

Ian D'Agata's Best Italian Wines of 2021

The following wines have all made my "Ian D'Agata's best wines of the year list" for 2021. Most of these wines were released during 2021, though some might have come out for sale a little earlier (the year before); however, most should be still available in the marketplace and were in fact wines so good I felt I needed to tell you about them some more. I have selected randomly a number of wines below to have tasting notes, while all others I limit myself to the final score.

A word about the wines in this list, which is not a list of "Italian best wines" but a list of "Italy's best wines of the year". This means that there is a preponderance of wines in the list that come from specific territories, because those territories had a banner year in terms of growing season, making for a stellar vintage. These same territories may in fact have been under-represented last year because that vintage was not as memorable. This is why in this year's list you will find so many, and so many high-scoring, Brunello wines: because the 2016 vintage is one of the three or four greatest all-time for that denomination and it cannot be that a best of the year list is not top-heavy with many such wines. For the same reason, those awards doled out always in the same numbers, every year, to wines coming from the same important regions (important advertisement-wise too) despite the fact it rained non-stop there are, to put it charitably, less than useful.

*This specific list of wines was compiled through tastings of wines supplied by producers directly to me or through their importers. A number of wines on this list were assessed by two of my long time collaborators, **Emily Huang** in Taiwan and **Michele Longo** in Italy, with whom I have been tasting with for years and who I am proud to say I have trained, at least to the degree that I am comfortable in knowing how they will think, evaluate and score wines. The former is one of my better students who has progressively devoted herself to wine more and more, despite her father understandably preferring she stay in the family company; but her passion for Italy is such that she is not just working more and more in wine, but also actually learning to speak and write Italian and is doing splendidly at it (better than I am with Mandarin, though I am improving fast too). Michele Longo most of you are aware of: besides knowing each other for almost 20 years now and having penned four editions (at least, memory fails me now) as co-authors of the Italy section in "Hugh Johnson's Pocket Book of Wine" (world's best-selling wine guide with 34 editions and over 12 Million copies sold), he is also my co-author of "The Grapes and Wines of Italy: A definitive compendium region by region", the state of the art textbook on which to study Italian wine (available from Amazon Press, there is simply no better or more updated textbook with which to study Italian wines out there).*

I trust you will enjoy reading the list we have come up with, safe in the knowledge that some choices you will agree with and others you'll be shaking your head at. But therein lies one of the many beauties of wine, too.

(...)

Vini Franchetti 2019 Contrada P Terre Siciliane

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