

# Avignonesi Grandi Annate, only in the best vintages

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The Avignonesi Grandi Annate Vino Nobile di Montepulciano is a special wine, made only in the best years.  
*Patricia Decker*

Produced in only the best years, the **Avignonesi Grandi Annate Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG** is a pure reflection of Italy's signature **Sangiovese** grape. Grandi Annate translates to Great Vintages, and this single vineyard, 100% **Sangiovese wine** doesn't disappoint. Elegant in its balance and finesse, rich in concentration and flavor, accented with bright acidity and woven with savory notes, the Grandi Annate is a stunning wine that drinks well now, but will grow more complex with age.

Once the wine of Tuscan nobility, **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano** is currently undergoing a quality renaissance. With prices of **Brunello di Montalcino** skyrocketing, this less expensive cousin is making a comeback. Bright fruit, deep flavor, concentrated and textured, high in acidity, good structure and balance, Vino Nobile is a dynamic wine that is a good value.

**Avignonesi** is a well known Tuscan wine producer which changed hands in 2009. Since then, Avignonesi has become 100% organic, and the largest biodynamic producer in Italy. There has

been a shift from Bordeaux varietals, like Cabernet Sauvignon, to a laser focus on Sangiovese, and the distinct Montepulciano terroir. Adding more vineyards, eight in total in Montepulciano, their motto, “Terroir speaks, we listen” has guided their winemaking decisions. The **Grandi Annate** took a four year hiatus, resuming with the 2011 vintage. In previous years, this wine was a blend of Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon. Starting with 2011, the Grandi Annate will be 100% Sangiovese from either a single vineyard or a blend of several. The 2011 bottle, which I sampled, is pure Sangiovese, produced from 40 year old vines grown in the historic **I Poggetti** estate.

Perfumed aromas of fresh flowers, black currant and red plums, and hints of eucalyptus swirl and evolve into an elegant, concentrated wine. Flavors of cherry, tobacco, spice, and hints of leather and earth flesh out the savory structure, with firm but silky tannins, and a long, persistent finish with cedar overtones. This is a wine that needs time, open or decant two hours before, and its charms will enchant you.

The Avignonesi Grandi Annate Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG is a special occasion wine, perfect for your holiday meals, with a suggested retail price of \$95. A complex wine, made only when conditions are right, it expresses the best of Tuscany.



**Patricia Decker**

Burbank Wine Shopping Examiner

