TERROIR SENSE

Brunello di Montalcino Vigna La Casaccia Docg 2017: Wines of the Week by Ian D'Agata Bright medium red with garnet highlights. Aromas and flavours of ripe red cherry, plum, and orange peel are complemented by strong notes of tobacco and earth. Perfumed and luscious on entry, then somewhat broad and diffuse in the middle, with ripe red cherry, plum nectar and redcurrant jelly flavours complicated by a dusting of wild herbs. Very fine tannins leave a suave mouthfeel behind on the long, savoury finish that features repeating strong nuances of sweet pipe tobacco. Under the capable direction of talented Francesco Ripaccioli, Canalicchio di Sopra has recently pole-vaulted into the upper stratosphere of the better Montalcino estates, producing Brunellos that rank every year with the fifteen or so best of the vintage. A good example of the talent at the winery is showcased by the 2017 Brunello La Casaccia , an excellent wine made in a hot, difficult year that caused headaches at many other estates. Clearly, it helps that Canalicchio di Sopra is located in the northern and much cooler part of the Montalcino denomination, such that hot years like 2017 pose less of a threat to the making of refined, well-balanced wines. Located at an altitude of 297-315 meters above sea level, the La Casaccia vineyard was planted in 1990; its soil is mostly clay with some pebbles and plenty of minerals, and tends to give the largest, broadest and most powerful of Canalicchio di Sopra's wines. First made with the 2015 vintage, the wine spends about 25 days on the skins and is stainless steel-fermented and spends thirty-six

months in 2500 liters Slavonian oak casks. Ready to drink now thanks to the specifics of the 2017 vintage, I would drink this up over the next ten years for maximum enjoyment while your 2015s and 2016s Brunellos mature in the cellar. This 2017 is a great example of what the word “cru” really means: La Casaccia is a true cru in that it delivers not just a good wine that is recognizable vintage to vintage (“recognizable” as in recognizably coming from that specific plot of land), but that can overcome the vagaries of bad weather. In other words, it’s not every plot of land that can give you an excellent wine in a difficult year like 2017: that is the difference between wines that are of a villages , a lieu-dit , a premier or a grand cru . The really good premier crus and the grand crus can push the vintage characteristics somewhat in the background and give a better wine than other plots of land, near and far; in this light La Casaccia is certainly worthy of Premier or Grand Cru status. Further proof of this is furnished us by the Brunello La Casaccia from 2018, another beautiful wine (94 points here on the TerroirSense Wine Review : see Brunello and Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2018, 2017 and other recent releases. August 18 and August 23, 2023) and that too was a very difficult vintage (for different reasons than those that made 2017 difficult). In any case, Canalicchio di Sopra’s La Casaccia Brunello, is a relatively new wine that was made for the first time only in 2015: time will tell exactly where exactly it falls on the scale of great Montalcino Brunello crus, but we already have enough info to declare this vineyard a dandy. Drinking window: 2023-2033. Canalicchio di Sopra 2017 Brunello di Montalcino Docg La Casaccia - 92/100 by Ian D’Agata https://terroirsense.com/en/p/9475.html