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A ROCKSTAR 2012 VINTAGE FOR BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO Fans of Brunello di Montalcino are in for a treat with the 2012 vintage. I tasted about 100 wines in October in a blind tasting in Tuscany and was impressed with their beautiful aromas, vibrant fruit, lively acidity, and ultra-fine tannins. These sangioveses are much more precise and finer than the bolder and riper 2011s. They have more in common with the legendary 2010 vintage and are most like the 2004s, a harmonious and gorgeous year for Brunellos. Just to show how much better the 2012 vintage is, I rated 26 bottles 95 points or more compared to only eight 2011s. I've still got another 100 bottles of the 2012s to taste in January when I return to Tuscany. "I am really, really happy with the quality," said one of Italy's leading consulting enologist Carolo Ferrini, who also makes his own tiny and excellent quality

normal, and this helped maintain the aromas and freshness in the wine from the good acidity," added Ferrini. Indeed, that's what I love about the 2012 Brunellos I've tasted so far. They show beautiful perfumes of ripe fruit and hints of earth with a mandarin and orange highlight. The palates are rich and dense, with an underlying crispness and linear thread from start to finish. "Of course, the 2012s are not the same quality as the 2010s, but they are very, very beautiful wines," added Vincenzo Abbruzzese, the owner of Valdicava. "The really great vintage is still to come, 2013 or 2015." — James Suckling, CEO/Editor