



- 91** **2001 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY (\$50.00) RED 91**
Located in Castelnuovo dell'Abate, Sesta di Sopra pursues a traditional approach to making its Brunello, which was one of the most pleasant discoveries of my tasting of the 2001 vintage. The vines are still young, and there is much to look forward to in future years from this producer. The pretty 2001 Brunello di Montalcino opens with a delicate, expressive nose of flowers and spices. It displays attractive juiciness and length on the palate. With sweet notes of macerated cherries and tobacco supported by a medium bodied frame, with fine, silky tannins and a long, satisfying finish. Anticipated maturity: 2009 - 2021
Various American importers, including: Premier Wine Company, Richmond, CA, and Dal Imports New York, NY
- 92** **2003 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY (\$50.00) RED 92**
Soft-textured and powerful at the same time, Sesta di Sopra's 2003 Brunello di Montalcino gives the impression it is still holding back much of its potential. Dark fruit, earthiness, licorice, toasted oak, tar and spices all open in the glass as this intense wine gradually shows its pure breed. Like many wines from the southern part of the zone, it comes across as a wine that is best enjoyed on the young side but it is sure to provide much pleasure over the next few years. This is a terrific effort from Sesta di Sopra. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2015.
Various American importers, including: Premier Wine Company, Richmond, CA; Dal Imports, New York, NY.
- 95** **2004 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY (\$55/60.00) RED 95**
The 2004 Brunello di Montalcino is an intense, full-bodied offering loaded with dark fruit. The wine possesses tone of richness that carries through all the way to the finish, where notes of tar, licorice, new leather and minerals add further layers of complexity. Today it comes across as extremely primary, but this is Brunello should develop beautifully with a few years in bottle. This is a striking wine of mindbending purity. The Brunello saw a lengthy fermentation and maceration, and was subsequently aged in 30-hectoliter casks. Anticipated maturity: 2014- 2024.
Sesta di Sopra, a small estate in Castelnuovo dell'Abate, continues to ratchet up the quality, as is evidenced by their 2004 Brunello, which may be the very finest wine ever made here.
- 93** **2005 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY (\$65.00) RED 93**
The 2005 Brunello di Montalcino is dark and powerful as masses of black cherries, plums, tar and licorice emerge from the glass. This is an especially dense, full-throttle Brunello in a vintage that yielded decidedly smaller-scaled wines. The intensity of the fruit carries all the way through to the finish without losing an ounce of vitality. This is impressive stuff! Anticipated maturity: 2012-2022. Sesta di Sopra has produced one of the finest Brunellos in 2005. Sadly, there are only 4,500 bottles to go around, as the vineyard covers just one hectare.
Importers: Premier Wine Company, Richmond, CA; tel. (818) 731-6238
- 95+** **2006 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY (\$65.00) RED 95+**
The 2006 Brunello di Montalcino is a viscerally thrilling wine that takes hold of the palate and never lets up. Waves of dark fruit sit on a textured frame of incomparable class. The wine blossoms over time, with beautifully centered red fruit, tobacco, minerals and scorched earth, all of which flow in a rich, expansive style. The explosive finish is utterly beautiful. This is a superb effort from Sesta di Sopra. Anticipated maturity: 2016-2031.
Importers: Premier Wine Company, Richmond, CA; tel. (818) 731-6238



- 92** **2006 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO – RISERVA TUSCANY** **RED 92**
The 2006 Brunello di Montalcino Riserva needs quite a bit of time in the glass to show its cards. Layers of dark fruit, spices and licorice flesh out in this muscular Brunello. There is plenty of intensity in the glass, but slight early signs of oxidation suggest the wine may have spent too much time in barrel. I don't quite find the finesse of the estate's best wines. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2024.
Importers: Premier Wine Company, Richmond, CA; tel. (818) 731-6238
- 94** **2007 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY (\$70.00)** **RED 94**
The 2007 Brunello di Montalcino is endowed with tremendous power and richness. Dark red fruit, flowers, mint, licorice and spices come to life in this deep, expressive Brunello. The wine turns more feminine and delicate on the finish, where hints of dried flowers and tobacco add the final layers of nuance. The 2007 is a hugely pleasing wine and a great follow-up effort to the 2006. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2025.
Importers: Premier Wine Company, Richmond, CA; tel. (818) 731-6238
- 91** **2008 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY** **RED 91**
Sesta di Sopra's 2008 Brunello di Montalcino is rather closed in its aromatics, but is more expressive on the palate, where layers of dark red fruit come alive. Smoke, tar, licorice, scorched earth and smoke add an attractive element of gravitas on the finish. Deceptively medium in body, the 2008, nevertheless, packs a serious punch. The long, superbly delineated finish bodes well for the future, but the 2008 needs time in bottle to settle down a bit more. Anticipated maturity: 2016-2026
- 91** **2008 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO RISERVA TUSCANY** **RED 91**
The 2008 Brunello di Montalcino Riserva displays a dark, brooding color with evolved aromas of dried spice, autumnal underbrush, cassis, figs and candied prune. As the wine evolves in the glass, it imparts increasingly seductive layers of licorice and dried ginger that build in complexity and momentum in quintessential Brunello fashion. There's a tightness and firmness to the palate that gives the mouthfeel a more youthful sensation compared to the mature aromas present on the bouquet. Drink: 2016-2023. Sesta di Sopra is usually a highlight of my Brunello tasting by a pretty wide margin. Results this year place the wines closer to median scores achieved by neighboring producers, although the special aromatic characteristics that distinguish these wines are still on display. Importer www.klwines.com
- 90** **2009 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY** **RED 90**
Enrica Bandirola's 2009 Brunello di Montalcino is an interesting and intriguing expression that boasts a very exotic, almost Byzantine (architecturally speaking) personality. Dark in color, the wine is loaded with bright little details and embellishments of crushed flowers, curry leaf, root beer and licorice stick. The mouthfeel is very dry, so much so the wine almost feels waxy on the finish with a very fine and polished manner. Drink: 2016-2022.
Sesta di Sopra is usually a highlight of my Brunello tasting by a pretty wide margin. Results this year place the wines closer to median scores achieved by neighboring producers, although the special aromatic characteristics that distinguish these wines are still on display. Importer www.klwines.com



2010 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY

RED 96

96

The excellent 2010 Brunello di Montalcino is a true standout of the vintage. This is a deep, full-bodied expression with thick aromatic layers that give the bouquet a greater semblance of importance and intensity. Dark plum, blackberry, dried cherry, licorice, tar, black truffle, leather and cured meat all play supporting roles. The wine ages in large oak casks for three years for a slow oxidative evolution that has set the course for this wine's steady longeevity. Smoke, ash and crushed stone make for elegant background tones. Drink it after 2017.

Enrica Bandirola's Sesta di Sopra is a 44-hectare estate located near Castelnuovo dell'Abate on the southern side of the appellation. This property has proudly produced one of the most beautiful wines of the 2010 Brunello harvest.

2011 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TUSCANY

RED 91

91

Bright cherries and fresh forest fruit rise from the bouquet of the Sesta di Sopra 2011 Brunello di Montalcino. The wine offers proud primary aromas that are plump and pristine. This is not always an easy feat given the warm conditions of the vintage and the fact that Brunello ages for five years in the cellar before its commercial release. Those conditions tend to make for flat and tired wines, but you certainly don't get that here. Instead, the wine is surprisingly intact and youthful. I would suggest a conservative drinking window of about five years so that you don't miss out on that primary fruit.

2010 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO RISERVA TUSCANY

RED 95

95

Sesta di Sopra is another winery in Montalcino that delivers a powerful and well balanced wine in this important vintage. The 2010 Brunello di Montalcino Riserva is an impressive effort and a wine that sports a masculine and muscular personality. The nose is redolent of dark fruit, wild berry, dried cherry, leather and tobacco. All those components come together in seamless fashion. The wine shows medium density in terms of mouthfeel but very long persistence. This is a wine of immense inner class and elegance.