

Tuscan Reds

68 wines recommended from 242 new releases tasted by blind panel; reviewed by Joshua Greene.

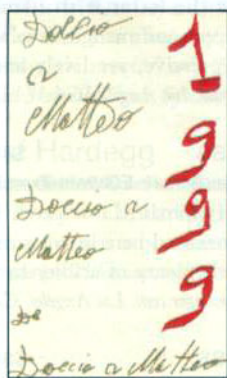


Il Molino di Grace wins 1st & 6th in latest blind tasting

Chianti Classico

93 | Il Molino di Grace \$51
2000 Chianti Classico Riserva Il Margone
 There's a quiet inner strength to this sangiovese-cabernet sauvignon blend, significantly more powerful than the new oak in which it hides. The red cherry sangiovese color, the red and black cherry length of fruit, the lovely richness and terse grip all stand substantially taller than the shield of oak. Young and beautiful, this has the balance and reserve to grow only more beautiful over the next ten years. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

93 | Tenuta di Nozzole \$40
2001 Chianti Classico Riserva La Forra
 Dark and concentrated, this is modern in its rich texture, classical in its aromas of cherries, wild mushrooms and roses. The scent is tightly focused and lasting, and the touch of chalky grit in the tannin gives it an aristocratic reserve. Decant this to enjoy with roast squab and porcini, or age it another five years. *Kobrand Corp., NY*



92 | Caparsa \$39
1999 Chianti Classico Doccia a Matteo Riserva
 The purple intensity of the color implies just how young and formidable the wine is. Its texture is as firm as it is broad, holding layers of dark herbs and smoky Chinese spices like cardamom and star anise in a long savor, the ripeness of the fruit in check. For pork in heaven (or, if you insist on more specifics, pork belly cooked to the perfect wobble then crisped; or simply roast suckling pig). *Artisan Wines, Norwalk, CT*

92 | Caparsa \$55
1997 Chianti Classico Doccia a Matteo Riserva
 Generous and spicy, this '97 is aging with grace. It still has plenty of tannin, along with a brisk freshness and roseate fruit. Air fills it out, a mature pleasure to decant for roast squab. *Artisan Wines, Norwalk, CT*

91 | Felsina \$30
2000 Chianti Classico Riserva
 The vintage ripened this wine to fullness. Air brings out the distinction behind its concentrated cherry flavor, settling the wine in the Classico hills. Even as it's bigger and fleshier than what might be typical, the stolid, mineral acidity and the scent of rose form a lasting impression. Ready for a steak, this will give more delicate pleasures with further age. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

91 | Il Molino di Grace \$39
2000 Chianti Classico Riserva
 In the mode of a super-Tuscan, this full-bore red layers oak toast over dark cherry fruit over oak tannins. It's savory, with a tough and weighty sangiovese power, gaining fruit intensity as it takes on air. The prominence of the oak recedes into sleek richness, the sophistication of the flavor continuing to evolve. This should be drinking best around ten years from the vintage. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*



91 | Torracchia di Presura \$26
2001 Chianti Classico Il Tarocco
 The depth of color carries through the wine with a bold richness and velvet texture. The robust fruit gains complexity with air, deepening to spiced plum, fig and date, and the

tannins lengthen in mineral density, almost saline in their quiet strength. Decant it for pasta with boar ragù. *Artisan Wines, Norwalk, CT*

90 | Antinori \$23
2003 Chianti Classico Pèppoli
 A fine performance in 2003, Antinori's Pèppoli offers the density and ripeness of the vintage with refinement. There's complexity in the floral, rose petal aromas surrounding full, rich fruit. Delicious with grilled fish finished in tomato sauce, or a grilled steak. *Rémy Amérique, NY*

90 | Caparsa \$29
2000 Chianti Classico Caparsino Riserva
 This is fresh for a 2000, with bright, firm cherry flavors underscored by plenty of mineral grip. The heavy oak blunts the wine for now, needing to be forgotten in a decanter for several hours or in the cellar for several years. Serve it with roast duck. *Artisan Wines, Norwalk, CT*



90 | Villa Mangiacane \$29
2001 Chianti Classico
 Soft with superripe tannins and sweet honeyed fruit richness, this voluptuous Chianti gains complexity and textural depth with air. It's a cold-weather red, the dusty herbal character of its tannins satisfying with steak Florentine. *Palm Bay Imports, Boca Raton, FL*

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89 | Capannelle \$40
2000 Chianti Classico Riserva
 Scents of new oak and fresh tobacco give this a cabernet sauvignon profile. The texture is velvety, the flavors under the wood tending toward soy and mushroom, along with spicy cherry.