

Wine Spectator Insider

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FIRST LOOK AT OUR EDITORS' MOST EXCITING NEW WINES

Insider Special Report: Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001, Part II

This special edition of the Wine Spectator Insider features 2001 Brunello di Montalcino riservas. Brunello di Montalcino is the top appellation in Tuscany, and the Italian DOCG laws require that these Sangioveses stay in cask for at least 24 months, and are not released for at least four years. Riservas such as those featured here have aged for an additional year, usually in bottle. The 2001s are some of the best wines ever to come from Montalcino, notable for their structure, focus and balance, as well as their higher prices. (The normale bottlings are traditionally about half the price; a chart featuring the top 2001 Brunello di Montalcino normales is featured on page 3.) A report by James Suckling, Wine Spectator's lead taster for the wines of Tuscany, follows. With the exception of the Hot Wines, on page 4, all wines are listed in alphabetical order. For part 1 of this report, see the Feb. 7 edition of the Insider.

If you buy only one type of Italian wine this year, it should be Brunello di Montalcino riserva from 2001.

2001 is a great vintage for Tuscany (I rated it 98 points) and these are some of the most exciting young reds I have tasted in a long time. Like many of the 2001 Brunellos released last year, the riservas show impressive richness and power yet wonderful balance and length. They are extremely aromatic and beautiful as well as silky and structured.

I tasted 50 2001 Brunello riserva and single-designation wines and only five received less than 90 points. So

plenty of top wines should be available. The main difference between a riserva and normale bottling of Brunello is the extra year of aging before releasing on the market. This is usually done in bottle. In addition, many producers save their best wines of a particular vintage for the designation. Single-vineyard wines are just that: They are made from grapes from a specific area or site.

Buy at will, and enjoy the fruits of what is the best appellation in Tuscany at the moment.

—James Suckling

Le Gode

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

91 points | \$70 | 200 cases imported | Red

Soft and layered, with lovely berry, cherry and mineral character. Full-bodied, with fine tannins and a fresh finish. Racy and clean. Drink now through 2015.—J.S.

Livio Innocenti

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

91 points | \$75 | 40 cases imported | Red

Lots of blackberry and cherry aromas follow through to a full body, with silky tannins and a long, fresh berry finish. Best after 2010.—J.S.

Fattoria La Lecciaia

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

90 points | \$55 | 1,000 cases imported | Red

Very aromatic, with rose, blackberry and cherry on the

nose. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a long, juicy finish. Pretty wine already. Best after 2009.—J.S.

La Magia

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

90 points | \$72 | 100 cases imported | Red

Very attractive aromas of raspberry and flowers follow through to a full-bodied palate, with fine tannins and a caressing finish. Racy and harmonious. Very clean and well made. Best after 2010.—J.S.

La Mannella

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

88 points | \$60 | 50 cases imported | Red

Aromas of tar, crushed berries and licorice follow through to a medium-bodied palate, with fine tannins and a lightly chewy finish. Best after 2009.—J.S.

Mastrojanni

Brunello di Montalcino Schiena d'Asino 2001
90 points | \$65 | 300 cases imported | Red

Spice, blackberry and cedar aromas follow through to a full-bodied palate, with a balanced fruit and pepper aftertaste. Tough now. Give it a few years to soften. Best after 2008.—*J.S.*

Mocali

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
94 points | \$68 | 300 cases imported | Red

Fabulous aromas of crushed blackberries and cherries, with hints of licorice. Full-bodied, very silky and refined, with a long, long finish. Best wine ever from here. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Mocali

Brunello di Montalcino Vigna delle Raunate Riserva 2001
91 points | \$70 | 100 cases imported | Red

Berry and cedar character, with lots of vanilla and blackberry on the aftertaste. Full, chewy and long. Delicious. Best after 2009.—*J.S.*

Il Palazzone

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
92 points | \$109 | 295 cases imported | Red

Fantastic aromas of crushed blackberries with beautiful undertones of cream and vanilla. Full-bodied, with loads of new oak. Perhaps a little too much, but the wine has outstanding fruit and polished tannins. Best after 2009.—*J.S.*

La Poderina

Brunello di Montalcino Poggio Banale 2001
95 points | \$130 | 150 cases imported | Red

Dark in color. Intense blackberry aromas evolve into licorice, vanilla and cherry. Full-bodied, with gorgeous flavors and ultravelvety tannins. Goes on and on. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Poggio Antico

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
93 points | \$151 | 350 cases imported | Red

Gorgeous aromas of crushed blackberries, roses and minerals follow through to a full-bodied palate, with velvety tannins and a long, long finish. Rich, layered and powerful. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Poggio Nardone

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
91 points | \$72 | 200 cases imported | Red

Lots of bright and crushed fruit on the nose, with raspberry, cream and flowers. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a long, caressing finish. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

San Filippo

Brunello di Montalcino Le Coste Riserva 2001
91 points | \$90 | 140 cases imported | Red

Aromas of blackberry and mushroom follow through to a full-bodied palate, with layers of silky tannins and a medium finish. Very pretty now. Best after 2009.—*J.S.*

San Polino

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
91 points | \$125 | 60 cases imported | Red

Lots of tar, roses and crushed berries. Full-bodied, with big, velvety tannins and a long, lively and fruity aftertaste of blackberry, cherry and vanilla. Gorgeous stuff. New winery, and a great start! Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Tenuta di Sesta

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
93 points | \$68 | 120 cases imported | Red

Intense aromas of blackberry, spices and citrus follow through to a full-bodied palate, with silky tannins and a very long and caressing finish. Gorgeous wine. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Sesti

Brunello di Montalcino Phenomena Riserva 2001
88 points | \$90 | 80 cases imported | Red

Aromas of slightly stewed fruit follow through to a medium-bodied palate, with fine tannins and a medium finish. I like it already. Best after 2007.—*J.S.*

Talenti

Brunello di Montalcino Vigna del Paretaio Riserva 2001
93 points | \$90 | 250 cases imported | Red

Gorgeous aromas of crushed berries, spices and meat. Decadent. Full-bodied, with lots of ripe, velvety tannins that caress and coat your palate. Long and delicious. Solid and serious. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Terralsole

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
95 points | \$95 | 1,000 cases imported | Red

Beautiful aromas of crushed raspberries, cherries, vanilla and Indian spices. Full-bodied, with ultrasilky tannins and a long, long finish. Fantastic. This relatively new producer is doing things. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

Tornesi

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001
92 points | \$90 | 60 cases imported | Red

Loads of crushed raspberries with vanilla and hints of toasted oak. Full-bodied, with a beautiful core of ripe fruit and silky tannins. Long, rich and caressing. Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

La Torre

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

90 points | \$90 | 15 cases imported | Red

A pretty wine with lots of blackberry and cherry aromas and flavors. Full body, with fresh acidity and a medium finish. Fresh and lively. Best after 2008.—*J.S.*

Vitanza

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

93 points | \$90 | 60 cases imported | Red

Very intense aromas of crushed blackberries, raspberries and black licorice. Full-bodied, with racy and refined tannins that caress your palate. Long and silky. Harmonious wine. Best after 2009.—*J.S.*

James Suckling's Recommended 2001 Brunello di Montalcino Normales

WINE	SCORE	PRICE	WINE	SCORE	PRICE
VALDICAVA Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Black hued, with intense aromas of crushed berries and licorice with hints of oak. Full-bodied, with loads of fruit, velvety tannins and a long, long finish. Superb.	98	\$110	SILVIO NARDI Brunello di Montalcino Vigneto Manachiara 2001 Very ripe fruit here, with currant, berry and hints of coffee. Full-bodied, with velvety tannins and lots of fruit. Structured and seductive.	95	\$86
CASANOVA DI NERI Brunello di Montalcino Tenuta Nuova 2001 Dark color with intense blackberry, chocolate and lightly toasted oak. Full-bodied and ultravelvety, with caressing tannins. Vanilla, chocolate and berry. Goes on for minutes.	97	\$70	PININO Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Plum, raspberry and cherry. Hints of vanilla. Full-bodied, with silky, long tannins and a beautiful fruity finish. Very well-crafted red here.	95	\$NA
SIRO PACENTI Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Pure fruit here with lots of currant and berry. Full-bodied, with loads of fruit and velvety tannins.	97	\$70	PODERE SALICUTTI Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Lots of licorice, new wood and ripe fruit character follows through to a full-bodied palate, with masses of fruit and ripe tannins. This shows fantastic concentration and goes on for minutes.	95	\$100
ALTESINO Brunello di Montalcino Montosoli 2001 Very beautiful aromas of flowers, ripe fruit and crushed blackberries. Full-bodied yet refined. Layers of tannins. Balanced. Montosoli is a great Brunello vineyard.	96	\$106	SESTA DI SOPRA Brunello di Montalcino 2001 This is really serious, with a wonderful complexity of ripe fruit, licorice and cedar. Full-bodied, with ultrafine tannins and a long finish. Wood is dominating now but it's a beauty.	95	\$55
FANTI Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Fabulous aromas of blackberry, cherry, meat and dried flowers. Full-bodied, with masses of velvety tannins and loads of fruit. A blockbuster.	96	\$90	CASTELLO BANFI Brunello di Montalcino Poggio alle Mura 2001 Loads of blackberry and currant on the nose with hints of cooked fruit. Full-bodied, silky and refined with a beautiful structure and refinement. Goes on for minutes.	94	\$75
LA RASINA Brunello di Montalcino Il Divasco 2001 Blackberry, licorice and cherry with hints of vanilla. Full-bodied, with fabulous fruit and ultrafine tannins. This goes on for minutes on the palate.	96	\$80	MARCHESI DE' FRESCOBALDI Brunello di Montalcino Castelgiocondo 2001 Aromas of currant, berry and light vanilla. Full-bodied and structured. Fine tannins but not giving much now. This is big and powerful.	94	\$60
LA SERENA Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Very ripe aromas of plum, almost prune, with dried flowers and cedar. Full-bodied, soft and velvety with loads of fruit and a long, long finish. Best ever from here. Decadent and seductive.	96	\$50	LAZZERETTI Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Gorgeous aromas of blackberry, minerals and lightly toasted oak. Full-bodied, with fine tannins and a long finish.	94	\$NA
EREDI FULIGNI Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Currant, berry and raspberry follow through to a full-bodied palate, with firm yet silky tannins and a fresh finish. Goes on for minutes. Tight and concentrated.	95	\$80	LA RASINA Brunello di Montalcino 2001 Intense aromas of crushed blackberry and vanilla follow through to a full-bodied palate, with silky tannins and a long, refined finish.	94	\$50
LA GERLA Brunello di Montalcino Vigna gli Angeli 2001 Intense aromas of meat, blackberry and black pepper. Full-bodied, chewy and powerful. Loads of fruit and spices. Phenomenal. Best ever from here.	95	\$75			

HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in Wine Spectator Insider. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

Eredi Fuligni

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

97 points | \$143 | 300 cases imported | Red

Wonderfully perfumed with roses and blackberry and just a hint of wet earth. Full-bodied, with layers of silky tannins and a long, long finish. Structured. Hard not to drink now, but even better with a little more bottle age. Best after 2009. *From Italy.*—J.S.

Gianni Brunelli

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

96 points | \$120 | 200 cases imported | Red

Very classic Brunello with plum, dark cherries, flowers and citrus aromas. Full-bodied, with fabulous fruit and velvety tannins. Everything in the right place. Best ever from here. Best after 2012. *From Italy.*—J.S.

Lisini

Brunello di Montalcino Ugolaia 2001

96 points | \$137 | 30 cases imported | Red

Lots of black cherry and spices on the nose. Slightly raisiny. Full-bodied, thick and chewy, with lots of fruit and a long, long finish. Builds on your palate. Muscular and powerful, if a bit traditional in character. Best after 2011. *From Italy.*—J.S.

Capanna

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2001

95 points | \$70 | 200 cases imported | Red

Amazing aromas of citrus fruit, plum and berries. Full-bodied and very concentrated, with a long, rich aftertaste. This is big and powerful. Massive. Very impressive and much better than the 2001 normale. Best after 2011. *From Italy.*—J.S.

Wine Spectator's Tastings

Wine Spectator reviews more than 12,000 wines each year; our senior editors comprise the most experienced staff of professional wine tasters of any publication in the world. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed.

We always taste wines blind, in our offices in San Francisco, Napa, New York and Tuscany, and in the vineyard regions of Europe. This is your guarantee that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. We score wines using our 100-point scale, explained below.

James Laube Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

Kim Marcus Managing editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Southern France, Portugal

Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended

Thomas Matthews Executive editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: New York, Spain

James Molesworth Senior editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa, South America

Bruce Sanderson Tasting director, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1993. Tasting beat: Alsace, Austria, Burgundy, Champagne, Germany

Harvey Steiman Editor at large, San Francisco

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: Australia, New Zealand, Oregon, Washington

James Suckling European bureau chief, Italy

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Italy, Port

Tasting staff: **Jo Cooke** (Veneto), **Daniel Sogg**