



Brunello di Montalcino: Understanding and Appreciating One of Italy's Greatest Wines

Kerin O'Keefe

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For fans of Italian wine, few names command the level of respect accorded to Brunello di Montalcino. With their earthy, wild-cherry sensations and full structure yet smooth textures, top Brunellos have the body and finesse of the most prestigious world-class bottlings from Bordeaux, Burgundy and Piedmont.

Expert wine writer Kerin O'Keefe has a deep personal knowledge of Tuscany and its extraordinary wine, and her account is both thoroughly researched and readable. Organized as a guided tour through Montalcino's geography, this essential reference also makes sense of Brunello's complicated history, from its rapid rise to the negative and positive effects of the 2008 grape-blending scandal dubbed "Brunellogate."

Brunello di Montalcino helps wine lovers maneuver their way among Montalcino's minefield of diversity by breaking the vast commune down into seven distinct subzones, ranging from the highest reaches around the town of Montalcino, which yield austere, elegant wines destined for lengthy aging in cellars; down to the lower plains in the deep south around Sant'Angelo Scalo, home to immediate, muscular Brunellos with higher alcohol and lower acidity; and to all the other fascinating areas that lie between those two geographical extremes.

O'Keefe also provides in-depth profiles of 58 carefully chosen wineries, big and small, famous and unknown, who produce excellent Brunellos that best express the quintessential characteristics of both Sangiovese and the various subzones in Montalcino.

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