



**ITALY, TUSCANY: BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO – NEW RELEASES** By Monica Lerner This is my third and last installment of Brunello coverage for the year. On January 31st, I published my earliest-ever report on Brunello di Montalcino; I mention this because the wines are released on January 1st every year, and my deadline to make that issue was under one week later. That's an impossibly tight turnaround for those first 100 wines tasted and reviewed. You can read those notes and my vintage comments [here](#) . One month later, on February 28th which is my usual publish date for this report, I posted the remaining 173 notes based on samples that had been collected by the Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino. That second grouping of wines can be accessed [here](#) . This smaller grouping of 45 reviews includes the wines that I did not previously have access to

visit on this trip to Montalcino was with cycling, wine and Jack Russell-enthusiast Paolo Bianchini of Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona. His delightful children Alex and Ester joined us. Both work at the estate, in logistics and public relations, respectively. Paolo is co-owner of the estate with his sister Lucia. We tasted through the new releases, but because many of those wines were already published in January, I only included a review of the 2017 Rosso di Montalcino here. We toured the historic cellars, and I jumped into an off-roading vehicle with Paolo (and Tappo, of course) to tour the vineyards and the surrounding countryside on a lovely, crisp early-spring afternoon. Tappo spotted a few roe deer looking for growth to munch on in the vineyard and Paolo was very grateful that his barking was enough to frighten them off. Paolo Bianchini, co-owner of Ciacci Piccolomini<sup>1/2</sup>



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