

PREMIUM

# Chianti Classico new releases: Best buys in 2022

Michaela Morris picks out her top producers, favourite wines and best value buys based on her Chianti Classico report.



Michaela Morris

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Credit: Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico

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## About Chianti Classico

Chianti Classico has a three-tier classification: annata, Riserva and Gran Selezione.

Quality has improved dramatically in the 25 years since producers were first allowed to make pure Sangiovese wines (since 1996). Marking another step up in quality, white grapes were banned in 2005.

In 2014, the Gran Selezione category was introduced to much fanfare, although a proportion of producers remain sceptical and prefer to bottle their top wines as Riserva – or even IGT – instead.

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# Which Chianti Classico wines should I buy in 2022?

## Standout & up-and-coming Chianti Classico producers

**Cigliano di Sopra:** 20-somethings Maddalena Fucile and Matteo Vaccari represent Chianti Classico's bright and dynamic future.

**Le Cinciole:** One of Chianti Classico's early adopters of organic viticulture, this under-the-radar Panzano estate offers precise, soulful wines.

**Istine:** Angela Fronti is undoubtedly one of Chianti Classico's top producers and her trio of single-vineyard bottlings is not to be missed.

**Querciabella:** Querciabella's new releases are a grand demonstration of Chianti Classico's three tiers across the 2019, 2018 and 2017 vintages.

**Montesecondo:** Silvio Messana's wines falls firmly into the natural category and challenge the old guard of Chianti Classico.

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## Value picks

**Bibbiano, Chianti Classico 2020:** Generous and characterful, this sings delightfully of place.

**Brancaia, Chianti Classico 2020:** Refreshingly unoaked, this exudes Sangiovese's vibrant mid-weight charms.

**Castello di Gabbiano, Chianti Classico 2020:** A perennial great value pick, Gabbiano's annata over-delivers more than ever in 2019.

**Ormanni, Chianti Classico 2019:** With a lightness of touch, Ormanni is not without intriguing fruity depths.

Villa Le Corti, Chianti Classico 2019: Robust and chewy, Villa Le Corti packs in a lot for a very reasonable price.

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## Michaela's favourite newly-released Chianti Classicos

**Riecine, Vigna Gittori, Chianti Classico Gran Selezione 2019:** An impressive first-ever Gran Selezione from Riecine exhibiting grace over brawn.

**Fontodi, Terrazze San Leolino, Chianti Classico Gran Selezione 2019:** A new wine for Fontodi, the estate's second Gran Selezione is a profound, mineral-driven follow up.

**Maurizio Alongi, Vigna Barbischio, Chianti Classico Riserva 2019:** Rising star Alongi produces one single, savoury, properly structured wine that deserves a place in the cellar.

**Tenuta di Carleone, Chianti Classico 2019:** Unfussy, gorgeously expressive, crunchy Sangiovese crafted by iconoclast winemaker Sean O'Callaghan.

**Isole e Olena, Chianti Classico 2019:** This well-known, perpetually over-performing *annata* simply exudes the region – a must-buy in 2019.

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## Chianti Classico releases 2022: Top scorers



### Fontodi, Vigna del Sorbo Gran Selezione, Chianti, Classico 2019

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At an elevation of 400 metres, Vigna del Sorbo boasts Chianti Classico's classic Galestro soil. The warm southwest-facing vineyard typically yields a powerful, intense wine in need of ageing. The 2019 demonstrates all the wild, penetrating characteristics of this site but i...

Points 97

### Riecine, Vigna Gittori Gran Selezione, Chianti, Classico 2019

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Riecine's first ever Gran Selezione is a true beauty. It comes from the Gittori vineyard, a south-facing plot which sits above 500 metres, planted in 1971 – after renting it for 20 years,

the estate was finally able to purchase it in 2019. The nose shows pure, precise fragrances...

Points 97



## Fontodi, Terrazze San Leolino Gran Selezione, Chianti Classico 2019

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Fontodi's brand spanking new Terrazze San Leolino Gran Selezione is a stunner. San Leolino was recognised locally as a cru site 200 years ago. The recently renewed terraces sit at 450 metres in Panzano but - unlike Fontodi's Vigna del Sorbo, which is characterise...

Points 96



## Istine, Vigna Cavarchione, Chianti, Classico, Tuscany, 2019

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The only one of Istine's single-vineyard bottlings that hails from outside Radda, Vigna Cavarchione is located in the neighbouring township of Gaiole. It is east- to southeast-facing on predominantly Galestro soil at 420 metres. The 2019 has a sweet/savoury personality with a firm backbone. Dark plum and wild strawberry meet...

Points 96



## Antinori, Badia a Passignano Gran Selezione, Chianti Classico 2019

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The vineyards of Badia a Passignano surround an ancient monastery which has belonged to Benedictine monks since the 11th century. It's just 3km south of Antinori's Tignanello estate, from which the Sangiovese cuttings hail. Youthful, graceful and unencumbered by...

Points 95



## Istine, Vigna Istine, Chianti, Classico, Tuscany, 2019

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The rocky, Alberese-rich Istine vineyard slopes down in front of the family home at 550 metres above sea level. From here, beyond the surrounding woodlands, you can see the town of Radda to the east and Panzano to the northwest. Of the estate's three single-vineyard bottlings, Istine takes the longest...

Points 95



## Istine, Casanova dell'Aia, Chianti, Classico, Tuscany, 2019

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As with Vigna Istine, Vigna Casanova dell'Aia is characterised by limestone marls of Alberese and Galestro, however it boasts a greater presence of clay which gives more vigour. It is also south- rather than north-facing and sits at 500 metres. The 2019 offers...

Points 95



## Maurizio Alongi, Vigna Barbischio Riserva, Chianti Classico 2019

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Maurizio Alongi makes one single wine from his remote Barbischio vineyard. Just two parcels totalling 1.3 hectares, it sits in the middle of a forest in the eastern stretches of Gaiole at 475 metres above sea level. The 2019 evokes the wildness of the area and all the fragrant earthy,...

Points 95



## Poggerino, Bugialla Riserva, Chianti Classico, 2019

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Planted in 1984, Bugialla is a 4ha plot at 500 metres on stony Galestro soil. Owner Piero Lanza picks the larger bunches first for the Chianti Classico and leaves the smaller bunches to ripen longer for the Riserva. Just bottled, the 2019 is shy but with coaxing, aromas of...

Points 95



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