



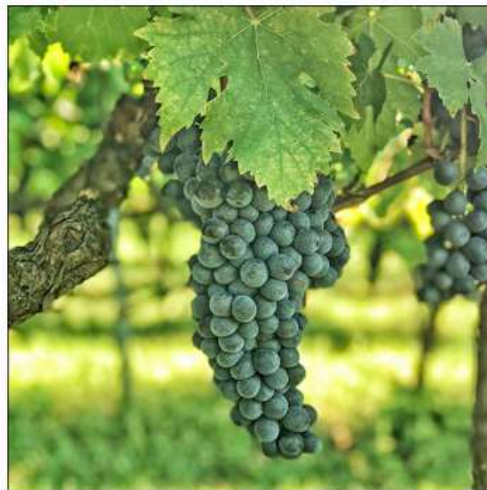
### MONICA LARNER

19th Sep 2019 | The Wine Advocate | September 2019 Week 3

"You can't get a plant to grow by pulling on its leaves," a friend once counseled me. By its very definition, growth happens organically, spontaneously and naturally. Those words came to mind as I tasted through the 248 beautiful wines presented in this article.

This is an exceptional group of wines that mark an exciting chapter for Chianti Classico. The momentum behind this region is just phenomenal, and as I have argued in past essays published as part of my annual coverage of this premier Tuscan region, no other Italian wine appellation matches Chianti Classico at the moment for its sense of excitement, innovation and, dare I say it, unity of vision. There is a level of excitement and energy here that reminds me of a nascent wine region (like Etna, for example). That electricity is impossibly rare to find in a wine region like the storied Chianti Classico, now past its 300th birthday.

The Chianti Classico flower is ascending with strength and vigor and promises to dazzle us soon with the full splendor of its precious blooms.



*Sangiovese is the belle of the ball in Chianti Classico. Her worthy suitors are the irresistibly charming and courtly Merlot and the gallant and chivalrous Cabernet Sauvignon. The flirtatious courtship between this threesome of grapes is intensifying, and as it does, the Chianti Classico territory gains in prestige and visibility.*

It is my pleasure to submit this list of my top ten wines from the region, representing the iconic 2016 vintage. Most are included in this report, and a few were published a bit earlier in the year (with links included below for your reference). As you can see, my top-scoring wines represent a pretty even spread between the indigenous grape Sangiovese and the international grapes (such as Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon) that are so beautifully expressed in Tuscany.

However, this grouping of ten wines does seem to greatly favor the IGT wines, as opposed to those made under the Chianti Classico appellation regulations. Among my top-scoring wines, there are eight IGT Toscana wines and just two Chianti Classico Gran Selezione expressions.

1. **Fontodi 2016 Flaccianello della Pieve** – Sangiovese [here](#)
2. **Marchesi Antinori 2016 Solaia** – Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon with smaller parts Sangiovese and Cabernet Franc
3. **San Giusto a Rentennano 2016 La Ricolma** – Merlot
4. **Castello di Ama 2016 L'Apparita** – Merlot
5. **Felsina 2016 Fontalloro** – Sangiovese [here](#)
6. **Montevertine 2016 Le Pergole Torte** – Sangiovese
7. **Castello di Ama 2016 Chianti Classico Gran Selezione Vigneto Bellavista** – Sangiovese
8. **Fattoria La Massa 2016 Giorgio Primo** – 50% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Petit Verdot
9. **Fontodi 2016 Chianti Classico Gran Selezione Vigna del Sorbo** – Sangiovese [here](#)
10. **Isole e Olena 2016 Cepparello** – Sangiovese

My top ten list is not radical or remarkable. The individual wines listed here are indeed exceptional, but my grouping most likely reflects similar preferences expressed by my peers and colleagues. Furthermore, this same grouping of ten wines would probably remain virtually unchanged, or with few changes, even if compiled in a vintage less successful than the extraordinary 2016.

These are the steadfast icon wines of this part of Tuscany, and most of them have enjoyed long and fruitful track records as such.

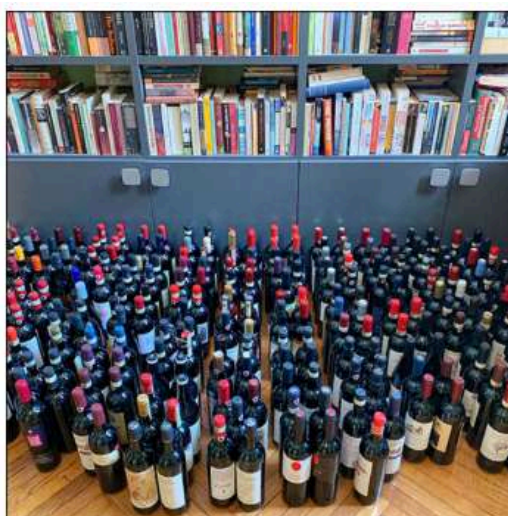
Let me return to the plant metaphor: "You can't get a plant to grow by pulling on its leaves." I feel as if too much has been done to "pull on the proverbial leaves" of the Chianti Classico appellation. Faced with increased competition from neighbors such as Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti Classico engaged in a series of aggressive steps to reshape the quality pyramid of the appellation and to give greater territorial identity to its top-tier wines. A few years back, Chianti Classico Riserva was the top product in the quality hierarchy. Starting in 2012, a new category called Chianti Classico Gran Selezione became the highest-placed wine, downgrading Riserva to a mid-level category.

The Gran Selezione idea was always controversial, and today there are conflicting reports as to its real measurable success. It has undoubtedly brought fortune from the bottom up, elevating little-known wines to the top-tier Gran Selezione status. But it has done little to move the qualifying, Sangiovese-based iconic IGT Toscana wines "down" to Gran Selezione status.

To call Gran Selezione a full success, in my view, wines like Flaccianello della Pieve, Fontalloro, Le Pergole Torte, Cepparello (on my list above) and Tignanello would at least consider becoming part of the Gran Selezione grouping. For various reasons specific to each producer, none of them ever did.

Herein lies my eternal optimism when it comes to the Chianti Classico wine region. Despite the many tugs, twists and wrestles with its leaves, the plant continues to grow healthily and steadily at its own natural pace. The wines show a level of sophistication and elegance that defy vintage, variety and appellation rules. They aspire to a greater level of excellence that can be defined by a single factor: *Territorio* (or geography).

This is the quintessential land of the Italian icon wine, and no amount of fussing or fretting has changed that simple truth. All we need to do is wait and watch it grow.



*In years past, I published my Chianti Classico reviews at the end of October. This year, I am able to present my results six weeks earlier than usual. The wines reviewed in this report were tasted at my home in Rome at the end of July and the beginning of August. My sincere thanks go to Silvia Fiorentini and the excellent team at the Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico who collected these samples.*

I am including a few links to previous articles for further reference. Last year, I declared Chianti Classico my favorite Italian wine territory [here](#). The year before that, I wrote an essay on the importance of the *comuni*, or villages of Chianti Classico, as a key to understanding the subzones of the appellation [here](#). In 2016, I recalled the long history of the appellation that celebrated its 300th birthday [here](#). In 2015, I discussed the newly introduced Gran Selezione category in greater detail [here](#). Lastly, I would refer you to my 2014 article [here](#) that gives basic information on the appellation and explains the difference between Chianti and Chianti Classico, two distinct concepts that are too often confused.









*Pici al ragù di cinghiale (pasta with wild boar sauce) is a local dish that makes a perfect companion to food-friendly Chianti Classico. Not only is the wine naturally high in the acidity needed to refresh the palate after such hearty flavors, your efforts go to reducing the wild boar population. Wild boar are a disruptive force in the local ecosystem and one of the biggest nuisances faced by vintners.*



# 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro

2017







[WA Tasting Notes \(1\)](#) | [Other Tasting Notes \(0\)](#) | [My Tasting Notes](#)

Rating	Release Price	Drink Date
95	NA	2020 - 2038
<b>Reviewed by</b>  <a href="#">Monica Larner</a>	<p>This is a beautiful wine with infinite depth. Born in a hot and dry vintage, the 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro (a blend of 69% Cabernet Franc, 23% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Sauvignon) never steps over the line into jammy or overripe territory. In fact, the wine is masterfully restrained and elegantly managed. Andrea Franchetti dealt with a harvest that, as he put it, yielded "tiny berries, all skin and seeds and no juice." I only feel the heat of the vintage in the tannins, which are a bit dryer and more astringent in this wine. This full-bodied Tuscan red boasts deep layers of black fruit, spice, tar and campfire ash. About 7,000 bottles were made. Give the wine an extra year or two of bottle aging to allow those tannins to soften up just a bit.</p>	
<b>Issue Date</b> 19th Sep 2019		
<b>Source</b> <a href="#">September 2019 Week 3, The Wine Advocate</a>		
<b>Importer Information:</b>	<b>T. Edward Wines</b>  66 West Broadway #406, New York, NY 10007  (212) 233-1504  (646) 349-5073  <a href="mailto:info@tedwardwines.com">info@tedwardwines.com</a>  <a href="http://www.tedwardwines.com">www.tedwardwines.com</a>	

# 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro • Bianco di Trinoro

2017

[WA Tasting Notes \(1\)](#) | [Other Tasting Notes \(0\)](#) | [My Tasting Notes](#)

Rating	Release Price	Drink Date
92	NA	2019 - 2025
<b>Reviewed by</b>  <a href="#">Monica Larner</a>	<p>Here's a surprise from an estate that has made quite a name for itself in the world of full-bodied red wines from Tuscany. Indeed, the 2017 Bianco di Trinoro by Andrea Franchetti comes out of left field. (And with only 1,000 bottles made, only the lucky will catch sight of one.) Fermented in steel and aged on the lees in a series of glass demijohns, this pure expression of Semillon surprises for its lightness, brightness and crispness, and it's ultimately a white wine that represents a direct opposite to the Trinoro staple of reds. However, this is not a simple wine. Indeed, it offers many layers of intensity with stone and tropical fruit followed by creamy pastry. It should be interesting to watch its evolution over the next five years.</p>	
<b>Issue Date</b> 19th Sep 2019		
<b>Source</b> <a href="#">September 2019 Week 3, The Wine Advocate</a>		
<b>Importer Information:</b>	<b>T. Edward Wines</b>  66 West Broadway #406, New York, NY 10007  (212) 233-1504  (646) 349-5073  <a href="mailto:info@tedwardwines.com">info@tedwardwines.com</a>  <a href="http://www.tedwardwines.com">www.tedwardwines.com</a>	

## 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro • Campo di Camagi

2017

[WA Tasting Notes \(1\)](#) | [Other Tasting Notes \(0\)](#) | [My Tasting Notes](#)

Rating	Release Price	Drink Date
94	NA	2020 - 2038
<b>Reviewed by</b> 👤 <a href="#">Monica Lerner</a>	Of these three single-vineyard Cabernet Francs, the 2017 Campo di Camagi is a uniquely complete and satisfying wine. As you should expect, the wine is dense, dark and inky black in appearance. In the case of this Cabernet Franc, the bouquet shows an extra degree of focus and detailing with crushed stone and faint mineral at the back of blackberry and prune. Like the other wines in this series from the hot 2017 vintage, the tannins show some dryness and tightness. A scarce 1,400 bottles were made.	
<b>Issue Date</b> 19th Sep 2019		
<b>Source</b> <a href="#">September 2019 Week 3, The Wine Advocate</a>		
<b>Importer Information:</b>	<b>T. Edward Wines</b> 📍 66 West Broadway #406, New York, NY 10007 📞 (212) 233-1504 📠 (646) 349-5073 ✉ <a href="mailto:info@tedwardwines.com">info@tedwardwines.com</a> 🌐 <a href="http://www.tedwardwines.com">www.tedwardwines.com</a>	

## 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro • Campo di Magnacosta

2017

[WA Tasting Notes \(1\)](#) | [Other Tasting Notes \(0\)](#) | [My Tasting Notes](#)

Rating	Release Price	Drink Date
94	NA	2020 - 2035
<b>Reviewed by</b> 👤 <a href="#">Monica Lerner</a>	One of three single-vineyard expressions of Cabernet Franc from Andrea Franchetti, the 2017 Campo di Magnacosta shows unique power. Only 1,700 bottles were made of this wine, coming from vines grafted with cuttings brought over about 20 years ago from Pomerol, an age-old French home of Cabernet Franc. The wine brings forth aromas of dried blackberry and plum backed by spice, smoke, tar and licorice. It is streamlined and focused in terms of mouthfeel, carrying its considerable weight with steady and even strides.	
<b>Issue Date</b> 19th Sep 2019		
<b>Source</b> <a href="#">September 2019 Week 3, The Wine Advocate</a>		
<b>Importer Information:</b>	<b>T. Edward Wines</b> 📍 66 West Broadway #406, New York, NY 10007 📞 (212) 233-1504 📠 (646) 349-5073 ✉ <a href="mailto:info@tedwardwines.com">info@tedwardwines.com</a> 🌐 <a href="http://www.tedwardwines.com">www.tedwardwines.com</a>	



## 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro • Campo di Tenaglia

2017

[WA Tasting Notes \(1\)](#) | [Other Tasting Notes \(0\)](#) | [My Tasting Notes](#)

Rating	Release Price	Drink Date
95	NA	2020 - 2038
<b>Reviewed by</b> 👤 <a href="#">Monica Larner</a>	The 2017 Campo di Tenaglia (100% Cabernet Franc) is a thick and muscular wine with the definition and drive of a racehorse. This beautiful wine has a thick load of black fruit and tarry spice that hits the senses all at once, immediately releasing whichever hormone it is that drives you to involuntarily start the grill and defrost a ribeye steak. Once you've had time to adjust to the power of the wine, you begin to sense the depth and complexity at hand. That inky black fruit breaks down to reveal exotic spice, cured tobacco and black licorice root. The tannins here are a bit softer compared to the other two wines in this series, and this wine is slightly more accessible, but not by much. Only 1,600 bottles were made.	
<b>Issue Date</b> 19th Sep 2019		
<b>Source</b> <a href="#">September 2019 Week 3, The Wine Advocate</a>		
<b>Importer Information:</b>	<b>T. Edward Wines</b> 📍 66 West Broadway #406, New York, NY 10007 📞 (212) 233-1504 📠 (646) 349-5073 ✉ info@tedwardwines.com 🌐 www.tedwardwines.com	

## 2017 Tenuta di Trinoro • Le Cupole

2017

[WA Tasting Notes \(1\)](#) | [Other Tasting Notes \(0\)](#) | [My Tasting Notes](#)

Rating	Release Price	Drink Date
93	NA	2019 - 2030
<b>Reviewed by</b> 👤 <a href="#">Monica Larner</a>	A blend of Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot, the 2017 Le Cupole is a gorgeous wine with thick, dark intensity and a sense of bright energy nonetheless. The wine pours from the bottle with midnight darkness. The bouquet offers soft, ripe and opulent fruit, but considering the heat and the drought associated with this vintage, the fruit is expertly managed. There are no jammy overtones or overtly ripe aromas as I had expected, and the tannins are velvety and subdued. Serve it alongside a gnocchi alla chiantigiana (with tomato, ground beef, garlic, pecorino and sage). Production was an ample 69,226 bottles with this one.	
<b>Issue Date</b> 19th Sep 2019		
<b>Source</b> <a href="#">September 2019 Week 3, The Wine Advocate</a>		
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