

TOP 100 ITALIAN WINES OF 2017

Monday, December 4, 2017



This year's Top 100 Italian Wines of 2017 focuses on pure quality. We tasted so many great bottles of Italian wine in 2017 and rated more than 3,500 in total; so it was difficult to narrow it down to just 100 wines.

Tuscany was the leader of great wines from Italy in our tastings as its momentous wines from the 2015 vintage come onto the market after a weak 2014. Don't miss buying 2015 Tuscany. So many excellent wines are out there and more will be released next year.



We featured six Tuscan wines in our top 10 in the list to underline the region's leadership in ultra-premium Italian wines, here are some of them with Tua Rita Toscana Redigaffi 2015 topping the chart.

That's why our Italian Wine of the Year 2017 is the Tua Rita Redigaffi 2015, the pure merlot wonder from the Tuscan coast near the city of Grosseto. It was the only wine we rated 100 points this year from Italy, and it is a benchmark wine for its intensity, structure, pedigree and balance. In fact, we featured six Tuscan wines in our top 10 in the list to underline the region's leadership in ultra-premium Italian wines.

At the same time, 2013 is a beautiful vintage for Barolo and we included many great bottles in the Top 100 Italian Wines of 2017. None were better than the Aldo Conterno Barolo Cicala 2013, a long-time favorite in single-vineyard Barolos and a gorgeous 2013. Conterno is the master of this unique plot of land in the Bussia area of the region, and the latest release is perhaps the greatest Cicala ever with such power and harmony.

When it also comes to Barolo, we hope many of you are as excited as we are about the increase in well-aged, recently released bottles, particularly the 10-year-old ones. Consider the Damilano Barolo Cannubi Reserva 2009, for instance, which just reached the market now. We put it as our No. 8 Italian wine this year. It's a special selection from the Damilano family's large holdings of this very special vineyard and aged longer in reserved casks before bottling than normal bottles. What an amazing Barolo by all accounts! Indeed, a handful of other "super Riserva" bottles are in our list including: Gianni Gagliardo Barolo Serre 10 Anni 2007, **Marchesi di Barolo Barolo Sarmassa 10 Anni 2007** and Roberto Voerzio Barolo Riserva 10 Anni 2007.

We can't remember a Top 100 Italian Wines list from JamesSuckling.com with so many excellent white wines, which we hope will encourage more people to take Italian whites seriously. Great whites seem to be emerging from all over Italy from classic regions such as Soave and Campania to tiny islands off the Tuscan coast. The latter give us great pleasure to commend as we always enjoy visiting the islands of Gorgona and Giglio on the Tuscany coast and believe these unique terroirs are making some of the most exciting whites in Italy now. Gorgona is more than just a special place and a great wine — it is a bottle with a social purpose where winemaking is helping a penal colony rehabilitate into society.

Campania is another unique place in Italy that we are more and more excited about. I still have memories of early in my career visiting the volcanic region and marveling in the quality of ancient bottles of Taurasi from the 1950s. Although Montevetrano Colli di Salerno 2015, the No. 9 wine in the list, is only partially aglianico, it illustrates the pedigree and balance the grape can achieve in the right winemaker's hands.

We really are fans of volcano wines, which is why the list had to include a few Etna reds. The wines are still growing in popularity in the international marketplace, and this hasn't come without strides in quality. The appellation of Etna offers distinctive characteristics and harmony in both reds and whites — all from the slopes of a formidable live volcano in Sicily.

This year's JamesSuckling.com Top 100 Italian Wines is an inspiration to me after almost four decades as a wine critic. There are so many great wines out there. My team and I promise to taste even more Italian wines in 2018 to bring you the most comprehensive ratings of Italian wines in international wine criticism. Until next year, enjoy our 2017 list and don't forget to search for other great Italian wines released this year and in the past! — James Suckling, CEO/Editor

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Barolo Sarmassa 2007 ***10 Anni***

Score
96

Ripe fruit, meat, black truffle and dried strawberry aromas are really amazing. Full body, chewy and juicy tannins and a very long finish of dried mushroom, cedar and berry. Love it. Why wait? One for the cellar.

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