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## My name is...Sangiovese: A Fine Evolution



Castello Banfi Il Borgo vineyard in Montalcino, Tuscany

**A**s Tuscany's classic wine grape — though it is also grown in other parts of the world and Italy, especially in Romagna, northeast of Tuscany — Sangiovese's reputation has changed with the years. It was once blended with Trebbiano, a white grape, and too-robust reds to drown out its tart flavors. After a bit of aging, the color dilution resulted in a tired brown hue. *This all changed once the grape was given its due attention.*

A bit of history: Until the mid-20th century, Sangiovese was purely for blending; and while it still is blended, albeit with carefully chosen grapes, it is also used solo. In the late 19th century, Biondo Santi championed Sangiovese, grown on a Montalcino hilltop, ranging in elevation from 500 to 2,000 feet. Tannic and color-saturated, this late maturing

clone needs long aging time in barrel and bottle. *Brunello di Montalcino* — *brunello* a diminutive of *brun*, referring to its color — became a quiet star from Montalcino's hilltop microclimate. Mid-1970s, Piero Antinori experimented with aging to give rise to a more modern version. Today, it's made with different aging methods, climate-clone dependent.

Sangiovese clones were studied to pinpoint different flavor and ripening characteristics to determine a good match to specific conditions. Those with softer, fruitier notes would gain structure in higher altitudes, while more acidic varieties benefit from warmer temps. This research led to the grape's purer expressions over the last couple decades, and it is now a sought after wine in its many

iterations: Chianti Superiore, Chianti Classico, Chianti Classico Riserva, Rosso di Montalcino and Brunello di Montalcino. Banfi's line of weeknight-friendly to special occasion Sangiovese is an ideal way to experience its ladder of versions.

The **2015 Banfi Chianti Superiore**, DOCG, brims with violets, red berries and plums. Meant to be enjoyed young, it is blended with Cabernet Sauvignon and Canaiolo Nero and is aged up to five months. Think pizza. \$9.49

Banfi's **2014 Chianti Classico**, DOCG emphasizes the cherry and plum notes, with a supple backbone of food-friendly acidity. Largely Sangiovese with other Chianti varietals, it is a dreamy pairing for tomato-based pasta dishes. \$12.99

The **2013 Banfi Chianti Classico Riserva**, DOCG, is released 28 months after harvest, singing with cherry, vanilla, cocoa and spice notes. It is an ideal pairing for tomato- and meat-based pastas. \$15.99

Moving up to the hillside of Montalcino, **Banfi's 2015 Rosso di Montalcino**, DOC, is aged at least six months in barrel. Notes of cherries, licorice and cedar

make this a formidable partner to hearty meat dishes. \$19.99

The **2011 Banfi Brunello di Montalcino**, DOCG is aged for a minimum of two years in barrel before bottle aging. This wine will glisten like a ruby at your special occasion dinner of rich, tender meat in a long-cooking sauce. \$69.99 **92 JS 91 RP 90 WS**

To complete a fine spectrum of Banfi Sangiovese in all its finery, 2012's wild temperature swings yielded a stellar Brunello di Montalcino. The complex Mediterranean and mountainous climate is a gift to start, but 2012's cold Spring and hot Summer birthed a royal vintage. **Banfi's 2012 Brunello di Montalcino** is a stunner worthy of, let's say, your favorite dad on Father's Day with his favorite meal. \$63.99 **93 WS 93 JS 92 RP**

Let's toast to the fine evolution of Sangiovese. ♦

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**Did you know...** East of Montalcino, around the town of Montepulciano, there is a similar system of classification for the local wines, known as *Vino Nobile di Montepulciano*. Rosso di Montepulciano plays a similar role to its counterpart from Montalcino.

## Wine Tastings Fri, 4-7 & Sat, 2-5

Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals!

**Fri 6/2: Italian Wines**

**Sat 6/3: Spanish Wines**

**Fri 6/9: June Staff Picks:** Check out our latest favorites.

**Sat 6/10: Josh Tasting & Label Making:** Josh Cellars wines with personalized labels for purchased bottles.

**Fri 6/16: Father's Day Wines**

**Fri 6/23: Sangiovese from Page 1 and Italian Whites**

**Fri 6/30 & Sat 7/1: Fourth of July Barbeque Wines**

### **Pasta Fagioli** *Adapted from The Art of Cookery*

1 lb dried cannellini beans, soaked 12 hours  
5 fresh sage leaves, divided  
5 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly smashed, divided  
1 tsp salt, plus more to taste  
Extra virgin olive oil, as needed  
1 or 2 sprigs fresh rosemary  
8 oz ditalini or elbow pasta  
pinch of red pepper flakes  
8 oz diced tomatoes  
freshly grated parmesan



Put the soaked beans in a pot with the sage, two cloves of garlic and salt, and cook over low heat for two hours. Ladle out two-thirds of the beans and mash them. Heat a generous pour of olive oil over medium heat and fry remaining cloves of garlic and the rosemary. Add the uncooked pasta, stirring for a couple minutes. Add the red pepper flakes, mashed beans and tomatoes, and cook, stirring, for a couple more minutes. Pour in half of the liquid from the beans in the pot, raise the temperature to high and lower just before it comes to a boil. Add the remaining liquid to reach desired brothiness and extra salt, if necessary, cooking until pasta is done. Remove the rosemary and garlic cloves and leave to stand for five minutes before serving. Drizzle with olive oil and parmesan, and serve with Ian's staff pick, below.

## News & Events

### Tuscan Cheese Pairings for Sangiovese

*Sheep's milk cheeses are plentiful in Tuscany; some are soft and buttery, while others are sharp and tangy. Sometimes, they are blended with goat's milk or cow's milk. These would be delicious with the wines on page 1.*

**Marzolino:** soft sheep's milk cheese, produced in March and briefly aged.

**Pecorino Toscano:** a young sheep's milk cheese (soft, mild and milky) or aged (firm and pungent with notes of chestnuts, bay leaves and herbs).

**Raviggiolo:** sheep's and goat's milk cheese (with cow's milk sometimes added), similar to ricotta; aged 5 days. It is spreadable, buttery and creamy.

**Rossellino:** salty, firm Pecorino, the rind of which is rubbed with olive oil; it acquires a red (rosso) color as it ages.

**Toscanello:** larger wheel of Pecorino Toscano; aged 6 months and sometimes spiced with peppercorns.

### Champagne Limoncello Sangria

*We are on the cusp of Summer, and we couldn't be happier. Serve this light, refreshing spin on a warm weather cocktail, and watch the sunset from the porch while the grill heats up.*



#### INGREDIENTS

½ bottle Maschio Brut Prosecco  
1 cup orange-pineapple juice  
1 ½ cups Caravella Limoncello  
Frozen strawberries and mango chunks

#### DIRECTIONS

Add frozen fruit to a pitcher or carafe. Pour in Prosecco, juice and Limoncello. Stir to combine and toast to Summer.

## June 2017 Staff Wine Picks

**Sheila: 2015 Olivier la Flave 'Les Sétilles' Bourgogne Blanc** (Bourgogne) **\$19.49** (reg \$22.99) A 70/30 blend of Puligny and Meursault Chardonnay and aged in a 60/40 combination of French oak and stainless steel, it is rich, round and creamy with plentiful citrus hints. \*Alaskan King Crab legs

**Joe: 2016 Honig Sauvignon Blanc** (Napa Valley) **\$14.99** (reg \$18.99) Made in a sustainable, solar-powered winery, and blended with 4% Semillon and 1% Muscat, it is aged in 90/10 stainless steel and neutral oak, it is crisp and fresh with notes of lemongrass, lime, jasmine and stone fruits. \*Mussels in white wine

**Max: Marietta Cellars Lot #65 Old Vine Red** (Geyserville) **\$12.99** (reg \$14.99) A blend of Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Syrah, Barbera and Montepulciano, it is aged 60/40 in stainless steel and neutral oak. Concentrated, spicy and rich. \*Short ribs

**Ian: 2014 Mas Donis Old Vines Garnacha-Syrah** (Montsant, SP) **\$10.19** (reg \$11.99) 90 RP Blended from 85/15 Garnacha and Syrah, it is stainless steel-fermented, then aged nine months in American and French oak. Vibrant cherry and dark berry flavors, with polished tannins. \*Pasta fagioli, see recipe above

**Bill: 2015 Jean Perrier Apremont Vin de Savoie** (Savoie, FR) **\$10.19** (reg \$11.99) 90 WS/#78 Top 100 2016 Made from Eastern France's Jacquere grape and aged in stainless steel, it has notes of yellow apple and lemon zest. \*Grilled trout