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ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST  
IMPORTANT WINE REGIONS, TUSCANY  
IS HOME TO SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST  
CELEBRATED & SOUGHT AFTER WINES.

Wines have been produced in Tuscany for more than 3000 years, first by the Etruscans, followed by the Greeks, and later by the Romans, and have always been considered among Italy's best. The wines have ranged from red to white and then back to mostly red, due to the fact that the principle Tuscan grape is the fabled red Sangiovese, the backbone of Tuscan wine production.



As few as five decades ago, numerous consumers identified Tuscany's wines by the colorful fiascos (wicker flasks) that identified many Chianti bottles, most of which were very basic red wines. A lot of the wines were produced by large wine cooperatives, who utilized the grapes from many small growers in their area. Then, the main emphasis was on volume and not necessarily quality. But, in terms of wine years, that time was long ago and today's Tuscan wines are on par with many of the finer wines from even the most exalted wine producing countries.

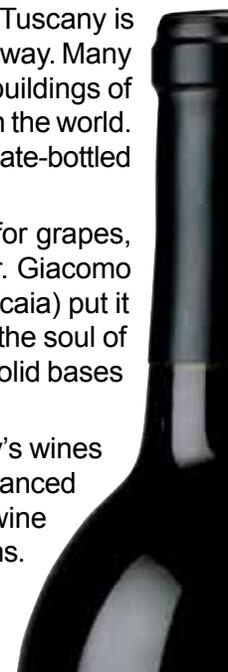
Chianti continues to be Tuscany's premier wine but it is a far cry from its older version. Tight new laws of appellation (DOC in 1963, DOCG in 1984) have made the region among the most controlled in the country and have given rise to a new wave of high quality wines that grace stores and fashionable restaurants.



Incredibly similar to its California look alike Napa Valley, Tuscany is quite hilly and built around the ancient Florence to Siena highway. Many wine estates abound, complete with rustic red clay topped buildings of historical distinction and easily among the most identifiable in the world. Like Napa Valley, these wine properties produce their own estate-bottled wines that are much sought after.

Many wine experts consider Tuscany the near-perfect growing area for grapes, due mostly to its location and excellent combination of climate and water. Giacomo Tachis, the greatest Italian wine expert (inventor of the perfect wine Sassicaia) put it thusly: "Here there is light, the sun. Radiant sunlight and the right soil are the soul of wine. But the tradition of the countryside and the memory of men are the solid bases of the extraordinary Tuscan wine culture."

If all of the above factors are put together, it is easy to see why Tuscany's wines carry such elevated credentials. International competitions have further enhanced many Tuscan wines' reputations and even the super-selective British wine press has often praised the nobleness of many of Tuscany's prized selections.





Tuscany is also among the most visitable places in the wine world. A short drive south from Florence and the majesty of the Tuscan countryside spreads out before you like a cover from a travel magazine. There are so many small, ambient places to stay that it is unnecessary to count. A savory local cuisine that is designed to accompany Tuscany's range of great wines makes the trip even more unbelievable. The settings are incomparable, the foods rich and delicious and the wines simply complete some of the great gastronomic experiences in life.

Tuscany's varied wine selections comes in both reds and whites, but the reds are the true masterpieces of the region. Where the soils vary slightly, so do the resulting wines and the inevitable comparisons are made from neighbor to neighbor. Two DOCG Chianti Classicos, made just miles apart, can



have totally different characteristics, a fact that adds to the area's allure.

## Tuscan Wine Region

The fact that Tuscany contains six DOCG appellations and thirty DOC speaks volumes as to its prestigious place in Italian wine hierarchy. Some of the DOCG names are considered the very finest in the country, i.e., Chianti Classico, Brunello di Montalcino, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and Carmignano. The actual Chianti DOCG has another seven sub-classifications, each with its own particular blend of soils and climate. As you might imagine, there is great rivalry and competition between the producers and estates of the region who often contend head to head in international competitions.



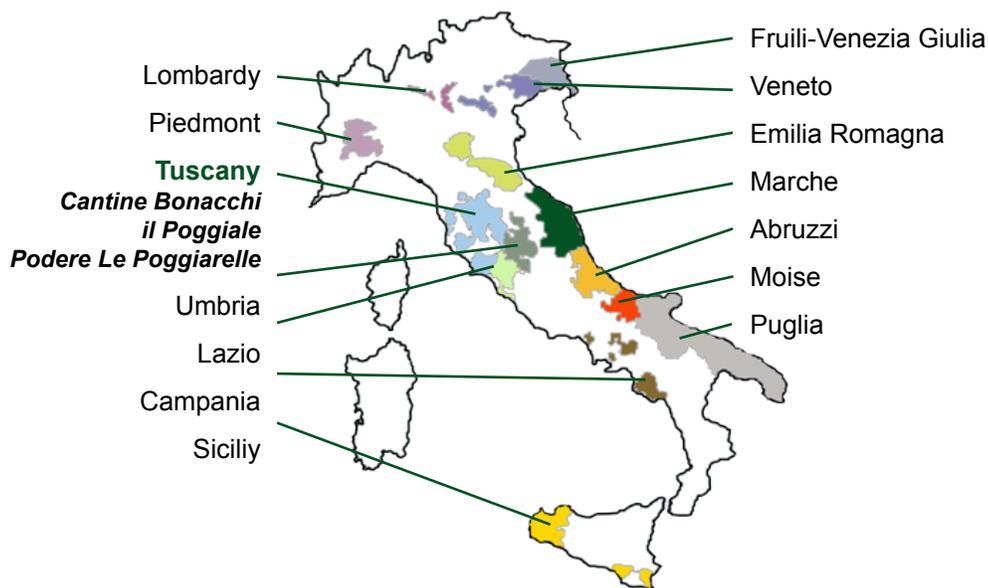
The actual topography starts in the northern slopes of the Apennine Mountain Range and runs toward the Mediterranean Sea with numerous limestone sedimentary formations that are ideal for growing vines. Small pockets that contain the area's moisture provide additional microclimates for the varied root stock.

In addition to the incredible amount of Sangiovese grown in Tuscany, small amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon, Canaiolo, Ciliegiolo, Mammolo and Vernaccia are also grown. While most of Tuscany's grape production is red, the region's outstanding white is certainly the highly regarded Vernaccia di

*Continued*

## wine regions of Italy

Italy is home to more than twenty designated wine regions, each producing an incredible range of wine styles and indigenous cuisines that are largely due to the country's extensive geographic characteristics. The wide-ranging topography, from coastal to mountainous, the differing soil conditions, and the moderate Mediterranean climate provide an ideal basis for premium grape growing and contribute to the production of over 350 grape varieties. The wines derive not only from native vines, which represent an enormous array, but also from a complete range of international varieties. Italy's glowing reputation with wine is due not only to the fact that it produces and exports more than any other country, but that it offers the greatest variety of wine types, ranging through nearly every color, flavor and style imaginable.



### Photos top to bottom, left to right:

- Sunset over the Tuscan countryside.
- A traditional Tuscan villa sits atop a hill of thriving vineyards.
- A Chianti vineyard in the heart of Tuscany.
- Chianti Riserva wines must age for at least 2 years in barrique barrels.
- A Carmignano hill in Tuscany.
- Map of Italian wine regions.
- Chianti wines were traditionally bottled in wicker flasks called fiascos.
  - Bonacchi's 2004 Chianti Riserva label.
  - The flags of Italy and Tuscany.

## Italy: Fun Facts!

- The city of Naples gave birth to the pizza.
- The average Italian consumes half a pound of bread a day.
- Today's modern Italian language originated in the region of Tuscany.
- With almost 40 million visitors, Italy is the fourth most visited country in the world.
- Italy is home to two microstates, San Marino and Vatican City.
- The ice cream cone is an Italian invention.
- The average Italian consumes 26 gallons of wine a year.
- The area around Venice is the wealthiest region in Europe.
- Over 75% of Italy is mountainous or hilly.
- Italy has a population of over 58 million.
- Italy has been making wines for over 2800 years.
- Italy has over 2000 grape varieties planted.
- Europe's only three active volcanoes, the Etna, the Stromboli and the Vesuvius, are all in the South of Italy.
- There are over 140 types of pasta made in Italy.

## reading an Italian wine label

Although Italian wine labels must display necessary information like the producer's name and type of wine, another helpful distinction is the quality classification. To guarantee and protect the origin of Italian wines, an appellation system was established to classify all types of wine according to region, quality, zones, and grape variety. This appellation system was developed by the Denominazione di Origine Controllata (DOC) wine legislation and helps regions to develop their own specific identity. Wines that meet the strictest standards are classified as DOCG and must pass a blind taste test for quality in addition to conforming to the strict legal requirements to be designated as a wine from the area in question. Other classifications include DOC, IGT, and Vdt which are more focused on defining the wine's geography, rather than the varietal composition.



*Continued from Tuscan Wine Region*

San Gimignano, considered among Italy's greatest white wines. There is also a special holy wine, or *Vino Santo*, a dessert delicacy usually made from Trebbiano grapes that have been left to dry in an airy place until the start of Holy Week before being made into wine.

Greve in Chianti is effectively the market town of the Chianti Classico wine area. Unlike the majority of Chianti towns, Greve is located on the floor of a valley instead of on a hill top, about half-way along the scenic Chiantigiana highway (SS 222) that runs from Florence to Siena.



## the flag of Italy



The Italian flag was first established during the Napoleonic Wars by French republics in northern Italy, who styled it after the French tricolor. The colors chosen by the Republic were red and white, the colors of the flag of Milan, and green, which was the color of Milanese civic guard uniforms. In 1848, the design was adopted by the house of Savoy, which went on to lead the Italian unification. The present flag was adopted in 1946, when Italy became a republic.



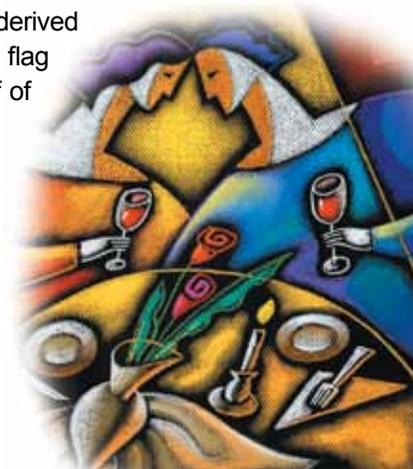
Tuscany's regional flag displays a Pegasus symbol in the center, bordered by horizontal red stripes. The Pegasus image was taken from a coin made by the Florentine artist Benvenuto Cellini in 1537, and it was also the symbol of the

Tuscan National Liberation Committee during the Second World War. The red stripes are thought to be derived from the red-white-red triband of the Austrian flag and was adopted by Tuscany in the latter half of the 18th Century.



*Salute!*

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# TUSCANY'S TOP PRODUCERS RELEASE REMARKABLY TRADITIONAL WINES OF DISTINCTIVE REGIONAL STYLE.

## Azienda Agricole il Poggiale

Shortly after World War II, the Finocchi Family purchased the il Poggiale vineyards and winery that had been part of the famous and huge Barco Reale Vineyard. The Barco



Reale dated back to the 1600's and was part of the vast royal Medici Vineyards. Many of the same vines planted then are still producing grapes to this day and are among the most treasured in all of Italy. Il Poggiale was initially divided into three distinct sections, one planted in Morello, the second in Trebbiano and the final in Cabernet Sauvignon and Malvasia del Chianti, both used for blending.

The dexterous Trebbiano grape produces a marvelous white wine that rivals any in the Carmignano District and indeed the entire country. The wine has been a dominant factor in international competitions and is highly respected throughout the entire wine world. In a country not particularly known for its whites, the il Poggiale Trebbiano is considered among the elite of Italian whites.

Il Poggiale is known as such due to the fact that it is situated on a series of small poggi, or knolls that cascade through the hills of Carmignano and is the local way of saying 'the house on the side of the hill.'

## Podere Le Poggiarelle

Since it is located only 5 kilometers (slightly over 3 miles) from il Poggiale, it seems reasonable that the two winery names sound similar. Also part of the Medici royal vineyards, Le Poggiarelle Vineyards were acquired by the Favillini Lenzi Family in 1970. The name Le Poggiarelle is a diminutive way of saying 'several small hills.' Additionally, the vineyards had been abandoned for more than a



decade when the Lenzi family bought the property. These vineyards were first planted in the ninth century in a zone that also supported wonderful olive trees that produced splendid olive oil. The entire farm has been restored to its former beauty and historical setting down to even the smallest detail.

Today, Le Poggiarelle's entire production is completely organically produced, where no phytochemicals are used in its production, which is a relative rarity in Italy. For decades, its wines have fared well at international levels and its Carmignano DOCG is considered the region's superior red wine.

By the way, the olive oil produced at Le Poggiarelle is also considered among the superior olive oils in the entire country, no mean feat in olive-rich Italy.

## Cantine Bonacchi

Our third selection is the Cantine Bonacchi 2004 Chianti Riserva, produced from Cantina Bonacchi's modernistic winery in Quarrata, a town in the Montalbano Hills, in the very heart of the Chianti production zone. Cantine Bonacchi and owner/winemaker Andrea Bonacchi own 60 hectares



(a little over 148 acres) of vineyards, 40 in the Montalbano zone and 20 in the Classico Gallo Nero along with additional vineyards in Montalcino near Sienna.

While Chianti can trace its origins back to the middle ages, in 1716 the area became officially recognized. In 1932, a ministerial decree gave it added importance. To be an accredited Riserva, the wine must be aged two years in oak barrels, then another three months in bottles and must have a minimum alcoholic content of 12 %. This wine is produced from one of Cantine Bonacchi's premier vineyards and is 100% Sangiovese. The Bonacchi Chianti Classico DOCG has performed well on the international wine stage and is considered one of the top Chiantis to be found anywhere in the world.

*The International Series features specially-selected imported hard-to-find wines  
of the world for members of the Gold Medal Wine Club.*

**International Series**

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small wineries since 1992"*



# International Series featured Italian wines

## **Carmignano** (car-mee-NYAH-no)

*Carmignano is Italy's smallest appellation, and also one of the oldest. Centuries ago, these valuable wines were reserved mostly for members of the Italian Royal Families.*



Enjoy now until 2015

## **Podere Le Poggiarelle 2005 Carmignano**

A classic Italian gem from the Carmignano Hills of Tuscany, the Podere Le Poggiarelle 2005 Carmignano is classified as one of the most prestigious and sought-after DOCG red wines in Italy today. Made with the finest selection of grapes, this is a traditional, classic style Carmignano blend of Sangiovese (70%), Cabernet Sauvignon (15%), Canaiolo (10%), and Merlot (5%). Deep ruby red in color with a full, rich body, this Carmignano's bouquet is well structured with great intensity and persistence. The aging in French oak barriques brings a perfect marriage of red ripe fruit flavors, wild berries, vanilla and spice and there is a nice presence of tannins that linger on the long, pleasant finish. Try pairing with roasted or gilled meats and savory pasta dishes. Aged 12 months in oak, 6 months in bottle.

### REORDER

- **Member Price:** \$55.00 /bottle\* **Save 31%**
- **Multi-Series Member Price:** \$48.00 /bottle\* **Save 40%**

## **Chianti** (kee-AHN-tee)

*Chianti is a wine of extremely ancient origin, and must be produced with at least 80% Sangiovese grapes.*



Enjoy now until 2012

## **Bonnacchi 2004 Chianti Riserva**

To be called "Riserva," Chianti wines must be aged for at least two years in barrique barrels, and three months in bottle prior to release. This extended aging helps achieve the classic old world style, character and complexity, and the Bonacchi 2004 Chianti Riserva is an excellent example of a traditional Chianti Riserva. Brilliant ruby red color in color, this Chianti Riserva is intense, with lingering aromas of delicious fruit and spiced notes, true to its old world characteristics. Elegant and well balanced, this wine is fruit forward and soft, with gentle tannins that are in nice balance with subtle flavors of vanilla, cocoa, and spice. Try pairing with Florentine style steak, roasts, and pasta. 100% Sangiovese.

### REORDER

- **Member Price:** \$20.00 /bottle\* **Save 23%**
- **Multi-Series Member Price:** \$18.00 /bottle\* **Save 31%**

## **Trebbiano** (treb-bee-AH-no)

*Trebbiano is also known as Ugni Blanc, St. Emilion, White Hermitage, and White Shiraz in other countries.*



Enjoy now until 2011

## **Il Poggiale 2007 Trebbiano (white)**

Il Poggiale's 2007 Trebbiano was produced in an old world style with the dominant white grape of Tuscany. Trebbiano grapes originated in Tuscany and now account for almost a third of all white wine in Italy. This classic white wine is from estate grown, hand-selected grapes and displays a subtle straw yellow color with light golden reflections, clear and transparent, and vivacious in its hues. A delicate aroma, fresh and fruity, with hints of peach, white melon, and citrus persists on the nose. The flavor is consistent with the bouquet, with sharp tangy notes, bright citrus fruits and well-balanced hints of minerals. This incredibly refreshing white wine leads into a smooth, crisp, clean and pleasant finish. Try pairing the Il Poggiale 2007 Trebbiano with shellfish and roasted meats.

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