



Livernano and Casalvento

Bob Cuillo was born to a poor family in the Bronx, New York, but he went on to own one of the largest car dealerships in the US. After this, he dedicated himself to his passion: music. From the 1970s he produced films and shows on Broadway and in London.

What does this have to do with wine? Well, Cuillo bought Casalvento, a property in the heart of Chianti Classico in 1997 and Livernano, the neighbouring wine estate, in 2002, resulting in a property of 185ha, with 25ha under vine. He restored the old Livernano village and turned it into a country resort with a restaurant.

Today, Cuillo's wife Gudrun meets almost every visitor to the winery, so a wine tour here is one of the most personable experiences in Tuscany.

Hours and visits Open daily at the Casalvento estate for wine tours. You can drop in for an informal wine bar visit or make an appointment for a proper tour and tasting – all for free.

Restaurant Chef Andrea Mancini's restaurant is in a beautiful valley. If you're lucky you'll be there when one of Cuillo's famous singer friends provide impromptu entertainment.

*Livernano 67/A, 53017 Radda in Chianti.
+39 0577 738353; livernano.it*

Above: Bob and Gudrun Cuillo play host



Castiglion del Bosco

The ancient hamlet was built in 1100, right in the heart of the Orcia valley, a UNESCO World Heritage site known for its breathtaking landscape.

Massimo Ferragamo bought the estate 11 years ago and turned it not only into a beautiful winery producing modern-style Brunello, but also a splendid resort with two great restaurants, a spa and one of Italy's most sought-after golf courses, designed by Tom Weiskopf.

The wine tour starts in the barrel cellar, an impressive wooden amphitheatre, and finishes in the slick tasting room. Be sure not to miss a visit to the Campo del Drago vineyard – one of the most picturesque in Italy.

Hours and visits Various types of visit that can be arranged at a time to suit, depending on your interests. Booking beforehand is required.

Restaurant The main restaurant, Campo del Drago, is known for its excellent fare in elegant surroundings.

For a more casual dining experience, there is a traditional trattoria and cosy wine bar with a stunning terrace overlooking the valley – the wine list offers top Italian wines at great prices.

Località Castiglion del Bosco, 53024 Montalcino Siena. +39 0577 807078; castigliondelbosco.com **D**

Filippo Bartolotta is the managing director of Italian wine travel agency Le Baccanti, a lecturer in wine culture at the University of Siena, as well as English editor of the L'Espresso Italian Wine Guide

Biondi Santi – Tenuta il Greppo

In 1888, the first Brunello di Montalcino was bottled here. In 2013, Franco Biondi Santi died at the age of 91, leaving his son Jacopo Biondi Santi, the fifth generation, at the helm of one of the world's most famous wineries.

Tenuta Il Greppo is high up in the hills of Montalcino. The ancient, rocky clay, Tuscan galestro, is the best soil to cultivate Sangiovese grapes, and wines here are old school, ageing up to three

years in big Slavonian oak casks.

Visiting here is like taking a step into Brunello history. Friendly staff lead guests through the beautiful estate, including the cellar – and by the barrel used to store the world's first Brunello. The tour concludes with a tasting of current release Brunello and Rosso di Montalcino or, if desired, a more extensive tasting.

Hours and visits Weekdays, by appointment only. Basic tour and tastings are €15 per person, but can cost more, depending on what you taste. There's the bonus of being able to buy an incredible selection of vintage bottles that have never left the estate. Currently drinking well are the liquorice- and violet-laden 1985, the balsamic, mineral 2001 Riserva, and the cherry- and cranberry-driven 2007.

No restaurant
*Villa Greppo 183, 53024 Montalcino.
+39 0577 848087; biondisanti.it*

Below: Biondi Santi, where the first Brunello was bottled

