



WINE ENTHUSIAST MAGAZINE / FEBRUARY 2013 / 2008 BRUNELLO DI

MONTALCINO: A 90-POINT VINTAGE

2008 Brunello di Montalcino: A 90-Point Vintage

Wine Enthusiast's Italian Editor, Monica Lerner, tastes more than 250 of the highly anticipated Tuscan bottlings.

Published on Jan 31, 2013
BY MONICA LARNER

The 2008 Brunello di Montalcino—arguably Italy's favorite wine—has just hit the market, and producers of this celebrated Tuscan appellation are presenting these anticipated bottlings at Benvenuto Brunello—an event taking place on January 31 at Gotham Hall in New York City. Follow-up tastings will occur in Italy next month. So will the new vintage be as well received as the soft, rich wines of 2007 and the elegant, refined wines of 2006?

As *Wine Enthusiast Magazine's* Italian Editor—I was one of the first to taste these new wines just shortly after their official release date on January 1. I rate the 2008 vintage of Brunello di Montalcino 90 points out of 100.

Austerity—an overused word in the corridors of European government and finance agencies these days—happens to perfectly describe these wines. The 2008 summer was cool and moderate in temperature, and there were hailstorms and showers at certain locations on the southern side of the appellation just before harvest, resulting in wines with high acidity and bright berry tones.

“The 2008 wines are austere,” says Giancarlo Pacenti, vice president of the Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino and a Brunello producer. “Sangiovese is a variety that shows naturally high acidity, so the challenge in a vintage like this is keeping that freshness in check.”

Indeed, some wines do show a nervous vein of sharp acidity, but they are well balanced by plump, ripe fruit tones of cherry and blackberry.

“Acidity can be a determining factor in the longevity of a Brunello,” says vintner Donatella Cinelli Colombini. “The key, however, is finding wines that show balance and harmony in the manner that acidity is delivered.”

The Consorzio seems to think the 2008 shows that balance, scoring the vintage four out of five stars. The 2006 and 2007 vintages both received five stars from the Consorzio, and I awarded them 93 points and 95 points, respectively.

Be sure to check out more than 250 Brunello reviews in the May 2013 issue of *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*, or visit the [Buying Guide](#) on April 1. In the meantime, here’s a sneak peak of my top Brunello and Riserva Brunello picks.

2008 Brunello di Montalcino

91 **Abbadia Ardenga 2008 Vigna Piaggia (Brunello di Montalcino).**
Peter Warren Selections.
abv: 14% Price: NA