

# Untold Italy Episode 213: Wines of Southern Tuscany - Brunello di Montalcino and Beyond

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 213.

Ciao a tutti and Benvenuti to Untold Italy, the travel podcast, where you go to the towns and villages, mountains and lakes, hills and coastlines of Bella Italia. Each week your host Katy Clarke takes you on a journey in search of magical landscapes of history, culture, wine, gelato, and, of course, a whole lot of pasta. If you're dreaming of Italy and planning future adventures there, you've come to the right place.

## Katy

Ciao everyone! I hope you're well and sipping on a lovely glass of Italian wine or thinking about when you can do that later in the day or week. I'm recording this episode in February but by the time it goes live I'll be back in Italy exploring Rome and Venice this time with a side trip to Berlin for a travel conference. I'm really in a quandary about what to pack because it will be super cold in Berlin - close to freezing in fact but in Rome it's quite mild. I guess it's layers for me and a cozy coat, hat and gloves.

I really need to be on top of the luggage allowances this time as I'm flying within Europe and in those cases, you're really restricted to budget airlines with very strict luggage policies. So be aware if you are flying within Europe to make sure what is included and not included so you don't get caught out.

OK back to the wine because that's much more interesting don't you think? And today our favorite wine experts Olivia and Andrea from Italian Wine Tales are back to share their insight into the beautiful wine region around the town of Montalcino. Right in the heart of Tuscany's Val D'Orcia, this is an incredibly picturesque area of the world that has been rightly recognized by UNESCO as a world heritage area and it is home to some of Italy's best-loved wine including Brunello di Montalcino.

This is the area we explore on our Tuscany Wine and Wellness tour and we're so thrilled to take guests there. Most visitors stick to the Chianti region which is closer to Florence but this little pocket of Tuscany is jam-packed full of surprises, not the least being its amazing wine.

So let's get started and hear all about Montalcino and the Val D'Orcia in Southern Tuscany.

## Katy

Bentornati. Welcome back to the Untold Italy podcast, Olivia and Andrea.

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**Olivia**

Ciao, Katie. Ciao, everyone.

**Andrea**

Ciao.

**Olivia**

Thanks for having us again, Katie.

**Katy**

Well, it's always a pleasure. Now, I want to know how you've been, and I hope you've been staying cozy there over the winter. I know that you've recently been in Barolo country visiting family and friends.

**Olivia**

Yes, we have. We've been up in beautiful terrain, but I have to say, it was unseasonably warm there. They didn't have a lot of snow this year. Yeah, not so cozy, but yeah, it's going to be interesting. It seems like spring is already here. For people listening, we're in February right now.

**Katy**

It's really unpredictable, isn't it? It's hard to explain, really, and the differences in the weather because I think it would normally be quite cold up there, 5 or 6 degrees. Strange things are happening, and I hope it doesn't impact the wine too much because obviously the wine is very sensitive to changes in the environment. Anyway, what I wanted to do today was chat about one of Italy's most celebrated wines, very similar to Barolo in terms of the fact that it's very famous. That one is the Brunello and the area that it comes from in Southern Tuscany. But first, can you quickly remind everyone where you're from and why you're so passionate about Italian wine?

## **Olivia**

I'm Australian if you can't tell by my accent, and I've been living in Italy for nearly five years. I came here for what I thought was going to be a year, and then it's extended into longer. I met Andrea. And yet more recently, we started Italian Wine Tales together, which is an online resource to learn more about Italian wine in a fun and approachable way. And I also lead many of the Untold Italy tours, and we do have a tour that goes to this wine region. So we'll talk about that a bit more later. But Andrea is the Italian.

## **Andrea**

I am actually Italian, in fact. Up north, as they say, from Torino. I've worked in restaurants before, always been passionate about wines. We decided to put our passion into Italian Wine Tales. This is why we're here today.

## **Katy**

It's always so fun to have you here. I love it. You make it so approachable and no one's scared to have a try of the wines. I know I'm sorry to break you away from the Barolo, Andrea, but we do need to talk about Brunello this time. But let's paint a picture for everyone because I think sometimes Italy is actually not that big a country, but it's also very regional. Everything comes from a pretty small pocket of land. In this case, it's in Tuscany. Now, where is it? Can you describe the area?

## **Andrea**

Val D'Orcia is in the Southern part of Tuscany, about 2 hours south of Florence. As you said, it's quite a small pocket of land. It's just 16 kilometers squared. The Montalcino area we're going to talk about today is not very big, but even if it's not massive, there are 250 wine producers just in this area because it's very, very rich in wine and history, as we're going to talk about in a moment. It's close to Siena as well. So if you're there, you can visit as well. And it's full of beautiful villages to visit. There is, of course, Montalcino. There is Montepulciano, and there is a beautiful town, probably my/our favorite in the region, which is Pienza. Absolutely stunning. Beautiful view from the walls. It's very, very beautiful. The difference between Val d'Orcia and Chianti, which probably the listeners are very familiar with, is that Val d'Orcia has open vistas and a lot of the classic Tuscan roads with Cyprus's roads alongside. It's a fable place. It's beautiful. Probably my favorite area in Tuscany, in fact.

## **Katy**

Yeah, it's really super iconic. I think one of the films actually that's brought at home to everyone is Gladiator. There's a scene where there's walking along the road with the cypress trees, if anyone can remember that. But it's really evocative. You know that you're in Tuscany when you're in that area. It's the pictures that you've seen. I'm really glad you mentioned the contrast between the Chianti because I think most people do go to Chianti, and that's much more rolling hills. You're right, Val d'Orcia is big, wide open spaces, and it's a very different landscape. Okay, so let's dig a little bit deeper into this region, shall we? Maybe we should talk about the wine first and what it's all about, and then we can go on to talk about what else we can do there.

## **Olivia**

Absolutely. Like Chianti, Brunello is also made from San Giovese, the famous Sangiovese grape. Differently to Chianti, a Brunello di Montalcino, sorry, is 100% Sangiovese, whereas Chianti can also... It has to be 80%, and it can have a few other grapes mixed in there. That's one difference. Brunello is a much more important wine, and by that, I mean the aging time. It actually requires 50 months spent aging, of which two years are spent aging in a barrique, which is a wooden barrel. That's different to Chianti. Chianti is a ready to drink wine. Obviously, you can age Chianti, too, but it's not a necessary requirement to have it aged as long as a Brunello.

## **Olivia**

Brunello, you're going to expect a really important wine. It's a big, bold wine. We're still talking European wine, so we're not saying Shiraz if you know an Australian wine drinker. There's some tannin there for sure, but it's an important wine.

## **Andrea**

It must be aged, in fact, for 50 months. At least two of those 50 months needs be spent into the barrique, so the wooden casket as part of the aging process.

## **Katy**

For years, I was doing my quick maths. I'm not very good at maths. I'm like, Wow. Now we'll be drinking the 2020 vintage I guess, or not even, maybe 2019. The pre-COVID vintage.

**Olivia**

Pre Covid

**Andrea**

If you want to have a taste of life pre-COVID, drink Brunello.

**Katy**

Oh, my gosh. Then you can understand probably why. It's probably a little bit more expensive than the other wines that we talk about, maybe like Chianti.

**Olivia**

Really good point. It is a lot more expensive than a Chianti Classical, and it's because of, obviously, how long it takes to produce this wine. The producers waiting for the five years before they get their return on their investment. It's a lot more expensive.

**Katy**

They probably have to keep... I'm just thinking the cellars must be quite big as well because you're keeping five years of wine in a cellar, so they're going to have to be quite big.

**Olivia**

Yeah, that's true. As we were saying at the start, though, it's such a tiny area and a lot of producers. But because it's such a labor-intensive product, they don't seem to make... I mean, you can find Antinori is like a big wine producer, but a lot of them are small family producers. That do make quite a small quantity of Brunello. I mean, we'll talk about it during this episode. They also make another wine that's a lesser important wine, and their version, I guess, of the ready-to-drink Chianti. It's not a Chianti, it's something else that we can talk about later as well.

**Katy**

What does it taste like and what do we drink it with? Because in Italy, obviously, we're always drinking our wine with our food.

**Olivia**

Exactly. It's definitely a foody wine. In terms of the flavors, tobacco, leather.

**Andrea**

Yeah, musk, red berries. It's quite intense. I really, really like it.

**Olivia**

Definitely some tannins, but because it's been aged for a while, they're nice and round. It's not so hitting you in the face with the tannin. It's really a little silky, I would say.

**Andrea**

The astringent component in the mouth of the tannin is not disturbing.

**Olivia**

Yeah, but it's not a wine that you're going to have for aperitivo hour, okay? You want to be pairing this with a classic pairing is like the chingiale or the wild boar, which is a typical Tuscan countryside dish. Something like that would go really well or other gamey meats. Otherwise, of course, like even the Bisteca that famous in Florence, the steak, right? That's going to go really, really nicely.

**Andrea**

Polenta with cheese as well. We were discussing the other day if you could also have this with ribolitta, which is the typical Tuscan soup. I was more in favor of it, and Liv was not so in favor of it. If you try to have it with the ribolitta, let us know who was right.

**Olivia**

But I think the name is these big, wintry, hardy dishes that - They need something to cut through them.

**Andrea**

Yeah.

**Katy**

Yeah. Okay. It's hard how long is a piece of string, but comparatively, what would be the price of a bottle of Brunello?

**Olivia**

Well, if you're buying it in a restaurant, it's always going to be more expensive than a wine shop, right? If you're looking at a restaurant, it's probably at least €100, I would say.

**Andrea**

It depends. It's quite expensive. Of course, as she was saying, if you buy directly from the producer, it can go down significantly, but I would say around 50-ish.

**Olivia**

At least 50 from a producer, at least. Then if you want to get one of the best years or something even older, then of course, the price is going to be more expensive. Then also, with all different wines in Italy, they always have the Reserva version, which is the best of the best grapes, the one that's been aged for longer. That's going to be significantly more expensive than just your average Brunello di Montalcino if you go for the Reserva version. An extra price tag. Extra deliciousness, though.

**Katy**

Yeah, amazing. I think the guests on our tour are very lucky on our wine and wellness tour because they definitely get to taste the Brunello, including the Reserva. We always like to make sure everyone's happy wherever. There's no being stingy here. If you're going to have it, you do it properly, right?

**Olivia**

Absolutely. There are plenty of wine tasting, plenty of delicious wines.

**Katy**

Yeah, excellent. I guess the cost is also driven by the small amount of bottles that are produced. It's really interesting to maybe make a comparison. I don't know if you know off the

top of your head, because I didn't ask you this in advance, but how many bottles, a small producer, how many would they make, maybe?

### **Andrea**

Well, I don't think that the number of bottles produced is small per se, because even if it's a small piece of land, there are quite a lot of producers, in fact. And there are bigger producers, as we were going to mention. So like Antinori, that you already mentioned, which produces around three million bottles a year, not just of Brunello, of course, but Brunello is among them. And then other smaller producers, which are mainly focused on Brunello, still produce significant numbers. It's like 33,000 bottles, Le Chiuse, or Poggio di Sotto, which is another producer, produces 120,000 bottles a year. The numbers are still significant.

### **Katy**

That is a lot. It's so interesting to get your head around when you see the small plots of vineyards and you think how much they get out of them. It's quite astounding, really. Sometimes when we think of maybe if you've been in the New World, United States or Australia, you see these big expanses of vineyards. But in Italy, they're quite small, quite little patches, really. It's quite astounding to think so much wine comes from them. What about these vineyards? What do they look like? What's the vibe?

### **Olivia**

Yeah, they're really beautiful. As you say, though, they're in a really condensed area, so really small, beautiful area. So you can actually visit quite a few wineries if you're going to be based there because they're all next to each other. Yeah, they're the rolling hills as well, but different to Chianti. Chianti is more like winding roads. If you get carsick, just keep that in mind. Whereas Val d'Orcia is better, right? Because it's big spread out areas and open plain vistas is what I'm saying, I guess. It's in 16 km zone. I always think of the Val d'Orcia, and it does depend on what season you go, but it's been really golden, especially in the fall season, which is when we have the tour running in 2024. It's really like sun-kissed, almost. Of course, after they do all the harvesting and stuff as well, it has a different look, but it's really golden and beautiful. Then obviously, if you're busy in the springtime, you've got all the leaves It's coming up, and it's really green, and it's a total different look. I like the two contrast. But for me, when I think of the Val d'Orcia in this wine region, I think of golden glowing.



**Olivia**

I just love it.

**Katy**

I remember going there, I don't know. I'm just starting to go a few many years back now. But I remember going to meet a friend for lunch, as you do in Monticello. It was one of those random, amazing experiences. We were driving on the road and I just said to my husband, "you got to pull over". I need to take a photo every three seconds because it was just these perfect shots of those pine trees and the roads just meandering through the valley. It's so nice. This was in October, and you're right, it's so sun-kissed. If people think of Tuscan hues, they do tend to think of that burnt orange and the muted. That's exactly what you're going to get when you go there. I feel like if you're going to be having this Brunello and these hearty dishes, you got to get out and about and explore a bit. What do you think?

**Olivia**

Absolutely. You've got to do some wine tasting and some sightseeing.

**Katy**

What things can you do around that region?

**Olivia**

There's a lot to do. There's a lot of hilltop villages that are worth visiting. Andrea mentioned a few before. Pienza is quite a popular one to visit now. For people who don't know Pienza, but I know you've got a podcast on it, Katie, it was built to be a utopia, the ideal city by one of the popes.

**Andrea**

Yeah, exactly.

**Olivia**

That's really nice. If you love cheese, it's so funny. It literally smells like pecorino.

## Andrea

In a good way, though. It smells like cheese, but it's good cheese. It's recommended.

## Olivia

That's just beautiful. It's just so pretty, and all the streets got really romantic names. That's a definite must-visit. Of course, the town of Montalcino, you have to visit. It's tiny, It's like a little medieval hilltop town. That's worth popping in to see. Montepulciano is only half an hour away from Montalcino so that's another must-visit. They also make wine there. It's not as an important wine, but you're in the area, of course, you're going to go and visit and you've got to compare and contrast because we can't always have such a big, heavy wine with every dish. There's a time and a place for every wine. Of course, we visit that on our Val d'Orcia Wine and Wellness tour. Then there's lots of littler towns, too. I think you mentioned one just before, Katy - Monticello. That's a really cute town.

## Andrea

A place is the Sant'Antimo Abbey, which is beautiful. We visited before and it's stunning. It's in the area and it's worth going to see. It's a little Abbey. Amazing. I really recommend it.

## Katy

There's so many cute little spots there, aren't there? I like just driving around. You can just spend hours driving around. But there is another few towns there that are to my new favorite passion, which is thermal baths. They're right there in the area. Haven't you? You've got these thermal bath towns that are very elegant.

## Olivia

Oh, my God. That was a new discovery for me a few years ago, too. One of these thermal bath towns. Oh, my God, it's heaven. You go and you just relax in this beautiful... I mean, you can get different... You can go to different properties. And this one very It's a luxurious hotel where you can enjoy the thermal baths with everyone. And it's just so nice. It's the perfect thing to do in fall, especially, but also in the springtime when it's still a little bit crisp and you just soak in the waters. And they're really good for you, too. A lot of health benefits. Then you go and have your wine.

**Andrea**

Yeah.

**Katy**

Sounds really great. I mean, this is the thing. You can do that and you can get on a bike and there's lots of hikes around. It's really a place where you can settle in for a few days. Like Andrea said earlier, it's really close to Siena, too. If you love Siena, and I know a lot of people do, what's not to love? I love Siena, too, you can definitely head on over there, too. Let's talk about visiting these wineries, though. I mean, everyone wants to know, Where should I go? Which one should I choose? Do you have some suggestions?

**Olivia**

Yes, we do. Definitely. Andrea was mentioning before, Antinori. I'm sure if people have heard of wineries in Tuscany, they've probably heard of Antinori because he is the most famous in Tuscany. He also produces the Chianti Classico, so you can try that while you're there, as well as the Brunello, as well as Super Tuscans. You can tick everything off by going to that winery. It is in a really architecturally stunning, stunning canteen or cellar. Whenever you take the... you're on the highway there in Tuscany, you go past it again and again. I think that's a nice one to visit, but obviously, keep in mind, that's a big winery. They make 3 million bottles of wine a year. If you're expecting to meet the whole family, that's not going to happen there.

**Katy**

But that one's more closer on the other side of Siena to Montalcino, right?

**Olivia**

Exactly.

**Katy**

But a good thing about that one is you can try lots of different ones at that place.

**Olivia**

Exactly, right? Yeah. But if you wanted to try some wineries that are closer to Montalcino itself and just really specializing in the Brunello wine, Andrea has some suggestions for you.

## Andrea

We've Le Chiuse, as we said before, which is a biodynamic winery, or Poggio di Sotto, which is as well an organic winery. Just remember that in Italy, when you go to a busy winery, you can just show up. You have to book online in advance, so keep that in mind.

## Andrea

Another one that we would recommend more for historical reasons is the Biondi Santi family winery, because the Biondi Santi family is the family which actually created Brunello for how we know it today. They've been doing this since 1888, so they know what they're doing.

## Olivia

I think the other thing that we're really used to in Australia in America, when we go to wineries, is that you can have lunch there, too, normally. It's not always the way in Italy. A lot of these smaller wineries, for example, their focus is not on the hospitality side of things. Their focus is on making wine. But if you did want to go to a winery where you can have a really nice lunch, Tornesi, that is a nice suggestion, right outside of Montalcino. You can do your tasting and you can have lunch.

## Katy

Yeah, I think it's really important to remind people of that. There are the big ones, and they will definitely offer a full suite of hospitality options. You can have ones that do picnics and different styles of wine tasting. But it is quite nice to go and see the real small producers where they are just literally doing the tasting so they can sell the wine. It's not part of a branding exercise. It's a literal cellar door where they're just selling the wine at their door and they're passionate about it. To make a plan, how many wineries would you expect to do in a day, maybe in that area?

## Olivia

Maximum three. That is maximum. I mean, I think Italians wouldn't visit three in a day unless maybe you're working in wine. In Australia, that would be such a normal thing to see three wineries in a day on a winery excursion, but that would be maximum, so maybe two.

**Andrea**

Don't push it.

**Olivia**

Make sure You eat in between, okay? Because as we said, this is a big wine, so you need to have some food.

**Katy**

It sounds like one where you might need someone to drive you around that wine, I think.

**Andrea**

Absolutely, yes. You need a driver to go around in the car. But if you ...If you're not to have a car, it's recommended to have a driver, someone taking you around the wineries and in the region.

**Olivia**

Yeah, there's no - forget public transport here, okay? You can get to Siena with a bus, but that's about it.

**Katy**

I think what's really interesting at the moment is there's a rise of things called wine resorts where you can actually stay at a winery and they've got experiences on site. I think that makes things a lot easier for people because I think if you're on vacation, driving in a foreign country is probably not the most relaxing unless you enjoy it. My husband does enjoy the driving. He's a bit - I was going to say strange, but let's not go there. But it's not for everyone. This is an area where you do need a car, but also think really hard about whether you want to be driving because there's so many great things to experience where you probably wouldn't want to be.

**Olivia**

Yeah, exactly. The alternative It's the same as you go on a tour. You can come with us on the Wine and Wellness tour where we visit all the different wine regions in the Val d'Orcia, or you

can do a day tour, make the choice that works out for you. Because remember, if you're driving as well, someone has to be designated driver.

**Andrea**

Yeah. They can't drink.

**Olivia**

And who wants to miss out on tasting Brunello, right?

**Katy**

Absolutely not. That sounds terrible. Okay. Is there any other wines that we can try in this area? Because it's such a big wine area.

**Andrea**

Yes, absolutely. There is the other famous wine from Montalcino, which is called Rosso di Montalcino. It's an easier wine compared to Brunello. The main difference is, in fact, in the aging. We said that the Brunello di Montalcino needs to be aged for a long time. While in fact, this one can be found on the market just one year after the harvest. So as you can imagine, it's lighter and it's also less expensive.

**Olivia**

A lot less, yeah.

**Andrea**

If you visit the wineries that we recommend, you will definitely find it more easy to drink, more affordable. It's still and it's still good. I mean, I like it. Don't think that just because it's not as expensive or as aged, it's not good. Absolutely not. This wine has similar characteristic to the Brunello, but it's an easier spirit overall. The color, it's bright red compared to the Brunello, which is a bit more dark. And the sense is blackberry, sour cherry. And since it's less aged, as we said, you can expect the tannins, the taste to be a bit more intense, but not too much.

**Olivia**

Andre just reminded me, too, when you said about the color of the wine. Something that we didn't mention at the start when we're talking about Brunello.

**Andrea**

About the Brunello, yeah.

**Olivia**

Yeah, is why it's called Brunello. True. You're better to explain this since it's an Italian word.

**Andrea**

Because the word Bruno in Italian means dark. It's because the color of the Sangiovese grape in that area grows with a particularly dark tone. And so it was called the Bruno, the Brunello, in fact, of Montalcino.

**Olivia**

The dark one. Yeah. So that's nice. But the other wine that you can also try besides the Rosso di Montalcino is the Rosso Nobile di Montepulciano. So that's the red wine made from the town that I was saying is half an hour away in Montepulciano. It is not as a full-bodied wine as the Brunello. It's not as important in terms of also the strength of that wine and their awards. It's not as a prestigious wine, I guess, but it's still definitely worth trying. There's a wine for every occasion I think.

**Katy**

Do they even make white wines? Because these are all red wines, right?

**Olivia**

Yeah, they're all red in this area.

**Andrea**

In this area, it's mostly red wine dominated. Yeah, absolutely.

**Olivia**

If you are a white wine drinker, we will recommend you other regions to visit if that's your preferred. If you don't like red wine, then it's not going to be your cup of tea or cup of wine.

**Andrea**

Cup of wine, yeah.

**Katy**

Glass of wine. Yeah. I mean, that's the that's the beautiful thing about Italy. You can always find something that suits your taste. If you like something bubbly, then you can go up north and to Prosecco country and Franciacorta. If you like white wine, obviously, the north is really wonderful for white wine as well. It is just amazing how many things you can do and see just by following your wine nose.

**Olivia**

Exactly.

**Katy**

I think it's also really accessible. You don't need to be an expert. I know there's one really big producer there called Castiglione del Bosco, which is very famous. It's very fancy. It's very nice. I haven't been to their estate in Val d'Orcia, but I have been to their wine tasting room in Florence. Let me tell you, that is a five-star. It's an incredible experience. If you're not going to make it down to the Val d'Orcia, go look up that wine room in Florence because you will get an exceptional experience there. They really know about hospitality and how to welcome guests and make them feel special. So 100%, if you're in Val d'Orcia, go check them out, and also if you're in Florence.

**Katy**

Okay, so look, I think this region is so beautiful, and there's so many things too - so from Thermal Springs, hot baths.

**Olivia**

Cheese.

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**Katy**

Cute towns.

**Olivia**

Yeah, we love it. Chianti is beautiful, but if you're looking for something that is a little bit more, I don't want to say off the beaten track, because by no means is it unknown, but it's a little bit less known than Chianti, and I think a little bit more varied in the activities that you can do. They also produce olive oil. We didn't even mention that, but it's Tuscany. So of course, they produce olive oil there. There's a lot that you can do. And if you like the Fiat 500s, that is a really typical exciting activity that you can do in the Val d'Orcia. You can go on a vintage Fiat 500 with driver and drive through those iconic landscapes that we mentioned, which I think if this is a special trip, what a special activity to do.

**Andrea**

The perfect Italian experience.

**Katy**

I know. And I think it's something that people do for their weddings. And you know what? I'm here to tell everyone, if you missed out on those special things for your wedding, it's not too late to do that stuff. I did that. I did my little exciting big birthday things last year. I just said, No, it's all about me, and I'm going to have the experiences that I felt I missed out on when I was getting married. Not that I didn't feel that at all. I think sometimes you don't need an excuse. Just do it. If you felt like you want to do something grand - Do it! Drink Brunello at the back of a vintage Fiat 500 in Tuscany, then you should just go for it.

**Olivia**

I love it. That's a great idea.

**Katy**

Now, Andrea and Liv, if our listeners are keen to learn more about Brunello and this enchanting part of Tuscany, how can they stay in touch with you and Italian Wine Tales?

**Olivia**

You can have a look at our website, which is [italianwinetales.com](http://italianwinetales.com). We have Instagram, and we also have a Facebook group, Italy Wine Lovers. They're the best ways to keep in touch with us. We're releasing new guides about different wine regions all the time.

**Katy**

They're working very hard. I don't know where they get all the time from. It's just... Anyway, a little reminder, if you are one of our lucky tour guests coming on our Southern Tuscany trip, exploring Brunello and other wines with a side of spa relaxation, you can also take advantage of Liv's expertise to help you order wines to send back home. Liv is in charge of choosing the wineries that we visit and the wine that we drink on our tours, and she's very, very particular about where we go. In fact, when I'm out and about in Australia and I'm looking for a wine, I often text Liv and say, "here's the wine list. Can you choose for me?" So, you're very lucky if you have her right there with you by your side.

**Olivia**

I've got to say that's one of my favorite activities. It's really nice. Keep it coming.

**Katy**

I mean I can just see your face, oh Katy's sent me another wine list.

**Olivia**

I love it.

**Katy**

Well, I think everyone deserves at least a few days in this beautiful area of Tuscany. It really is very special. So Grazie Liv and Andrea. Thank you for sharing your amazing Brunello expertise with us on Untold Italy.

**Olivia**

Grazie mille, Katy.

**Andrea**

Thank you, Katy.

**Olivia**

Thank you, guys. See you again.

**Olivia**

Ciao.

**Andrea**

Ciao.

**Katy**

Ciao.

**Katy**

And there you have it, beautiful southern Tuscany home to amazing wine, incredible scenery, thermal baths and much much more. If you think you've seen Tuscany but haven't been to this area then you really should dip in there or linger a while if you're returning to Italy. I promise that you won't be disappointed.

We're so excited to take our tour guests to the Val d'Orcia for a week of exploring this incredible region and soaking up all that it has to offer. Departing from Rome, we whisk you away to this idyllic countryside where your wine and wellness adventures begin. You can find out more about the tour including the full itinerary on our [untolditaly](https://untolditaly.com) tours website and there's a link in the app too.

And as always we've provided a full list of the wines and places mentioned as well as a link to our southern Tuscany wine and wellness tours into our detailed show notes for this episode found at [untolditaly.com/213](https://untolditaly.com/213). Make sure you have a poke around our website while you're there. There are hundreds of articles designed to help you build your dream trip to Italy. We're very proud of the information we send out into the world. It's based on a love for Italy and checked regularly so you know it's up to date.

Thanks to all our wonderful listeners for your ongoing support of Untold Italy. I hope you enjoyed today's show. If you did then it would be amazing if you gave us a rating or review in your favorite podcast app. If you're using Apple podcasts then you need to go to the show

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page for Untold Italy - not the episode page - and scroll down until you see “ratings and reviews”. You can leave your 5-star review and message there.

On next week’s episode, we’re taking another virtual trip to beautiful Italy to discover exactly what makes us want to return again and again.

But until then it’s “ciao for now”.