Brunello Riserva 2019 Vintage Report: Consistency and Quality From a Remarkable Year The newest Brunello di Montalcino Riserva feels like a vintage straight out of a James Bond movie, where the secret agent asks for a bottle of the newest famous Italian red with great confidence – "The 2019 Riserva Brunello, please" – instead of his usual Bollinger Champagne. That's how a producer put it to me when describing his take on the singularity of the 2019 vintage, and our initial tastings perfectly capture the consistency and quality of this remarkable year. The greatest Brunellos – those with balance and readily apparent aging potential – are historically harvested in October, and this was no different for the 2019 vintage, which produced wines with amazing balance, structure and freshness alongside concentrated fruit. James, Senior Editor Jacobo García

2019 was warm without excessive heat spikes, and rain arrived at just the right times. It was a harvest that unfolded smoothly, offering winemakers clarity and ease in interpretation. According to official data from the wine producers organization Consorzio del Vino Brunello, winter saw slightly above-average temperatures compared with recent years, with subzero lows mostly in early January. Rainfall was concentrated between Jan. 18 and 25 and in the first days of February, totaling about 70 millimeters over two months. Budbreak occurred on schedule, aided by around 100 millimeters of rain and average temperatures of 10 degrees Celsius (50 Fahrenheit) from March through May. This weather conditions slowed vine growth by roughly two weeks – a positive factor for sangiovese heading into summer. June and July were largely dry, except for a significant

“monumental” wine, according to James. The classy and traditional Livio Sassetti Riserva 2019 , meanwhile, shines for its transparency and ultra-fine texture, while the Poggio di Sotto Riserva 2019 confirms its consistency after being one of the standout samples from last year. It’s silky and graceful but you can also bet on it for the long haul. Another wine deserving of mention is the Gianni Brunelli Riserva 2019 , which is probably the best ever from the estate. It shines with its youthfulness and shows telltale raspberries fresh with smoky-woodland and licorice depth alongside amazing structure. Like many of the Brunello Riserva 2019s we tasted, it has all the hallmarks of the vintage in that it is classic, balanced and is meant for exquisite aging. – Aldo Fiordelli, Senior Editor