



Italy, Miscellaneous: Loose Ends from 2021

A very busy year of Italian wine coverage comes to a close. Despite pandemic-related travel challenges and shipping delays, 2021 ended with a higher number of published reviews from Italy than anticipated. We published 40 articles from Italy this year, which is not quite one per every issue of our weekly magazine, but almost.

My goal this year was to maintain a continuous flow of Italian wine coverage and to shake things up with more videos, interviews with producers, spotlights, longer articles and more detailed producer notes to accompany the individual reviews.

The idea is to bring you more of the stories behind the bottles reviewed, and of course I plan to do the same in 2022. I hope to make the case that *Robert Parker Wine Advocate* offers the best possible coverage of Italian wine in terms of the quality of writing, timeliness and the accuracy of the reviews. And, I want to have some fun too by bringing more Italian culture and character into my reporting.

(...)

October 2021

By far, the biggest challenge of the year was typing, with a broken elbow, the 6,000 words of text and interviews found in my massive article on Tuscany's icons. If I could go back, I would not do it again; however, the article proved very popular with our readers. I am surprised by how productive this month ultimately proved to be. I started to experiment with a new format called "five questions" and used it to profile Poderi Luigi Einaudi and Giuseppe Mascarello of Barolo, Masciarelli of Abruzzo and Nittardi of Chianti Classico. I will definitely continue my Five Questions series in 2022. In October, I published my favorite article of the year on Sicily's Etna. If you read one article from me in 2021, that's the one I'd recommend.



Italian wine lost a brilliant winemaker, Andrea Franchetti, in December 2021. He was 72. I had featured his wines from Etna (Passopisciaro Vini Franchetti) in October, and that same month I gave Andrea's 2019 Tenuta di Trinoro from his estate in Tuscany a perfect 100-point score. I was shocked and saddened to learn of his unexpected death. Here, I am in a selfie I took with Andrea a few years back in Sarteano, Tuscany.