

Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast

I found a lot to like in this year's crop of new releases from the Tuscan Coast. The best Vermentinos and Morellinos offer terrific value, while at the higher end, many of the region's reference-point wines turned out beautifully. Moreover, a greater emphasis on freshness yields contemporary wines that marry energy with the natural opulence that comes so easily on the coast, a pretty appealing combination in my book.

I have to say, I was especially taken with the wines of the Tuscan Coast I tasted for this article, despite not having been able to travel in the region as I did regularly prior to COVID-19. But, as with many articles I have written over these last two years, I actually found tasting in a neutral setting allowed me to focus on just the samples, without any outside distractions, and to appreciate the wines in a slightly different manner than in the past.

The first thing I noticed, as mentioned above, is a general move away from the opulence of years past in favor of an approach that gives more importance to delineation and vibrancy. To be sure, some of that is attributable to the character of recent vintages, but there does seem to be an effort to seek greater finesse through less extreme farming and gentler winemaking than was once the norm. Tuscany's coastal appellations naturally produce wines of generosity and volume, so having something to counter that richness can be quite compelling, as it is for many wines in this report.

On a less positive note, I was disappointed to see the continued use of excessively heavy bottles. I always chuckle (that is a polite term) when I see an estate that touts its sustainably farmed vineyards but then uses big, heavy bottles. Ordinarily, that would just be hypocritical. But in today's day and age, it is that and also just plain offensive. The production of glass is heavily reliant on natural resources. And then there is environmental impact of shipping these wines around the world. Even before today's environment marked by soaring inflation and war in Ukraine, the precarious position of the world with regards to climate change demands a more sensible and thoughtful approach to packaging. It's time for those oversize bottles to go.



Recent Vintages

Tuscany is a very large region, so vintage descriptions are general at best. Even so, it seems pretty clear to me that 2019 is more exciting on the coast than it is inland in regions such as Chianti Classico. The 2019s are aromatic and a touch lighter than most years, but that is not a bad thing here, while quality is more consistent than it is elsewhere. After a wet and cool spring, most winemakers reported more favorable conditions in summer, with less rain than seen in inland regions and diurnal shifts at the end of the season, which led to a slightly later harvest by present-day standards. The balance of the best 2019s is compelling.

Two-thousand eighteen is an irregular vintage marked by a cool growing season and quite a bit of rain. Quality is inconsistent, and yet the top estates found a way to make gorgeous wines in the restrained style of the year. It's too early to have a complete view on 2020, but the first releases I have tasted suggest a vintage of mid-weight structure.

Although this article focuses on the coast, I have also included a number of wines from regions further inland, closer to Chianti Classico. For the sake of both completeness and easy reference, all reviews previously published in my 2019 Tuscany Preview article have been moved into this report.

2020 Campo di Tenaglia

96

Drinking Window
2025 - 2040

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2020 Campo di Tenaglia is a heady, explosive wine. Soaring Cabernet Franc aromatics make a strong first impression. Deep and layered, with tons of intensity, the 2020 opens beautifully with time in the glass. Beams of tannin lend energy through to the focused finish. This is such a promising wine.

- By Antonio Galloni on July 2022

Andrea Franchetti is no longer with us, but his spirit is very much alive in these new releases from Tenuta di Trinoro. I usually don't have a chance to taste two vintages side by side, but doing so was really quite instructive. In general, the 2020s are quite rich and potent, while the 2019s offer greater aromatic intensity and more finessed tannins. The three Cabernet Franc selections are so individual and expressive, while the flagship Palazzi and Tenuta bottlings are blends that are in a sense more complete. Speaking of the Tenuta, the estate has decided to push back the release of that wine until next year, which is why a review does not appear here. Last, but certainly not least, the Le Cupole captures all the personality of the top wines but at a more modest price. More than anything else, though, what I love about these wines is how distinctive they are. Andrea Franchetti crafted wines of uncompromising character throughout his remarkable career. These new releases perfectly embody that vision.

2020 Campo di Magnacosta

95

Drinking Window
2025 - 2040

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2020 Campo di Magnacosta is a wine of depth and gravitas. Dark cherry, lavender, spice, sage and leather fill out the layers. There's terrific breadth and volume here, but also a good bit of tannin that needs time to soften. I would not be in a rush. This is an especially virile expression of Franc.

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2020 Campo di Camagi

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Drinking Window
2025 - 2040

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2020 Campo di Camagi shows notable density and yet remains very much medium bodied in overall structure. Dark cherry, plum, menthol, licorice, spice and mocha meld together in a wine that offers notable richness and textural presence, with maybe a bit less aromatic display than some of the other wines.

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2020 Palazzi

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Drinking Window
2025 - 2040

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2020 Palazzi is packed with dark fruit, cloves, leather and bittersweet chocolate. Rich, deep and quite potent, the 2020 is another extroverted wine in this range. There is some grittiness in the tannin, otherwise, the 2020 is very nicely done and quite promising, especially if those tannins soften.

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2020 Le Cupole

92

Drinking Window
2022 - 2030

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2020 Le Cupole is a rich, flavorful wine. Super-ripe dark cherry, plum, espresso, incense and chocolate are front and center. There's not much subtlety here, but then again I am not sure that is the goal, either. This flamboyant red will be a joy to drink right out of the gate.

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2019 Tenuta di Trinoro

97+

Drinking Window
2027 - 2039

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2019 Tenuta di Trinoro is a surprisingly reticent wine. That's not a descriptor I find myself reaching for often here, but it seems appropriate. Medium in body and quite nervy, the 2019 is going to need time to come together. The tannins are a bit severe at this stage. And yet there is plenty of Trinoro intensity waiting to emerge. Time brings out hints of dark-fleshed fruit, spice, mocha, licorice and incense. There's plenty to look forward to.

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2019 Palazzi

97

Drinking Window
2025 - 2039

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2019 Palazzi is a classic Trinoro wine, with maybe a bit less bombastic intensity than some of the earlier wines, but all of the seamless elegance that has long made these reds so compelling. All the elements are wonderfully put together in the 2019, a wine that impresses with its mix of elegance, flamboyant intensity and sheer allure. I loved it.

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2019 Campo di Tenaglia

97

Drinking Window
2025 - 2039

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2019 Campo di Tenaglia is elegant, silky and wonderfully polished. Bright red-toned fruit, blood orange, mint, spice, incense and rose petal are all finely sculpted in a Cabernet Franc that impresses with its delineation and focus. Although a bit reticent at first, the 2019 opens beautifully with time in the glass.

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2019 Campo di Camagi

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Drinking Window
2025 - 2039

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2019 Campo di Camagi is another highlight in this range from Trinoro. Bright and effusive in its aromatics, the 2019 is all class. Sweet red cherry fruit, cedar, tobacco, anise, blood orange and cinnamon lend brightness. I especially admire the delineation here. The 2019 is not a huge wine. It doesn't need to be.

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2019 Campo di Magnacosta

94+

Drinking Window
2025 - 2039

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2019 Campo di Magnacosta comes as very tightly wound. Bright red/purplish toned fruit, chalk, mint and white pepper lend notable and salivating energy to this decidedly focused Franc. It's amazing to see just how expressive these wines are with regards to site and vintage. Let's see if this fleshes out a bit more with time.

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2019 Le Cupole

92

Drinking Window
2024 - 2034

From: Tuscany: New Releases from the Coast (Jul 2022)

The 2019 Le Cupole offers a beguiling mix of intense red-fleshed fruit intermingled with sweet floral, spice and citrus notes that lend brightness. Medium in body and silky, the 2019 is one of the most restrained, polished Le Cupoles I can remember tasting. In that sense, it is the total opposite to the much more opulent 2020.

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