

all is in balance. Just give it time to come together; best after 2002.—J.S.

**94 Fattoria Petrola Toscana Galatrona 1997 \$50**  
A big and juicy Merlot, with loads of blackberry, cherry and mint as well as new oak character and hints of tar. Full-bodied, with full, polished tannins. Voluptuous and sexy, but needs time to calm down. Best after 2000. 250 cases made.—J.S.

**94 Fattoria Petrola Toscana Torrone 1997 \$42**  
An exotic and voluptuous Sangiovese. Wonderfully ripe on the nose, with masses of plums, berries and figs, and hints of new oak. Full-bodied and chewy, with tons of fruit and velvety tannins. Long, long finish. Massive. Best after 2000. 1,200 cases made.—J.S.

**93 Fattoria Montellori Toscana Salamartano 1997 \$43**  
This gorgeous Bordeaux blend has ripe fruit throughout, with berry, plum and blackberry character and a hint of smoke. Full-bodied, with masses of caressing, polished tannins and a long, long finish. A real beauty. Best after 2000.—J.S.

**93 Agricola Quercilabella Toscana Camartina 1995 \$NA**  
A big and juicy red. Always a blockbuster. Dark in color, with chocolate, berry and cherry character. Full-bodied and very chewy, with loads of fruit and tannins. Long finish. Cabernet. Needs time. Best after 2002. 1,250 cases made.—J.S.

**93 Riecio Toscana La Gioia 1997 \$53**  
Super class in a glass. Wonderful aromas of berry, cherry, raspberry and mint. Full-bodied, with very fine tannins and a long, long aftertaste of ripe fruit and mint. Best from 2000 through 2005. 1,030 cases made.—B.S.

**93 Tenuta di Trinoro Toscana 1997 \$75**  
The Tuscan answer to new-wave St.-Emilions. A wine loaded with big, velvety tannins and ripe fruit. Full-bodied and chewy, with a long plum and cherry aftertaste. Very impressive. Best after 2002.—J.S.

**92 Castello di Ama Toscana Vigna l'Apparita 1996 \$146**  
This big and concentrated Merlot is more like a raisiny dry Port. Enticing aromas of mushroom, a hint of oak and ripe, almost dried fruit. Full-bodied, with tough, chewy tannins and a long, fruity finish. A bit rustic but outstanding. Best after 2003.—J.S.

**92 Eredi Fulligni Toscana Rosso San Jacopo 1997 \$NA**  
A new wine from one of the best producers in Brunello. Big, chewy and chocolaty, with masses of berry and plum character. Full-bodied and mouthpuckering, with lots of tannins and a long finish. Pure Sangiovese pleasure. Give it time. Best after 2001. 1,200 cases made.—J.S.

**92 Antico Podere Gagliole Toscana 1997 \$60**  
A tough and powerful red built for aging, with reserved aromas of berry and mint. Full-bodied, with a powerful, compacted fruit and tannin structure. Long, long finish. Best after 2000. 1,500 cases made.—J.S.

**92 Fattoria Pogglopiano Toscana Rosso di Sera 1997 \$44**  
A big, boisterous Sangiovese, with loads of blackberry, spice and toasted oak character. Full-bodied, with a thick, velvety tannin structure and a

long finish. A beauty. Best after 2000. 800 cases made.—J.S.

**92 San Fabiano Calcinaia Toscana Red Cerviolo 1997 \$36**  
Can't keep my hands off this. Full-bodied, with gorgeous velvety tannins, loads of berry, cherry and vanilla character and a caressing texture. Best after 2000. Wonderful blend of Sangiovese, Cabernet and Merlot. 2,500 cases made.—J.S.

**92 Tenuta Valdipiatta Toscana Trincerone 1997 \$33**  
A fabulous Sangiovese, with aromas of violet, berry and cherry. Medium- to full-bodied, with velvety tannins and a long aftertaste of chocolate and cherry. Best after 2001. 330 cases made.—J.S.

**92 Castello di Verrazzano Toscana Sassello 1997 \$50**  
A wonderful Sangiovese, with a super structure. Ink in color, with intense aromas of crushed blackberry, mint, currant and cherry. Full-bodied, with loads of silky tannins and a long berry, currant and mint finish. Best after 2000. 500 cases made.—J.S.

**91 Capezzano Toscana Ghiaie della Furba 1997 \$50**  
An excellent Cabernet, with all the berry, currant and spice character you can expect. Full-bodied, with lovely tannins and a long currant and vanilla aftertaste. Best after 2000.—J.S.

**91 Cecchi Toscana Spargolo 1997 \$38**  
Delicious and soft, with loads of plum, berry and vanilla character. Medium- to full-bodied, with caressing tannins and a long, fruity finish. Give it a bit of bottle age. Best after 2001. 1,600 cases made.—J.S.

**91 Gualdo del Re Toscana Federico Primo 1996 \$30**  
Big and rich, with decadent aromas of ripe fruit, tobacco and meat. Full-bodied and loaded with fruit and round, velvety tannins. Long, long finish. Merlot and Sangiovese. Best after 2000. 650 cases made.—J.S.

**91 Isole e Olena Cabernet Sauvignon Toscana Collezione de Marchi 1996 \$40**  
A cerebral, wonderfully textured Cabernet. Dark, with loads of currant, mint and dried herb aromas. Medium- to full-bodied, with smooth, silky tannins and a long currant, berry and raspberry aftertaste. Best after 2000. 1,000 cases made.—J.S.

**91 Fattoria Petrola Toscana Torrone 1996 \$40**  
An outstanding Sangiovese, with gorgeous aromas of crushed berry and flowers and hints of toasted oak. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a solid core of fruit. Very classy. Best after 2000. 1,667 cases made.—J.S.

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# Wine Spectator

## LETTERS

### Garage Days

James Suckling makes a comparison between Bordeaux (Médoc) and Garage Wines (St.-Emilion) in his column "Do We Need Garage Wines in 2000?" (Sept. 15). It is difficult to make such a comparison as they are different styles of wine. The top growths of Médoc are in a Fort Alamo position; all the other wines are the Indians surrounding the fort. The new *garagistes* are Crazy Horses—real wine people who want to emphasize throughout a maniacal viticulture and a maniacal winemaking those categories of wine appreciation that appeared when the California winemakers decided to break the *terroir* concept (which has been the key marketing point of the Bordeaux growers), and made the wine world a more alive and vibrant scene.

The *garagistes* and/or the cult winemakers (also the Europeans) are the Californians of the global world. The new cult wines are all over the place. Their importance is that they try to make high quality wines from nontraditional *terroirs*. They represent a new era of wine making. They are not like the château owners of Bordeaux or the aristocratic families of Tuscany, who have to

defend a tradition of hundreds of vintages. For these above reasons, collectors will always look for the few bottles, the impossible-to-get and high-priced new wines—therefore, we do need "garage wines in 2000."

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