



PODERE POGGIO SCALETTE
RUFFOLI - GREVE IN CHIANTI

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TASTING REPORT: 100 NEW TOP SUPER TUSCAN REDS TO BUY

July 3rd, 2013

The best Super Tuscan reds this year (90 points or more), from the heart of Italy's most popular wine region, look to be outstanding quality thanks to two excellent vintages just coming out on the market – 2010 and 2009. The 2011s and 2012s also look promising.

Many 2010s are surprisingly concentrated even though the growing season was cooler than normal. It seems many of the top producers picked very late, leaving their grapes on the vine longer to achieve more ripeness. By comparison, the 2009s are rich and fruity with loads of character due to a much warmer growing season compared to 2010.

"It was a very cool and very late growing season," said Axel Heinz over the telephone to me, who is the winemaker of Tenuta dell'Ornellaia, the great wine estate of Bolgheri. Its pure Merlot, Masseto, is the best wine I've tasted so far from Tuscany. "Not only on the harvest but the entire growing season were rather cool, and the Merlot did better than the Cabernet Sauvignon. We picked the Merlot after September 20 and finished around October 4."

It's this choice for a later harvest that is making many wines I have tasted from Tuscany so impressive. They have a richness and concentration yet remain fresh and agile. The tannins are almost creamy in texture due to the extended time on the vines – or "long hang time" as some New World winemakers call it.

Granted, I have not tasted that many Sangiovese-based reds this year from the 2010 vintage. Most of the reds I have reviewed so far are international varieties such as Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, or Syrah. And they were very exciting from the top producers. However, I do have a hunch that the Sangioveses are going to be equally compelling.

"Sangiovese was really beautiful in 2010," said Carlo Ferrini, one of the top consulting enologists in Italy, whose winemaking hand helps dozens of the top names in Tuscany. "Sangiovese was really excellent in 2010. It produced gorgeous wines with perfumes, fruit and beautiful acidity. Look at how great the wines are from (Sangiovese) regions such as Vino Nobile, Brunello di Montalcino and Chianti Classico. They have such great harmony. The 2010 could be better than 2007, 2006 or 1997."

I am not sure about that. But I am impressed with what I tasted so far this year from the vintage. The only issue with picking too late is when the fruit and tannins become over-extracted during the winemaking processes should the winemaker macerate for too long. In the past this has made wines that I have found a little too thick and jammy – like some overdone Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignons. But let's wait and see.



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In any case, what I can say is that the much hotter 2011 vintage yielded some wonderful Sangioveses in addition to the 2010. For example, a new pure 2011 Sangiovese from Petrolo stood out in my tasting for this report – Bogginanfora. The wine is made from grapes grown in a small single vineyard on the estate about 30 minutes south of Florence and fermented and aged in ceramic amphorae. The clarity of fruit and finesse of tannins is fabulous in this small-production wine.

"Both 2010 and 2011 made some excellent wines," said owner and winemaker Luca Sanjust of Petrolo. "Perhaps it's better to speak about specific vineyards than areas or producers in a specific vintage. Tuscany nearly always has good to outstanding vintages. It should be a question of understanding what vineyards made the best grapes and thus the best wines."

95/100 IL CARBONAIONE 2010 IGT ALTA VALLE DELLA GREVE

Super aromas of crushed raspberries, blackberries and violets. Full body, with intense and dense palate of dark fruits and super polished tannins. Goes on for minutes. Always superb. 100% Sangiovese. Truly excellent. Better in 2015.

Super aromi di lamponi spremuti, more e viole. Corpo pieno, con gusto intenso e denso di frutti scuri e super tannini levigati. Va avanti per minuti. Sempre superb. 100% Sangiovese. Veramente eccellente. Meglio nel 2015.

Super-Aromen von zerdrückten Himbeeren, Brombeeren und Veilchen. Ganzkörper, mit intensiven und dichten Gaumen nach dunklen Früchten und Super poliert Tanninen. Geht für Minuten. Immer super. 100% Sangiovese. Wirklich hervorragend. Besser im Jahr 2015



90/100 CAPOGATTO 2010 IGT ALTA VALLE DELLA GREVE

I like the aromas of dried fruits with hints of dried flowers and dried spices. Full body, with velvety tannins and a medium finish. Very approachable now but give it two or three years. Blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and Cabernet Franc.

Mi piacciono gli aromi di frutta secca con sentori di fiori secchi e spezie essiccate. Corpo pieno, con tannini vellutati e un finale medio. Molto avvicinabile ora ma diamogli due o tre anni. Blend di Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot e Cabernet Franc.

Ich mag die Aromen von getrockneten Früchten mit Noten von getrockneten Blüten und getrocknete Gewürze. Ganzkörper, mit samtigen Tanninen und einem mittleren Abgang. Sehr zugänglich, aber jetzt gebe es zwei oder drei Jahren. Cuvée aus Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot und Cabernet Franc.

