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Estratto: Lupicaia 2021 conquista il 47° posto nella classifica “Top 100 Wines of Italy 2026” selezionati da James Suckling e dal senior editor Aldo Fiordelli, con il punteggio di 98



CASTELLO DEL TERRICCIO

TOSCANA

Top 100 Wines of Italy 2026: Pride of Place 100 TASTING NOTES Wednesday, Sep 16, 2026



James and Roberto Guerrini Fuligni of Eredi Fuligni toast our Italian Wine of the Year, the Eredi Fuligni Brunello di Montalcino 2021

Almost everywhere in the wine world, you hear the same thing: young people don't drink wine. But perhaps we should be asking a different question. What kinds of wines are they drinking when, and if, they do?

Wine is a traditional world, and trends should always be treated with some caution. But it would be foolish to ignore what is happening. Behind the interest in organic, biodynamic and natural wines is a broader demand for authenticity. Many people, young and old alike, are looking for wines that feel real – wines that not only taste good but also inspire.

More people today want wines with a clear identity – wines that speak first of their place and vineyard. Winemaking comes second. And the idea of styling a wine simply to fit a particular taste seems increasingly out of step.

That change is easy to see in many of Italy's best wines. Winemakers, members of the wine trade and consumers increasingly talk about where great wines come from and what makes those places distinctive. They also look for more transparency in the wines themselves. Oak is being used with greater restraint. Ancient vessels such as amphorae have returned to cellars. And growers are paying closer attention to picking grapes at the moment when ripeness, freshness and tannins are in balance.

The vineyard, once again, is at the center of the conversation.

The excessive ripeness, extraction and alcohol that marked many wines in the past are increasingly difficult to find among Italy's best bottles. Climate change obviously plays an important role in determining ripeness and alcohol levels, but many winemakers are doing their best to mitigate its effects and make balanced wines. Many of Italy's leading producers today are making wines that are fresher, clearer and less heavy.



Roberto Giannelli, the owner of the San Filippo winery in Montalcino, (left, with Senior Editor Aldo Fiordelli), holds the San Filippo Brunello di Montalcino Riserva Le Lucere 2021, our No. 2 Italian wine. (Aldo Fiordelli photo)

We looked for all of the above in choosing our Top 100 Wines of Italy for 2026 from about 7,000 Italian wines we tasted during the past year – out of the more than 30,000 wines in total we have rated.

We tasted throughout the country, from the Isarco Valley in Alto Adige in the extreme north to Vittoria in southeastern Sicily, which is roughly on the same latitude as parts of the North African coast. Few wine countries can match Italy for its diversity of grapes, soils, climates and traditions. We personally tasted the majority of the wines considered for this list, with the help of our fellow wine critic Andrii Stetsiuk.

Among the many Italian wines and vintages we reviewed coming onto the market, one stood above the rest: Brunello di Montalcino 2021.



James and Roberto Voerzio check out his beautiful vineyards in La Morra. Voerzio made the No. 3 Roberto Voerzio Barolo Brunate 2022. (James Suckling photo)

For us, 2021 is one of the best Brunello vintages of the past two decades, producing wines with impressive structure, freshness and balance. Three 2021 Brunellos are in our Top 10, including our Italian Wine of the Year, the Eredi Fuligni Brunello di Montalcino 2021.

It was a clear choice for No. 1. The wine combines exceptional quality with excellent availability and a reasonable price, particularly considering its pedigree. It sells for slightly less than \$100 a bottle, and about 40,000 bottles were made. Fuligni has long been one of our benchmark Brunello producers, making harmonious wines that drink beautifully when young yet age effortlessly for decades.

The other two 2021 Brunellos in our Top 10 are the San Filippo Brunello di Montalcino Le Lucere 2021 at No. 2 and the Giodo Brunello di Montalcino 2021 at No. 7.

Tuscany is also represented by one of the great icons of the fine-wine world: Tenuta San Guido's Bolgheri-Sassicaia Sassicaia 2023 at No. 5. The wine combines the refinement, freshness and pedigree that have made Sassicaia an international benchmark for decades.

One of the other surprises of our tastings this year came from Barolo's 2022 vintage. It was an extremely dry and early growing season that year, and our expectations were understandably cautious. The vintage seemed unlikely to be remembered among Barolo's greatest. Yet nebbiolo proved remarkably resilient and produced some exciting wines.

The best 2022 Barolos have wonderful precision and immediate appeal. They may not have the depth of the greatest vintages, such as 2021, but they can be beautifully aromatic, fresh and refined.

Roberto Voerzio's Barolo Brunate 2022, our No. 3 wine, is one of the best examples of just how impressive the vintage can be in the hands of a great grower. G.B. Burlotto's Barolo 2022 at No. 6 is not far behind.

The year also reminded us of the beauty of traditional Barolo blends. In recent decades, much attention has been given to wines from individual crus, but blending fruit from different vineyards can create its own complexity and completeness. It can be particularly valuable in a challenging year such as 2022, bringing together the strengths of different sites.

The superb quality of nebbiolo in 2021 is also reflected in the Produttori del Barbaresco Barbaresco Paje Riserva 2021 at No. 10, a single-vineyard Barbaresco of exceptional depth and precision.

For white wines, Alto Adige was one of the strongest regions of the year, placing two wines in our Top 10: Cantina Terlano's Alto Adige Terlaner I Grande Cuvée 2023 at No. 4 and J. Hofstätter's Gewürztraminer Alto Adige Vigna Pirschrait 2016 at No. 8.

The Terlaner I Grande Cuvée is clearly on the same level as some of the best white Burgundies, but the Hofstätter Vigna Pirschrait is particularly fascinating because it shows what gewürztraminer can achieve at the highest level in Italy. The grape is sometimes dismissed as an easy-drinking, aromatic white, but the greatest examples can stand among the world's finest white wines.

And, of course, our Top 10 – of our Top 100 – would be incomplete without a great Etna red. Tenuta delle Terre Nere consistently delivers. Its Etna Rosso Calderara Sottana Prephylloxera La Vigna di Don Peppino 2024, at No. 9, is one of Italy's true unicorn wines, made from ancient vines in a singular terroir that is almost impossible to replicate.

You may notice that some of Italy's most famous wines are not in this year's Top 100, including Masseto, Biondi-Santi, Bruno Giacosa, Roagna and Monfortino, among others. Their absence does not reflect their quality. We simply tried to focus on wines selling for less than \$400 a bottle.

You will notice other omissions as well. Keep in mind that the list is based not only on ratings but also on price and availability. We generally tried to select wines with production of at least 250 cases. When wines received similar scores, we gave preference to bottles that people can actually find and buy. Availability and value matter in our final ranking.

And we consider something more subjective as well: what we actually want to drink and which wines move us emotionally.

After all, wine is meant to be opened and drunk at the table. When a wine touches your heart, it gives you something beyond a score. Perhaps younger drinkers understand that better than we sometimes think.

– *James Suckling, Editor & CEO, and Aldo Fiordelli, Senior Editor*

The list of wines below is comprised of bottles tasted and rated over the last 12 months by the [JamesSuckling.com](https://www.jamesuckling.com) tasting team. You can sort the wines below by score, vintage and alphabetically by winery name. You can also search for specific wines in the search bar.

47 CASTELLO DEL TERRICCIO TOSCANA LUPICAIA 2021

Score
98

Tuesday, Jun 09, 2026

Color Red

Country  Italy

Region Tuscany

Vintage 2021

An intense wine with aromas of underbrush, myrrh, lavender, rosemary, flowers, bramble fruit and hints of leather and cloves. Full-bodied and velvety with elegant tannins, refreshing acidity and a long, savory finish that's muscular and grainy yet sweet and juicy. Drinkable now, but it will be at its peak in 10 years.

Aldo Fiordelli
Senior Editor