

YEAR'S BEST TUSCAN REDS

mandarin orange. It comes from the estate's oldest vineyard, a 74-acre terraced plot of sangiovese first planted in 1935. The wine, aged 24 months in large barrels, is smooth with fine tannins, and rich in red fruit flavors that would pair well with slow-roasted pork shoulder. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*

92 | Campo alla Sughera \$125

2009 Rosso di Toscana This is a study in purple, with violet scents leading into sappy flavors of plum and blackberry that wash over the palate like a cool indigo wave. Primarily petit verdot with some merlot, the wine aged 24 months in French oak barriques, gaining notes of peppery spice and smooth tannins. Some savory notes of grilled game and smoky tobacco emerge with air, yet the wine stays cool and balanced. *Curious Cork Imports, Napa, CA*

91 | Il Borghetto \$87

2009 Toscana Clante Liverpool native Tim Manning ferments whole clusters of sangiovese with native yeasts for this wine, and ages it for 24 months in barriques, about half of them new. The 2009 shows good vibrancy for the warm vintage, with bright red fruit flavors edged in orange zest and brown spice. Notes of mushroom emerge with air, leading to a lightly bitter amaro note. Match the wine's richness with a creamy mushroom risotto. *A.I. Selections, Long Island City, NY*

91 | Duemani \$45

2013 Costa Toscana Altrovino Merlot e Cabernet Franc Consulting enologist Luca d'Atoma and his partner, Elena Celli, began this project in 2000 with the purchase of uncultivated land on the hilly outskirts of Riparbella, about 40 minutes north of Bolgheri. Altrovino, a blend of equal parts merlot and cabernet franc, shows a firm structure beneath lush flavors of blackberry and plum, accented by notes of dark chocolate and black tea. The flavors are ripe yet fresh, with a streak of cooling graphite. *A.I. Selections, Long Island City, NY*

91 | Tenuta San Guido \$32

2013 Toscana Le Difese A touch of menthol freshens the flavors of blackberry and black currant in this blend of cabernet sauvignon with 30 percent sangiovese. It feels cool and juicy, with a green sappy accent and subtle notes of tobacco, spice and dark chocolate. Pair its vibrant flavors with a grilled burger. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*



90 | Castiglion del Bosco \$76

2011 Toscana Prima Pietra Brunello producer Castiglion del Bosco owns the 25-acre Prima Pietra estate in Riparbella, where a vineyard of densely planted Bordeaux varieties grows on a hillside facing the Tyrrhenian Sea. Aged 18 months in French oak barriques, it's intensely concentrated, the purple fruit flavors edged in vanilla, anise, cedar and black spices. The oak flavors and alcohol are prominent now, but the fruit shows good purity and verve that will reward a few years of cellar time. *Maisons Marques & Domaines USA, Oakland, CA*

90 | Tenute Guicciardini Strozzi \$35

2013 Maremma Toscana Momi A coastal blend of sangiovese, cabernet sauvignon, petit verdot and montepulciano, this is rich and savory, with notes of black olive, tobacco and rosemary accenting ripe black fruit flavors. Tight tannins and tangy acidity buoy the dark flavors, and call for roasted lamb with rosemary. *Montcalm Wine Importers, NY*

90 | Conte Ferdinando Guicciardini \$54

2012 Toscana Castello di Poppiano Tricornio The vineyards of Castello di Poppiano sprawl across 320 acres of hills about 15 miles southwest of Florence. Tricornio, a blend of equal parts sangiovese and cabernet sauvignon with 20 percent merlot, shows flavors of black plums and baked fruit edged in fennel seed, cardamom and orange zest. A layer of smoked game and black olive balances the ripe fruit flavors. Match its richness and herbal notes with grilled fennel sausages. *Downey Selections, Lorton, VA*

90 | Tenuta Sette Cieli \$112

2010 Toscana Scipio This is a high-octane cabernet franc that exhibits flavors of toasted nuts, vanilla and sweet spice from two years spent in French oak barriques. An earthy note of loamy soil accents juicy blackberry and plum flavors, with a wisp of tobacco on the warm and rich finish. It will benefit from a few years in the cellar, allowing the oak flavors to integrate with the fruit. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*



90 | Tenuta Sette Cieli \$50

2011 Toscana Indaco This blend of equal parts cabernet sauvignon, malbec and merlot with 10 percent cabernet franc is bold and brash, with warm alcohol and brusque tannins. It begins to open after a few hours, showing brambly black fruit flavors layered with bitter chocolate, tobacco and mint. Notes of roasted game and dried leaves emerge with more air. Cellar it for two to three years, or decant and serve with a rare steak. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*

90 | Tenuta Sette Ponti \$35

2013 Toscana Crognolo Crognolo is 80 percent sangiovese, but the black currant flavors of the merlot and cabernet sauvignon are more prominent at this stage. A year in French barriques has imparted notes of black spice and hints of caramel and oak char that lend richness and a slick texture to the wine. The sangiovese begins to show in the tangy acidity that brightens the finish. A match for lamb chops. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*



88 | Agricola Querciabella \$25

2012 Toscana Mongrana (Best Buy) Sangiovese's bright cherry flavors meld with darker fruit and herbaceous tones from 25 percent each of cabernet sauvignon and merlot. It shows good freshness for the warm vintage, maintaining a juicy texture within the tight structure, and offers a good introduction to the Super Tuscan style. *Maisons Marques & Domaines USA, Oakland, CA*