



Montecappone

By Ian D'Agata

2012 Montecappone Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico

89

Bright straw-green. Pear and apricot on the bright nose. Fresh, saline flavors of apple, pear and almonds linger impressively on the finish, which features a tannic bite. A little more concentration and this would have merited an outstanding rating.

2012 Montecappone Tabano Marche Bianco

92

(\$29) Bright straw. Very fruity aromas of apricot, yellow apple and ripe pear lifted by a pretty note of jasmine. Fresh and suave on the palate, with creamy flavors of pear jelly, apple cider and apricot kernel. The finish is long and rich. There's real weight to this wine as well as a touch of residual sweetness, but plenty of acidity keeps it light and lively. Very good stuff.

2012 Montecappone Federico II Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico Superiore

91

Bright pale straw. Bright nose hints at grapefruit, white peach, oyster shell, almond and sage; more perfumed than the 2011. Fresh and clean on entry, then tactile and taut in the mid-palate, offering superb energy and cut to its gooseberry, almond and herb flavors. Finishes long and clean, with a subtle touch of citrus zest.

2011 Montecappone Federico II Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico Superiore

90

Bright straw. Passion fruit, green fig and sage on the perfumed nose and lively palate. A laser beam of acidity extends the flavors on the back, with a persistent white pepper nuance providing extra lift. This wine will no doubt remind you of sauvignon blanc, and that's a direct result of the hyper-reductive winemaking techniques used by Lorenzo Landi, the consulting winemaker who follows the doctrines of Denis Dubourdieu in trying to avoid oxidation and to preserve thiols at all cost. It's an outstanding wine, but it will remind you of verdicchio only on the long finish.

2011 Montecappone Sauvignon La Breccia Marche Bianco

87

Medium-deep yellow. Delicate lemon and herb aromas on the straightforward nose. Bright and fresh, with lemon and white flower flavors picking up weight on the back. Finishes with a light creamy touch.

2011 Montecappone Tabano Marche Bianco

90

(\$29) Pale, bright yellow. Musky white peach and fresh apricot on the herbal, delicately spicy nose, along with a vanilla note. Silky, sweet and bright, with a fine-grained texture and very suave stone fruit and vanilla flavors. Today this wine's stone fruit sweetness and delicate herbal qualities dominate any underlying minerality. Finishes rich and long, with a light touch. One of the most delicious Tabano Biancos ever.

2010 Montecappone Utopia Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico Riserva

92(+?)

(\$40) Pale bright yellow. Brilliantly delineated aromas of gooseberry, crystallized lemon peel, white flowers and almond. Sweet, dense and large-scaled, displaying an oily quality and serious weight to its lemon, white peach and sage flavors. Large-scaled but very pure and graceful verdicchio, finishing long, suave and not at all aggressive thanks to its harmonious juicy acidity. One of the more impressive, precise Utopia Verdicchios from Montecappone in recent memory: I'd cellar this another year or two to let it develop more of its verdicchio-typical almond nuances.

2012 Montecappone Rosso Piceno**90**

(\$19) Opaque purple-ruby. Very fruity aromas of fresh blackberry, blueberry and smoky plum. Bright and fresh on the palate, with repeating flavors of ripe plum and blackberry lifted by bright acidity. Finishes long and enticingly juicy. A terrific food wine and an excellent by-the-glass pour for restaurants.

2011 Montecappone Rosso Piceno**91**

(\$19) (70% montepulciano and 30% sangiovese): Good deep red-ruby with purple highlights. Crushed berries and licorice on the nose, complicated by a bright floral quality. Vibrant and concentrated, with red cherry and red berry flavors accented by licorice and minerals. The bright, long finish offers outstanding clarity and cut for an entry-level wine. Remarkably balanced and pure--one of the best Rosso Piceno wines from Montecappone in years.

2012 Montecappone Tabano Marche Rosso**89**

(\$32) Dark medium red. Dark plum, tobacco leaf, and a whiff of menthol on the nose. On the lean side but not at all hard, with good vinosity to its floral redcurrant, tobacco and spicy flavors. I love this wine's balance. Finishes with firm but easygoing tannins and decent length.

(Salvia Bianca Imports, www.salviabianca.com)