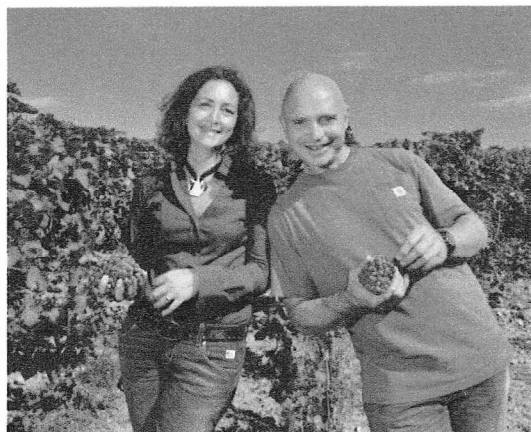


'Morellino aside, the leitmotif is pioneering individualism. It is the source of the most diverse range of high-calibre wines'



Above: Elena Celli and Luca D'Attoma of Due Mani

Chianti Classico is currently preoccupied with the issue of differentiating itself from straight Chianti. The problem is a purely commercial one because, in terms of quality and style, the wines from the traditional production area stand head and shoulders above the rest. Whether the new Chianti Classico Gran Selezione – a kind of super-riserva category that is due out shortly – will reinforce the superiority or simply muddy the waters remains to be seen.

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, for decades the poor relation of the Sangiovese family, is probably the most improved of the region's DOCGs. Made from a distinctive blend of local varieties and aged less in oak than Brunello, Vino Nobile offers the full-on Tuscan red experience at highly competitive prices. Also much improved (and outstanding value) is Morellino di Scansano, cherry-and-almond scented Sangiovese, with a generous dash of Mediterranean herbs from the Maremma.

This part of the region, the Maremma, is the one that most eludes generalisations. Morellino aside, the leitmotif is pioneering individualism. It is the source of the most diverse range of high-calibre wines from the innovative – the biodynamic Caiarossa, Duemani's (also biodynamic) Cabernet Franc and Syrah, San Cristoforo's Petit Verdot – to the rejuvenated traditional, such as Antonio Camillo's amazing Cilieggiolo.

The outsider among all these red wines is the vastly underrated white, Vernaccia di San Gimignano (Elisabetta Fagioli from Montenedoli is one of Italy's great unsung white winemakers). This DOCG is abandoning technology for terroir and will be a force to be reckoned with. **D**

Richard Baudains is a co-Regional Chair for Italy at the DWWA and has written for the magazine on Italian wine for 25 years

Baudains' top Tuscan reds: an eclectic selection (continued)

Poggio Argentiera, Capatosta,

Morellino di Scansano 2011 17.5 (91)

NA/UK poggioargentiera.com

Emblematic. Gianpaolo Paglia abandoned barriques and set off in search of terroir. Nose of character and charm; sweet and floral with red fruit and hints of spice from the oak in the back. Direct, juicy, dry and agile on the palate with soft and very natural grape tannins in the background. Irresistibly drinkable. **Drink** 2014–2016. **Alc** 14.4%

San Giusto a Rentennano, Le

Baròncole, Chianti Classico Riserva 2010 17.5 (91)

NA/UK fattoriasangiusto.it

Less austere than in the past, but still authentic Chianti Classico at its best. Refined nose, with delicate floral/leafy character and sweet kirsch and plum in the background. Great volume on the palate, with gritty Sangiovese tannins, lots of energy and very natural progression towards a finish of sweet fruit and cinnamon. **Drink** 2014–2020. **Alc** 14.5%

Tenuta Pietramora, Brumaio

Morellino di Scansano 2010

17.5 (91)

NA/UK tenutapietramora.it

Benchmark Morellino. Classic nose of cherry, plum and almonds with an underlying earthiness. Starts fresh and juicy on the palate then opens big, round and warm with ripe grapey tannins. Long and soft in the finish of spicy-leathery maturity and Mediterranean herbs. **Drink** 2014–2016. **Alc** 13.5%



Il Borghetto, Monte de Sassi, Chianti Classico

Riserva 2010 17 (90)

NA/UK borghetto.org

Handmade wines with great personality from a young, organic producer. Nose of potpourri with spices and herbs under the bright red fruit. Real substance on the palate with ripe, velvety tannins and bags of energy. Long finish with notes of incense, orange peel and five spice. **Drink** 2015–2020. **Alc** 14.5%

Petrolo, BògginAnfora 2011 17 (90)

POA [LibertyWines](http://LibertyWines.com)

From a top producer of Merlot, a new

Sangiovese from old vines aged in amphorae. First impression of wild herbs on the nose, then sweet cherry and plum. Fresh and fluid on the palate with nervy intensity and a long mouthwatering finish of great length and purity. Personal, original, fascinating. **Drink** 2014–2016. **Alc** 14%

Podere Lamberto, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano 2010 17 (90)

NA/UK poderelamberto.com

New wave, top drawer Vino Nobile. Fresh and floral on the nose, but still quite closed. Dense and tightly knit texture on the palate with firm structure and nervy underlying fruit waiting to come out. Tangy mineral finish, long and very pure Sangiovese character. **Drink** 2015–2020. **Alc** 14%



Badia a Coltibuono, Chianti Classico 2010 17 (90)

NA/UK coltibuono.com

Historic producer of expressive terroir-Chianti with great personality. Open, leafy/floral nose, with notes of ripe plum and tar and spice in the background. Tangy impact on the palate and a splendid tannic wear in the follow through, firm and grippy in the finish. **Drink** 2014–2018. **Alc** 13.5%

Selvapiana, Vigneto Bucerchiale, Chianti Rufinà Riserva 2010 17 (90)

£20.95–£25 widely available via [LibertyWines](http://LibertyWines.com)

Top vineyard selection from historic pioneer of quality at Rufinà. Nose of red fruit and dark flowers with hints of tar and mushroom underneath. Intense dry palate with fine tannins and long, soft, juicy finish. More refinement than structure. **Drink** 2014–2018. **Alc** 14.5%

Poggio Trevvalle, Pàssera, Morellino di Scansano 2012 16.5 (88)

NA/UK poggiotrevvalle.it

Gulpable Morellino from an up-and-coming organic producer. Very pure, defined cherry and raspberry fruit with floral touches on the nose. Bright, soft and juicy palate, with a full-bodied, fleshy texture and long, dry finish with fruit and almond aroma. Irresistible. **Drink** 2014–2015. **Alc** 14.5%

For full details of UK stockists, see p88