerful red with layers of dense, ripe fruit and firm, savoury tannins. This is extremely structured and superb quality. Full body. Long, intense finish. Shows the winemaking prowess of Ama. A blend of 50 per cent sangiovese, 25 per cent merlot and 25 per cent cabernet franc. Better in 2017. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.64 | Marziano Abbona Barolo Pressenda | 2010 |
| | <i>A wine with beautiful depth of fruit and richness, plus floral and berry character. Such purity. Full body with fabulous concentration and balance. It lasts for minutes. One of the big surprises of the vintage. Better in 2018. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.65 | Mauro Veglio Barolo Rocche dell'Annunziata | 2010 |
| | <i>Fresh red fruit with slightly tannic, woody character but sophisticated structure, elegant finesse and velvety texture. Best ever from here. What a wine. Drinkable now but better in 2016. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.66 | La Spinetta Barbaresco Valeirano | 2011 |
| | <i>This is so complex, with decadent leather, tar and sliced-plum aromas. Porcini mushrooms. Full body. Firm and structured with fabulous fruit but subtle and racy. Better in 2017. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.67 | Michele Chiarlo Barbaresco Asili | 2010 |
| | <i>Wow. So much beautiful fruit to this wine but the tannins are intact and polished. Full-bodied and very fine with a polished, silky-textured mouthfeel. One of the best wines ever from Michelle Chiarlo, which shows the greatness of the Asili vineyard. Goes on for minutes. Try after 2017. (96 points)</i> | |
| No.68 | Aldo Conterno Barolo Gran Bussia Riserva | 2006 |
| | <i>A full-bodied red with muscular tannins and hints of dark chocolate, berries and minerals. Full body, chewy tannins and intensity. Fresh and precise. This is a blend of the top vineyards of Bussia. Almost three years in large wooden casks. A pretty, elegant 2006 that shows balance for a tannic vintage. About 4,000 bottles made. (95 points)</i> | |

No.69 Parusso Barolo Bussia A L'E Per Mi Un Vin Special 2009

A decadent, beautiful wine with coffee, cedar and berry character. Full body with chewy, polished, pretty tannins and a long finish. Better in 2016 but so great now. This is a blend of various vineyards: Munie, Rocche and Fiurin. (96 points)

No.70 Produttori del Barbaresco Barbaresco Asili Riserva 2009

Super-aromatic with mineral, floral and liquorice character. Full body, a powerful structure of rich tannins and impressive fruit. Spicy. This is racy and intense. Superb. Great finish. Leave it until 2018. (96 points)

No.71 Roberto Voerzio Barbera d'Alba Pozzo dell'Annunziata 2010

This is always one of the best Barbera d'Albas. The 2010 Pozzo – the name change is the result of changes in Italian appellation laws – shows fabulous density and depth with wet earth, dark berries and loads of mineral character. It's full-bodied with bright, creamy acidity and a long, long finish. Only in magnums. Fantastic. Drink now or hold. (96 points)

No.72 Cos Sicilia Pithos Rosso 2011

A fabulous red with sliced strawberries, flowers and fresh rosemary. Full-bodied but so refined and beautiful, with ultra-fine tannins. Fabulous aftertaste that lasts for minutes. Light cocoa and strawberry. Eight months on the skin in amphora. Racked and pressed. Juice goes back in amphora. Then vat of cement and then a few months blend. What a texture. 60 per cent nero d'avola and 40 per cent frappato. Drink or hold. (95 points)

No.73 Tenuta di Biserno Toscana Lodovico 2011

A firm, sexy red with minerals, blackberries and rose petals. Full body with ultra-fine tannins and an intense finish. So long. The hot-stone character and ripe fruit go on for minutes here. The most complex, refined Lodovico ever. 95 per cent cabernet franc and 5 per cent merlot. Needs time to soften: better in 2016. (96 points)

No.74 Vietti Barolo Brunate 2010

A 2010 Barolo with beautiful balance and complexity. Rose, plum and hints of sandalwood. Full body with integrated tannins and a long, seamless finish. Best Brunate of the vintage. Better in 2018. (96 points)

No.75 Virna Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2010

Aromas of dried berries including strawberries, plus dried meat and mushroom. Full body, soft, velvety-textured tannins and a savoury, rich finish. Not a heavy wine but full of character. Enchanting. Better in 2017. (96 points)

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| No.76 | Aldo Conterno Barolo Colonnello | 2010 |
| | <i>A fabulous nose of minerals, fresh roses and dark fruits. This is full-bodied with a powerful structure of gorgeous subtle fruit and polished tannins. Great wine for 2010. Better in 2017. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.77 | Altesino Brunello di Montalcino Montosoli | 2009 |
| | <i>This is a unique wine for 2009, with an amazing nose of clementines and ripe fruit. It's full-bodied and very, very velvety with a long, long finish. Classy wine. Best of the vintage. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.78 | Andrea Oberto Barolo | 2010 |
| | <i>Crazy aromas of dried berry, cedar, white truffle and handmade paper. Full body with perfect tannin texture and length. A wine that shows incredible depth and power. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.79 | Antonelli Sagrantino di Montefalco | 2007 |
| | <i>This is really something. I loved it a few years ago but now it's even more amazing. Full and velvety with superb fruit. It's soft and decadent with meat, berry and bark character. It goes on for minutes. Great wine. Reminds me of a great Côte-Rôtie. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.80 | Cos Vittoria Rosso Pithos Rosso | 2013 |
| | <i>Phenomenal aromas of rose petals, rose stems, dried strawberries and jasmine. Full body, super-fine tannins and great freshness and clarity. A fabulous, refined, elegant wine. Drink or hold. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.81 | Tenuta Sette Ponti Toscana Crognolo | 2012 |
| | <i>Richly layered, coloured, perfumed and sculpted, with dazzling red fruits, a great mouthfeel, silky tannins and exceptional balance. A tremendous follow-up to the superb 2011. Drink now, but best in 2017. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.82 | Banfi Toscana Summus | 2011 |
| | <i>A round, beautiful red with blueberry, light chocolate and blackberry character. Full body, super-fine tannins and a fabulous finish. Drink now or hold. (95 points)</i> | |
| No.83 | Cusumano Sicilia Tenuta San Giacomo Sàgana | 2012 |
| | <i>Fabulous aromas of mulberries, wet earth, blackberry and hot stones. Full body, velvety tannins and a juicy finish. The fruit balance is beautiful and so complex. The greatest nero d'avola ever made? Originates from the Butera area. About 14 months in large, 20-hectolitre casks. Drink or hold. (95 points)</i> | |