

# Wine Spectator Insider

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A Members-Only, Weekly Publication

THIS week's *Wine Spectator Insider* covers two renowned European wine regions, Burgundy's Chablis in France and Tuscany's Brunello di Montalcino in Italy. Bruce Sanderson reviews 14 white wines from the 2008 vintage of Chablis, include three classic-rated bottlings from Christian Moreau Père & Fils, all of which can be found among the Hot Wines, on page 4. Christian Moreau and his son, Fabien, altered the vinification for the 2008 vintage, opting to rely on solely indigenous yeasts, which resulted in wines that are more precise and site-specific.

Also in this issue, James Suckling continues with his tasting notes for 2005 Brunello di Montalcino. Among the Brunello houses reviewed this week are Casanova di Neri, La Poderina, and Villa I Cipressi, a small producer that is developing a track record for quality. For more Brunello notes, check out the April 7 edition of the Insider.

## France Chablis

### CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Les Clos Clos des Hospices 2008

**94 points | \$96 | 60 cases made | White**

Rich and powerful, yet with a classy profile and vibrant structure keeping the ripe apple, lemon cake and chalk flavors focused. It's complex and balanced, and it's this harmony that makes it so impressive. That and the long finish. A deep well of mineral on the aftertaste. Best from 2012 through 2030.—*B.S.*

### CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Vaillon Cuvée Guy Moreau 2008

**94 points | \$48 | 40 cases made | White**

Terrific intensity here, between the concentrated flavors of peach, grapefruit, flowers and mineral, to the vibrant structure and dense texture. Very backward, it builds in the palate to a long, spice and mineral aftertaste. Tastes like old vines here. Best from 2012 through 2027.—*B.S.*

### PATRICK PIUZE

Chablis Blanchot 2008

**93 points | \$85 | 75 cases made | White**

Seems a bit pinched now, with an airy quality and racy structure. A mix of lemon, apple, green plum and stone flavors are underscored by a stony intensity. It's long, so give it some time to come together. Best from 2013 through 2030.—*B.S.*

### PATRICK PIUZE

Chablis Bougros Côte de Bouqueyreaux 2008

**93 points | \$85 | 75 cases made | White**

Ripe and creamy, with lemon cake, apple and peach aromas and flavors. Though broad, there's a fine structure. It tastes like it's seen a little wood, but everything is well integrated and lingers on the long, long finish. Best from 2012 through 2026.—*B.S.*

### PATRICK PIUZE

Chablis Les Clos 2008

**93 points | \$105 | 100 cases made | White**

Still a little lactic, this white is all about the sea. There's a salty quality, along with oyster shell and iodine notes. Lemon and apple add depth and interest. It's tight and sinewy, with a long aftertaste and character. Best from 2012 through 2027.—*B.S.*

### PATRICK PIUZE

Chablis Les Preuses 2008

**93 points | \$120 | 25 cases made | White**

A racy style, very chalky in texture and backward in character. Lemon, flowers and green apple are the main flavors with an undercurrent of mineral. It's concentrated and intense, just needs time. Excellent finish. Best from 2013 through 2030.—*B.S.*

## LAMBLIN & FILS

Chablis Vaillon 2008

**92 points | \$33 | 75 cases imported | White**

Fresh, pure and focused, this white shows apple, lemon and intense chalk notes. Everything is in the right proportion, it just needs time to integrate more fully. Fine length. Best from 2012 through 2022.—*B.S.*

## CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Vaillon 2008

**92 points | \$45 | 450 cases made | White**

Rich and creamy, with hints of vanilla and spice augmenting peach, melon and yellow plum. Beautifully integrated now, with a lingering aftertaste of spice and mineral. Should only get better. Best from 2011 through 2022.—*B.S.*

## CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Valmur 2008

**92 points | \$75 | 300 cases made | White**

This is intense and tightly wound, offering concentrated lemon, apple, spice and chalk aromas and flavors. It keeps building on the palate, changing as it finishes with a flourish of mineral. Very dry and savory. Best from 2013 through 2028.—*B.S.*

## PATRICK PIUZE

Chablis Fourchaume 2008

**92 points | \$58 | 300 cases made | White**

Round and almost creamy in texture, with some spice and stone elements supporting the apple, melon and lemon flavors. This has intensity and length. Best from 2012 through 2020.—*B.S.*

## PATRICK PIUZE

Chablis Mont de Milieu 2008

**92 points | \$65 | 350 cases made | White**

Lemon, apple and mineral aromas and flavors are the main course with a vibrant structure keeping them defined. There's density, but it needs to be reconciled with the acidity. Fine length. Best from 2012 through 2022.—*B.S.*

# Italy

## Brunello di Montalcino

### LUCE DELLA VITE

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**93 points | \$93 | 250 cases imported | Red**

Very dark ruby color. Intense aromas of dried blueberries and Indian spices. Full body, with medium chewy tannins and an outstanding intensity of fruit, new oak and minerals. Very long finish. Clearly outstanding for the vintage. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

### POGGIO IL CASTELLARE

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**93 points | \$54 | 1,665 cases imported | Red**

This is very powerful for the vintage, plenty of ripe fruit and cedary new wood, yet it's balanced and pretty. Full body, with polished tannins and a long finish. Give it a year or two to come completely together. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## LA RASINA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**93 points | \$50 | 335 cases imported | Red**

Wow. What a powerful wine for the vintage. Full body, with loads of ripe fruit and toasted on the palate. Chewy and rich. It needs bottle age to soft, but it's all there. This is one of the best producers in Montalcino now. Best after 2013.—*J.S.*

## CASTELLO ROMITORIO

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**93 points | \$49 | 1,000 cases imported | Red**

Strawberry pie, with hints of cream on the nose and palate. Full body, with chewy tannins and plenty of fruit. Needs bottle age to soften. Powerful. Impressive for the vintage. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## CASANOVA DI NERI

Brunello di Montalcino Tenuta Nuova 2005

**92 points | \$75 | 1,500 cases imported | Red**

Blueberry and vanilla cream, with zabaglione undertones. Full body, with velvety, chewy tannins and a long, sweet-fruit aftertaste. Solid and rich for the vintage. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## CORTE PAVONE

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**92 points | \$60 | 1,250 cases imported | Red**

Blackberries and flowers on the nose. Full body, with firm, chewy tannins and a focused finish of ripe and fresh fruit. Tight now, needs bottle age. Made from organic grapes. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## DA VINCI

Brunello di Montalcino Da Vinci Collezione Speciale 2005

**92 points | \$70 | 1,000 cases imported | Red**

Fascinating aromas of lilacs and ripe raspberries follow through to a full body, with a solid core of fruit and super polished tannins. Clearly outstanding quality. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## FOSSACOLLE

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**92 points | \$70 | 200 cases imported | Red**

Dark berries and meat, with hints of fresh mushrooms on the nose. Full body, with chewy tannins and a complex palate of fruits and mahogany. Long finish. Give it time. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## SIRO PACENTI

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**92 points | \$90 | 1,000 cases imported | Red**

Blueberry and light toasted oak, with coffee bean undertones as well. Full body, with silky tannins and a gorgeous chocolate and dark berry aftertaste. Hard not to drink now. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## SESTA DI SOPRA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**92 points | \$60 | 165 cases imported | Red**

Indian spices and sliced plums, with hints of ripe strawberries on the nose. Full body, with chewy tannins and a powerful palate. Very structured. Small and serious producer. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## UCCELLIERA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**92 points | \$65 | 665 cases imported | Red**

Very pretty aromas of mulberries and some flowers. Full body, with toasted oak, coffee and dark fruits on the palate that follow through to a chewy tannic finish. Still tight and holding back. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## VITANZA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**92 points | \$48 | 1,250 cases imported | Red**

Love the dark berry and licorice aromas to this red. Full body, very polished tannins and long and racy on the finish. It's a little reserved now, but will deliver lots of classy fruit and enjoyment in the end. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## VITANZA

Brunello di Montalcino Tradizione 2005

**92 points | \$37 | 2,085 cases imported | Red**

Porcini, dark fruits and spices on the nose. Full body, with juicy and ripe tannins and lots of opulent fruit that turns to dried fruit cake, chocolate and almonds. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## GORELLI

Brunello di Montalcino Le Potazzine 2005

**91 points | \$55 | 415 cases imported | Red**

Round and fruity with lots of new wood in this young Brunello, but there's impressive ripe fruit and a solid core of everything. Builds on the palate. Clearly outstanding. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## MASTROJANNI

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$60 | 250 cases imported | Red**

Dark brick red color, with dried orange peel and sliced plums. Full body, with chewy tannins and lots of dried, dark fruit. Long and flavorful. Almost peppery. Stylish. Even better than the 2004. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## LA PODERINA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$72 | 665 cases imported | Red**

Intense aromas of tangerine rind and blueberries. Medium-to full body, with chewy tannins and a long and racy finish. Fresh and reserved still. Nearly always outstanding from here. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## POGGIO SAN POLO

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$70 | 835 cases imported | Red**

Dried fruits, with raisins and grilled meat on the nose. Full body, with chewy tannins and ripe fruit. Plenty of new wood, but it should all come together beautifully with bottle age. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## SAN FILIPPO

Brunello di Montalcino Le Lucère 2005

**91 points | \$60 | 750 cases imported | Red**

Ripe berry and plums, with vanilla bean and flowers on the nose. Full body, yet a very fine and polished texture on the palate. Chocolate and berries. Yummy. Long, caressing. Drink now.—*J.S.*

## SAN GIORGIO

Brunello di Montalcino Ugolforte 2005

**91 points | \$65 | 1,000 cases imported | Red**

Wonderful aromas to this wine of Indian spices and berries with hints of sultanas. Full body, with super velvety tannins and a long, flavorful finish. A subtle, balanced and complete wine. Why wait? Best after 2010.—*J.S.*

## LA SERENA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$60 | 415 cases imported | Red**

Coffee and spices, with dark ripe fruits such as sultanas and treacle tart. Full body, with firm tannins and lots of fruit. Tight but juicy. So much there. Give it some bottle age to express itself more. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## TENUTA DI SESTA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$42 | 835 cases imported | Red**

Subtle and complex, with sweet berry and floral aromas that follow through to a full body. It has super well-integrated fruit and tannins and a long, long finish. Beautiful and refined. Better than 2004. Best after 2011.—*J.S.*

## TERRE NERE

Brunello di Montalcino Campigli Vallone 2005

**91 points | \$50 | 835 cases imported | Red**

Some earth and spice aromas, with ripe fruit on the nose that follows through to a full body, showing sweet-and-ripe fruit and a long, fresh finish. Love the chocolate and spices on the finish. Why wait? Drink now through 2015.—*J.S.*

## VALDICAVA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$94 | 1,000 cases imported | Red**

Dried dark fruits, with toasted oak and dried flowers. Full body, with a solid core of fruit and chewy tannins. This is rather subdued now, but should open with bottle age. Long finish. Valdicava always makes outstanding wines. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

## PODERE LA VIGNA

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**91 points | \$55 | 415 cases imported | Red**

Loads of new, toasty wood on the nose, with intensely ripe fruit as well. Full body, very chewy and slightly austere from the new wood. But this will come around beautifully with bottle age. Best after 2012.—*J.S.*

# HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

## CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Blanchot 2008

**95 points | \$79 | 60 cases made | White**

A taut, linear profile sets the pace for the peach, melon, grapefruit and vanilla aromas and flavors. The vivid structure keeps it moving, while a smoky, mineral element emerges on the generous finish. It's all there in the right proportions, just give it time. Best from 2013 through 2030. *From France.—B.S.*

## CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Les Clos 2008

**95 points | \$79 | 400 cases made | White**

Aromas of citrus blossom and chalk dust lead into lemon, vanilla, peach and mineral in this elegant, yet powerful white. Really expressive of place, it evolves across the palate, cascading into a long aftertaste of citrus and mineral. Fine seashore intensity. Best from 2013 through 2030. *From France.—B.S.*

## CHRISTIAN MOREAU PÈRE & FILS

Chablis Vaudésir 2008

**95 points | \$79 | 75 cases made | White**

Supple and polished, yet there's no shortage of power. Lemon parfait, apple and butterscotch notes are underlined by a persistent mineral element that should emerge over time in the bottle. Terrific length. Almost drinkable now. Best from 2012 through 2030. *From France.—B.S.*

## VILLA I CIPRESSI

Brunello di Montalcino 2005

**94 points | \$55 | 665 cases imported | Red**

Fabulous aromas of flowers, incense, Indian spices, and dark fruits. Full body, with polished, chewy tannins and a long, flavorful finish. Dense mid-palate of fruit. Layered and concentrated. It has just about everything considering it's from this vintage. Elegant and full of finesse. A small producer on a roll. Best after 2013. *From Italy.—J.S.*

## WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

### The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

*Wine Spectator's* tasting staff includes 14 people in three offices. They work together to review more than 18,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our seven senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind in our offices in Napa, New York and Tuscany. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Austria, Greece, Portugal, southern France

**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: New York, Spain

**James Molesworth** Senior editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: Argentina, Chile, Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa

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**James Suckling** European bureau chief, Italy

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Italy, Port

Tasting staff:

**Tim Fish** (California),

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#### Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended