

# Wine Spectator

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## GREAT WINES OF TUSCANY

James Suckling tells you what to buy now  
from Italy's hottest wine region



**91** **Castello di Vicchiomaggio Toscana Ripa delle More 1999 \$48** Powerful aromas of black currants, prunes and spices. Full-bodied, with thick and round tannins and a long finish of chocolate and berries. A big young wine. Slightly rustic. Sangiovese and Cabernet. Best after 2005. 1,500 cases made. —J.S.



The term "super Tuscan" came into vogue in the late 1980s as a handful of reds from the region gained international attention. The wines were sold as *vini da tavola*, or table wines, because their use of international varietals, principally Cabernet Sauvignon, made them ineligible for official wine categories. They were "super" Tuscan reds—superior in quality and outside of official premium wine designations.

With changes in legislation in the European Community in the mid-1990s, the *vino da tavola* designation was dropped for vintage-dated wines, so the Italian government created a new appellation. Called Indicazione Geografica Tipica (IGT), its regulations are so loose that wine producers can do just about anything they please. The main IGT in Tuscany is Toscana Indicazione Geografica Tipica.

A super Tuscan can be just about anything, from a pure Sangiovese to a complex blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah with a touch of Pinot Noir. This freedom gives producers more opportunity to focus on quality and the approach best-suited to the uniqueness of their respective estates. Restrictions on viticulture and winemaking do exist, but they are fewer compared with more lofty classifications such as DOCG.