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# 15 Enticing Tuscan Values

New reviews of buy-by-the-case reds and whites from Italy priced at \$20 or less



Photo by: Sandro Michahelles

Il Palagio's Sting and Trudie Styler blend Sangiovese, Syrah and Merlot into Message in a Bottle.

*Bruce Sanderson*

Posted: September 23, 2016

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This selection of recent releases from Tuscany ranges from IGT Toscana to DOCs and DOCGs. All these reds and whites are priced at \$20 or less and are widely available. They encompass fruity, contemporary reds such as Il Palagio's Message in a Bottle and Rocca dell Macie's Morellino Campomaccione, along with more traditional styles from Tenuta Bibbiano and Castello di Querceto.

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**CASAL DI PARI Montecucco Tenuta L'Impostino 2011 Score: 93 / \$18**

Aromas of cherry, plum and licorice turn to sweet orchard fruit on the palate. Tar, leather and graphite notes add complexity, allowing this to cruise to a long aftertaste. Shows fine harmony and expression. Drink now through 2020. 400 cases imported.—B.S.

**VILLA PILLO Toscana Borgoforte 2014 Score: 91 / \$12**

Enticing aromas of violet, black currant and rosemary are accented by licorice and tobacco flavors in this fluid and harmonious red, with fine tannins gracing the long finish. Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2022. 6,000 cases imported.—B.S.

**IL BORRO Syrah-Sangiovese Toscana Pian di Nova 2013 Score: 90 / \$19**

A smooth, exuberant red, boasting raspberry, cherry and black pepper flavors tinged by earth. Vibrant, fresh and balanced, with a fruity, minerally finish. Drink now through 2020. 2,500 cases imported.—B.S.

**MIDA MILANO Chianti Rufina Grignano 2013 Score: 90 / \$18**

This is appealing, with smoky cherry, strawberry, wild herb and mineral aromas and flavors. Deftly balanced and effortless, lingering on the moderately firm finish. Drink now through 2020. 500 cases imported.—B.S.

**MONTE ANTICO Toscana 2012 Score: 89 / \$13**

Cherry, strawberry, tobacco, white pepper and earth flavors turn to spice on the compact finish. A light dusting of tannins completes the profile. Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2019. 75,000 cases made.—B.S.

**IL PALAGIO Toscana Message in a Bottle 2013 Score: 89 / \$20**

Offers intense aromas of violet, bilberry and black currant, with flavors reminiscent of candied black currant. Vibrant, exerting grip on the moderately long finish. Sangiovese, Syrah and Merlot. Drink now through 2019. 3,000 cases imported.—B.S.

**ROCCA DELLE MACIÈ Morellino di Scansano Campomaccione 2015 Score: 89 / \$16**

The bright raspberry and blackberry fruit is accented by spice and tobacco notes. Firm yet balanced, with a lingering finish of earth and tobacco. Sangiovese, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2020. 12,500 cases made.—B.S.

**TENUTA BIBBIANO Chianti Classico 2014 Score: 88 / \$19**

Pretty cherry and plum fruit is accented by leather and earth notes. Iron and sanguine details creep in as this plays out on the long finish. Drink now through 2020. 1,000 cases imported.—B.S.

**COL D'ORCIA Toscana Spezieri 2015 Score: 88 / \$16**

A bright, fruity style, exhibiting cherry, berry, spice and light tea notes. Supple and approachable now, with light tannins coating the finish. Sangiovese and Ciliegiolo. Drink now through 2018. 5,000 cases made.—B.S.

**CASTELLO DI QUERCETO Chianti Classico 2014 Score: 88 / \$16**

Black cherry, blackberry, tobacco and leather notes plumb the dusty depths of this red. Shows richness for the vintage, despite a compact finish. Drink now through 2019. 8,000 cases imported.—B.S.

**SALCHETO Toscana Obvius 2015 Score: 88 | \$19**

A rich, fruity style, this red boasts black cherry, blackberry and spice flavors. Open and accessible, with a hint of tobacco on the finish. Sangiovese. Drink now. 1,250 cases imported. —B.S.

**STRACCALI Chianti Classico 2014 Score: 88 | \$15**

A fluid, elegant red, sporting cherry, strawberry and earth flavors. Offers a fine Sangiovese character, with moderate length. Drink now. 6,500 cases made. —B.S.

**BIBI GRAETZ Toscana Casamatta Red 2015 Score: 87 | \$15**

Rich in texture, this red boasts cherry, blueberry and floral flavors. Straightforward, with an immediate appeal and pleasant astringency. Sangiovese, Merlot and Syrah. Drink now. 4,000 cases imported. —B.S.

**BIBI GRAETZ Toscana White Casamatta 2015 Score: 87 | \$15**

This pungent version offers spice, white pepper, peach and grassy flavors. Fresh and moderately long on the finish. Vermentino, Trebbiano and Moscato Bianco. Drink now. 4,000 cases imported. —B.S.

**ROCCA DELLE MACIÈ Toscana Rubizzo 2015 Score: 87 | \$13**

This balanced red offers ripe cherry, raspberry, tobacco and almond flavors, with good structure and moderate length. Sangiovese. Drink now through 2018. 23,000 cases made. —B.S.

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