



# Agostina Pieri

## Setting a New Standard of Ripeness in Montalcino

When Francesco Monaci established this winery, he had no idea of the frenzy his wines would inspire. In only a handful of vintages, his Brunello and Rosso have become some of Montalcino's most sought after wines.

A nephew of consorzio president, and famed producer, Giancarlo Pacenti, Francesco had long dreamed of making great wines in the Montalcino area, but was not able to find the perfect vineyard until 1991. The steep Sangiovese vineyard that he finally found, in Castelnuovo dell'Abate, offered the potential to realize his goal.

The seven-hectare vineyard he found is perfectly situated, with a full southern exposure. This allows for incredible ripeness even in the old, low-vigor Sangiovese clones he favors. Grapes are harvested by hand and then strictly sorted to eliminate sub-standard fruit. The fermentation takes 25-30 days in vat and stainless steel before racking into large Slovenian oak casks and smaller French oak barriques. Only the finest lots are selected for Brunello.

This is one domaine that takes great pride in its Rosso, treating it much like the Brunello. Pieri is the only producer ever to earn Gambero Rosso's prestigious Tre Bicchieri score for a "mere" Rosso di Montalcino.

That wine, the 1995, caused a sensation with its amazing concentration and persistence—it easily outpaced most Brunellos and set a new benchmark for the appellation. And, always looking to push his wines further, Francesco has begun collaborating with Fabrizio Moltard for the 2002 vintage. Together, they aim to enhance the expressive sense of place that a unique vineyard, and unique appellation, can produce.

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