

Campania whites

DOCG wines made from Fiano and Greco may be the stars here, but two other grapes are also making a name for themselves. Tom Hyland reviews this exciting white region

CAMPANIA IS THE home of some of Italy's most singular white wines, especially those made from indigenous grapes.

Eruptions of Mount Vesuvius over the centuries have laced the soils with ash and other volcanic deposits; this imparts a distinct minerality to the wines, especially in Montefredane, one of the most important towns for Fiano di Avellino. The finest versions are powerful, in some years quite lush, with aromas of lemon zest, papaya and magnolia commonplace. The versions from Lapio, further east and slightly higher in altitude (480m elevation versus 400m) tend to be more delicate with jasmine and golden apple aromas but with a less pronounced minerality. The finest examples from both zones drink well for five to seven years, and fine 10- to 12-year bottlings are not uncommon.

Greco di Tufo is a more refined wine with slightly higher acidity than Fiano di Avellino. Where the latter can often be more fruit forward, Greco tends to be more subtle; minerality is quite pronounced. This is a much smaller zone than that of Fiano di Avellino; important sites include Santa Paolina (home to the Cutizzi vineyard of Feudi di San Gregorio) and Montefusco. Vineyards in the latter town reach heights of 600m – ideal results for vibrant wines that highlight expressive aromas of pear, lime and lemon zest, along with a trademark note of almond. While many examples of Greco di Tufo are ideally consumed within three to five years, some can last well up to 20 years.

Beyond Greco & Fiano

Falaghina tends to be a more humble wine, with its textbook high acidity and notes of green apple and citrus. Much is grown in the inland province of Benevento, while the historic roots of this variety are actually in the province of Caserta. The Campi Flegrei district is another stronghold for the variety; the seaside versions tend to be more floral, while those from Benevento are fruitier in nature.

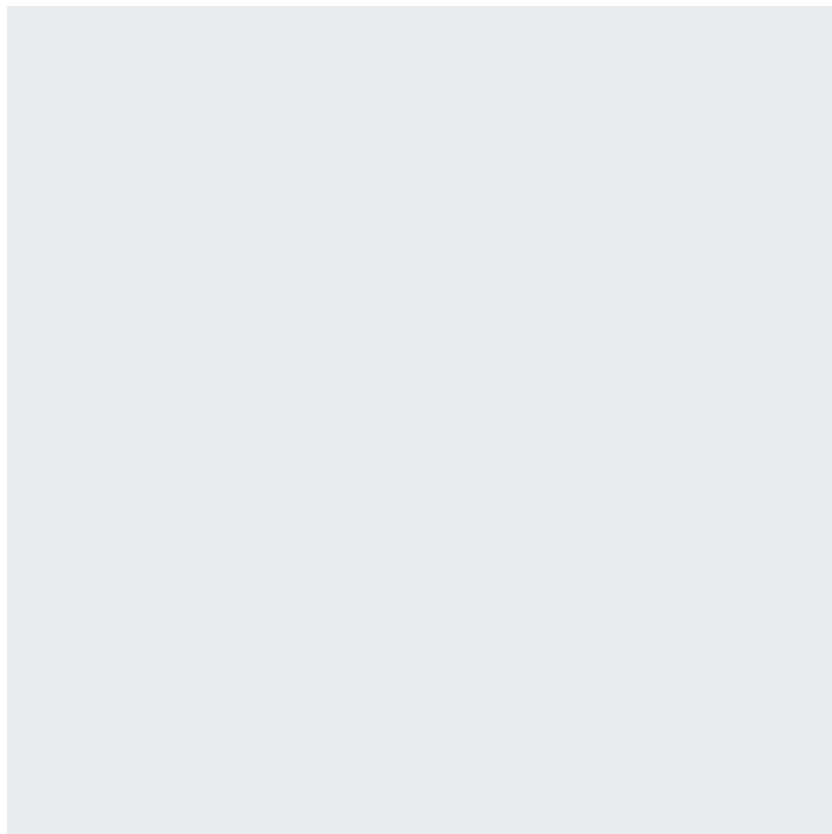
Coda di Volpe is another variety attracting attention. For years, this grape has been known as the main one in Lacryma Christi – a simple wine meant for early drinking. Throughout Irpinia, Coda di Volpe is sometimes used as a blending grape (up to 15%) in both Greco di Tufo and Fiano di Avellino, but now a few local estates are making a varietal wine. These emphasise citrus fruit and white flower aromas in a mid-weight framework. They are not cellar candidates, nor do they possess much in the way of minerality, but they are attractive wines that display immediate charm.

Campania can get very hot in summer, so rain is a key factor; indeed Irpinia records some of the highest rainfall totals in Italy on an annual basis. Lack of rain in September can actually result in less than optimal conditions; as in 2011, which produced powerful, forward whites that while quite flavourful, lacked the structure for lengthy cellaring.

Ongoing viticultural research has resulted in wines of greater refinement throughout Campania in recent years; the region's whites are among the finest in the country. Now the area's most dedicated producers are raising the stakes with more single-vineyard offerings, no doubt to gain the attention of the rest of the wine world.

Tom Hyland is the author of *Beyond Barolo and Brunello: Italy's Most Distinctive Wines*

Map: Maggie Nelson



Campania: know your vintages

2012 Huge snowfall in the winter meant good water supply in the soil. A long, hot and dry summer followed by welcome rains in mid-October. Yields were low and the resulting wines are of fine quality with notable structure and perfumes. Cellar for five to 10 years.

2011 Less-than-average rainfall meant an early harvest. Powerful wines with excellent varietal character, with lower-than-usual acidity. Good vintage meant for earlier consumption; best over the next two to three years.

2010 Above-average rainfall; wines of great freshness, notable structure and outstanding aromatic qualities. For Sabino Loffredo of Pietracupa, 2010 was the finest vintage for Irpinian whites in the past 20 years. A classic vintage with great ageing potential; 10 years plus.

2009 Heavy rainfall, otherwise typical growing conditions. Slow ripening resulted in wines of excellent aromatic expression. Impressive richness, complexity and structure. Drink now and over the next three to five years.

Campania: the facts

Fiano 800ha planted in Campania, of which 550ha are in Irpinia and 170ha in Salerno

Greco 1,000ha planted in Campania, of which 800ha are in Irpinia

Falaghina 1,500ha planted in Campania of which about 1,000ha are planted in Benevento province and 40ha in Irpinia

The results

No Outstanding-rated wines, but nevertheless a very positive tasting that reflected the improvements in wine quality here in recent years – and with Greco and Fiano the highlights. Christelle Guibert reports

A DECADE AGO, who would have predicted that *Decanter* would host a tasting of the whites of Campania? But here we are, and with an impressive 76% of wines recommended, we can see how far the region has come in terms of quality.

'Structurally, Campania whites have the potential to be incredible – perhaps some of the best in the world,' said Emily O'Hare. Her fellow judges agreed. The region has everything going for it: great grape varieties, great climate, great terroir and passionate people,' said Ian D'Agata.

So, all very positive, but why no Outstanding wines? 'The overall standard was very good,' noted Michael Garner, 'but most of the samples are from 2012 – a big, hot vintage. As a result, some of the wines lacked subtlety and fragrance.' D'Agata agreed and didn't find any wines that 'knocked his socks off', feeling that 'this hot vintage compresses the aromas and decreases the acidity so the wines end up being less focused, and with less clarity to them'.

With so many native grape varieties to choose from, what should consumers look out for or leave on the shelves? The panel was unanimous; Greco and Fiano were the stars of the show. O'Hare described the Greco di Tufo wines as 'exhilarating and stimulating' and Garner defined them as

'Structurally, Campania whites have the potential to be some of the best in the world' Emily O'Hare

more consumer friendly. 'Greco has got this fleshy, ripe, honeyed quality with a good whack of acidity. It's a hedonistic style of wine and can be quite explosive on the palate.' While Fiano 'can have very distinctive aromas and elegance' explained Garner, 'the wines are more cerebral – they have a sort of waxy, floral, honey quality, with various fruit sensations.'

The Falanghina and Coda di Volpe varieties were judged works in progress. Garner compared Falanghina with Chardonnay: 'It's a kind of blank canvas upon which the winemaker can paint his own picture.' D'Agata said it was a hard grape to define as it lacks the typicality or character of Greco or Fiano – and yet it gets lots of attention. 'Falanghina is like a starlet with no talent who's on all the magazines, half naked. At least when the wine is well made it's soft, creamy and inoffensive and perfect for wine by the glass.'

The scores

80 wines tasted

0

Outstanding

16

Highly recommended

45

Recommended

18

Fair

0

Poor

1

Faulty

Opinions were divided on Coda di Volpe. Garner found the wines hit and miss: 'There were a few very good examples, but also a few very nondescript ones. It's a chameleon-like variety and until recently it lived in the shadow of Greco and Fiano.' D'Agata feels Coda di Volpe deserves to be better known: 'It does have typicality but it was always blended with Greco because it's a very high acid grape, so consumers don't really know its personality yet.' When made well, he said, it has a honey, white flower and peach character with vibrant acidity and lots of structure. 'It takes the middle ground: not quite as tannic as Greco, but bigger bodied than Fiano.'

In terms of ageability, Garner feels Fiano has potential if the wines have the balance to develop well in bottle. 'But few of the examples I tasted had the integrity and harmony.' With Greco, D'Agata felt 'producers haven't been making it well enough for long enough to tell how long it can age,' adding that this would improve in time. He said all the wines were drinking well now. O'Hare also noted the suitability of Campania's whites as food wines: 'They are loaded with flavours and aromas that enable you to pair them with bold, full-flavoured dishes.'

D'Agata said this was an exciting region for wine lovers. 'If you were to list the 10 top white winemakers from Italy today, four would be from Campania. That's how good the region is.'

Entry criteria: producers and UK agents were invited to submit their latest-release wines from Campania, made from 85% minimum of one of the following grapes: Fiano, Greco, Coda di Volpe, Falanghina

Highly Recommended

17–18.25pts (90–94pts)



Di Meo, F, Fiano di Avellino 2012

Decanter average score: 18.25/20pts (94/100pts) Individual judges' scores: Ian D'Agata 18 Michael Garner 18 Emily O'Hare 18.5

N/A UK www.dimeo.it

Notes of greengage, peach and kiwi with overtones of hazelnut and dried herbs. Full, round and ripe with mature flavours of liquorice and white peach. Good intensity and concentration. **Drink** 2014–2017 **Alcohol** 12.5%



Colle di San Domenico, Greco di Tufo 2012

18 (93) IDA 18 MG 18 EOH 18

N/A UK www.cantinecolledisandomenico.it

Lush, waxy and creamy nose of lychee and ginger. Big, full and ripe with juicy and peachy fruit flavours and fair acidity. A saline finish that is very clean. **Drink** 2014–2018 **Alc** 13%



Tenuta Sarno, Sarno 1860, Fiano di Avellino 2012

18 (93) IDA 18 MG 18 EOH 18

N/A UK www.tenutasarno1860.it

Ripe, fruity nose echoes green apple, pear and hazelnut. Round, ripe and creamy palate with nutty and soft fruit flavours underpinned by decent acidity. Ticks all the boxes. **Drink** 2014–2016 **Alc** 13%



Cantina del Taburno, Amineo, Coda di Volpe, Beneventano 2011

17.75 (92) IDA 18 MG 17 EOH 18

£19 Vini Italiani

Mirabelle plums, a floral sea breeze and a touch of aniseed. Ripe apricot and peach then drier tannic flavours of apple and pear. Finishes with mouthfilling and refreshing acidity. **Drink** 2014–2018 **Alc** 13%

The tasters' verdicts

Ian D'Agata



The Comitato Grandi Crus d'Italia named D'Agata Italy's best wine journalist in 2012. He is a DWWA Regional co-Chair for Italy, writes on the wines of Italy, Canada and Bordeaux for Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar, and is author of The Ecco Guide to the Best Wines of Italy and Guide to Excellence in Italian Wines. D'Agata is also co-director of Rome International Wine School and lectures on Italian food and wine cultural history for New York University's Food Sciences Master's program. Prior to his wine career, he graduated in paediatric gastroenterology and nutrition.

D'Agata's verdict

'2012 was characterised by a constant heat that didn't allow for noteworthy aromatic expressions in the wines. Producers made more interesting whites in 2011. Though high temperatures are less of an issue in parts of Campania like Irpinia (a mountainous, often cold, windswept area) than other areas in Italy more affected by heat, in 2012 even usually great wines such as Fiano di Avellino and Greco di Tufo were not very striking; the two wines also resembled each other more in this vintage than usual (constant heat being a flattener of wine diversity). But the 2012s made up in power and mineral expression what they lacked in gracefulness, complexity and floral perfume.'

'Despite what many in Italy say, Falanghina confirmed that, with few exceptions, it's a wildly overrated grape and wine, with too many poor renditions and too many different flavour profiles. Coda di Volpe instead confirms itself as a standout white that producers in Campania should increasingly look to.'

Michael Garner



Garner has worked in the wine business for more than 30 years and has specialised in Italian wine for nearly 25 years. He is co-author of Barolo: Tar and Roses, is a regular contributor to Decanter and has taught for the WSET.

Garner's verdict

'An excellent opportunity to look at how Campania is shaping up as an important white wine-producing region: a plethora of lesser known denominations waits in the

wings hoping to emulate the success of Irpinia's two famous DOCG whites – Greco di Tufo and Fiano di Avellino.

Overall standards were decent, though the need for separate identities for some of the more minor denominations is, particularly at this stage in the region's development, at best questionable. A handful of wines – Luigi Maffini's Kratos 2012 (Paestum), Quintodecimo's Via del Campo Falanghina 2012 (Irpinia), Cantina del Taburno's Amineo Coda di Volpe 2011 (Beneventano) and Fattoria La Rivolta's 2012 vintage wines from Sannio gave grounds for real optimism though.

Wine quality was, surprisingly, not higher within the two DOCG denominations, where the cool-climate growing conditions come into their own in hot and dry vintages such as 2012. Fiano di Avellino proved to be the most successful wine style: the Di Meo and Tenuta Sarno wines were delicious with Colle di San Domenico, Le Masciare and Villa Raiano's Ventidue not far behind. The Greco di Tufo wines were on the whole slightly less inspiring, though their broad, rich and ripe style offers good short- to medium-term drinking.'

Emily O'Hare



O'Hare is head sommelier and wine buyer at London's The River Café, where she has worked for five years. She also writes about Italian wine and sits on judging panels for Decanter and the DWWA. In her spare time she runs a women's tasting group, Women, Know Your Wine! and a wine-focused pop-up restaurant, Whizzbangpop.com.

O'Hare's verdict

'Despite there being quite a few low

scores in this tasting, there was still a lot to be positive about. There were many simple, well-made wines, with character and a sense of place, that should have very competitive prices. There are many great co-ops in Campania that make a number of very good wines; I would certainly choose these over many whites from better-known winemaking regions.

'There were some excellent Falanghinas and Grecos, but the Fianos from Avellino really delivered – they had invigorating acidity (many of these wines are from vineyards more than 400m above sea level) intensity, concentration and unique smoky, spicy, saline flavours.'

'Surprisingly, although the younger wines from 2012 were drinking well, as expected, the 2011s, now three years old, showed little sign of age – if anything their time in bottle had contributed further complexity. I have long found it tricky to put an ageing bracket around Campania's whites; some are best drunk within their vintage, whereas others can drink well for up to and even beyond five years.'

Highly Recommended (continued) 17-18.25pts (90-94pts)



Amarano, Dulcinea, Fiano di Avellino 2011 17.25 (90+) IDA 17 MG 17 EOH 17.5

£18.75 Vini Italiani, Grossi Wines
Ripe yellow fruit aromas with floral and spicy notes and a hint of smoke. A balanced palate with fair definition of ripe and nutty soft fruit flavours and a stony minerality that builds with aeration. **Drink** 2015-2018 **Alc** 13.5%



Colle di San Domenico, Fiano di Avellino 2012 17.25 (90+) IDA 17 MG 18 EOH 17

N/A UK www.cantinecolledisandomenico.it
Ripe and aromatic with mature yellow fruit aromas plus notes of honeysuckle and freesia. Round, full and juicy with full, fleshy flavours and a rich, creamy mid-palate. **Drink** 2014-2017 **Alc** 13%



Le Masciare, Anbra, Fiano di Avellino 2012 17.25 (90+) IDA 17 MG 17 EOH 17.5

N/A UK www.lemasciare.com
Good breadth of aroma with notes of linen, spice and red apple. This is a big, impressive wine that has a full, rich and creamy palate with good ripe fruit flavours and a spicy-toned finish. **Drink** 2014-2017 **Alc** 14%



Quintodecimo, Via del Campo, Falanghina, Irpinia 2012 17.25 (90+) IDA 17 MG 17 EOH 17.5

£17.50 (2011) Justerini & Brooks
Big, bright and beautiful. Fresh flowers, yellow apple and quince, then orange and lemon curd. Quite attractive ripe fruit flavours with a welcome note of green herbs. **Drink** 2014-2016 **Alc** 14%



Antico Castello, Greco, Irpinia 2012 17 (90) IDA 16.75 MG 16.5 EOH 17.5

£18 Immersus Emergo
Full, broad and waxy nose with intense plum and peach aromas. Typical palate of orchard fruit, anise and driven acidity. This is true to its grape variety. **Drink** 2014-2018 **Alc** 13%



Fattoria La Rivolta, Coda di Volpe, Sannio Taburno 2012 17 (90) IDA 17.5 MG 16.5 EOH 17

N/A UK www.fattorialarivolta.com
Soft and spicy nose with orange, rose water and berry fruit tones. Round, ripe and full with bright and balanced acidity and a peppery finish. **Drink** 2014-2017 **Alc** 13.5%



Fattoria La Rivolta, Fiano, Sannio Taburno 2012 17 (90) IDA 17 MG 17 EOH 17

N/A UK www.fattorialarivolta.com
Full and forward with overripe fruit aromas of melon and preserved lemons. Lovely, balanced, clean and rich with mouthwatering acidity that lifts the peppery, quince flavours nicely. **Drink** 2014-2017 **Alc** 12.5%



Filadoro, Santàri, Fiano di Avellino 2011 17 (90) IDA 17 MG 16.5 EOH 17.5

N/A UK www.filadoro.it
Mature and ripe with subtle citrus notes. A full palate of luscious soft fruit flavours and a balanced, smoky, clean finish. Looking good now and can age. **Drink** 2014-2019 **Alc** 13.5%



Luigi Maffini, Kràtos, Paestum 2012 17 (90) IDA 16.75 MG 17.5 EOH 17

£16 Lea & Sandeman
Light, bright, clean and fresh – simple but well made Fiano. Concentrated and balanced palate of tropical fruit and minerality with a broad floral-toned finish. This has a real sense of place. **Drink** 2015-2017 **Alc** 13%



Oppida Aminea, Pelike, Fiano, Sannio 2011 17 (90) IDA 17 MG 17 EOH 17

£12 TryWines
Ripe citrus notes of grapefruit and mandarin with a floral edge. Smoky, mineral, clean, long and fresh with well-chiselled fruit and a lovely finish. **Drink** 2014-2018 **Alc** 13.5%



Villa Raiano, Contrada Marotta, Greco di Tufo 2012 17 (90) IDA 16.75 MG 17.5 EOH 16.75

£19.50 Prestige Food & Wine
Very floral – almost Fiano-like – nose of orange blossom. Ripe, round and full with developed flavours of ginger. Lively acidity cleanses the palate of its chewy tannins and extract. **Drink** 2014-2017 **Alc** 13.5%



Villa Raiano, Ventidue, Fiano di Avellino 2011 17 (90) IDA 17 MG 17.5 EOH 16.5

£19.50 Prestige Food & Wine
Intense and creamy with mature tropical fruit aromas. Long and ripe with good mineral overlay to the white stone fruit and peach presence. Good acidity. **Drink** 2014-2016 **Alc** 13.5%

Recommended 15-16.75pts (83-89pts)

Wine	Score	IDA	MG	EOH	Tasting note	Alc	Drink	Price	Stockists
Di Meo, G, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.75 (89)	16.75	16	17.5	Rich, sweet and creamy with lemon oil and marmalade aromas and flavours. This is juicy and lots of fun; a good food wine.	12.5%	2014-2017	N/A UK	www.dimeo.it
Feudi di San Gregorio, Cutizzi, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.75 (89)	16.75	16.5	17	Fresh and floral and then almost spritz acidity with lemon and stone flavours. This has a long finish with a touch of honey.	13.5%	2014-2017	£17	Hallgarten Druitt, Hangingditch, Good Wine Shop
I Favati, Pietramara, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16.75 (89)	16.75	16.5	17	Savoury and smoky with serious structure and ripe, sweet fruit. Rich, waxy and nutty with good development of flavour.	13.5%	2014-2016	£16	Avery's, D Byrne, Eton Fine Wines, Megan & Duncan, Prohibition, Valvona & Crolla, Vinum
La Guardiense, Janare, Falanghina del Sannio 2012	16.75 (89)	17	16.5	17	An almost cucumber freshness with peach and plum aromas. A long finish with saline and floral flavours that is hard to forget.	13.5%	2014-2017	£10.30	Armit
Mastroberardino, Novaserra, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.75 (89)	16.75	16.5	17	Full and aromatic. Peach and apple pie with cinnamon characters, this also has peppery spices but little in the way of nuance.	13.5%	2014-2017	£25.99	Bianco & Gomez
Villa Raiano, Allmata, Fiano di Avellino 2011	16.75 (89)	17.75	16	16.75	Very smoky and mineral, with notes of hazelnut and peach supported by balanced acidity and structure.	13.5%	2014-2015	£19.50	Prestige Food & Wine
Cantine Antonio Caggiano, Devon, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.5 (88)	17	16	16.5	Forward, peachy nose with a touch of ginger. Ripe and weighty palate with pretty, upfront yellow fruit flavours though rather superficial.	14%	2014-2017	£17	Great Western Wine, Pall Mall Wine
Fattoria La Rivolta, Falanghina del Sannio Taburno 2012	16.5 (88)	16.75	16	16.5	Great nose of flowers and sweet, yellow fruit. Round, ripe and balanced with minty nuances, stony flavours and decent acidity.	13.5%	2014-2016	N/A UK	www.fattorialarivolta.com
Mastroberardino, Morabianca, Falanghina, Irpinia 2012	16.5 (88)	16.25	16	17	Yellow plums with lily and spice notes. Round and full with ripe fruit flavours but a rather hot finish.	13.5%	2014-2017	£16.35	Mondial
Mastroberardino, Radici, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16.5 (88)	16.25	16.5	16.5	Quite full and intense with notes of saffron and flowers. A richer style with ripe apple, peach and clean mineral nuances.	13.5%	2014-2017	£12.10	Mondial
Mustilli, Falanghina del Sannio Sant'Agata dei Goti 2012	16.5 (88)	16.75	16.5	16.5	Fresh and broad, with peach and herbal notes. Brighter and richer on the palate with quince and lemon apple flavours that linger.	13%	2014-2017	N/A UK	www.mustilli.com
Rocca del Dragone, Falanghina, Campania 2012	16.5 (88)	16	16.75	16.5	Green apple skin and white pear with herbs and white flowers. Quite fresh though has decent ripeness with balanced and aromatic fruit flavours.	12.5%	2014-2017	£8.95-£10	Widely available
SanGiovanni, Tresinus, Paestum 2012	16.5 (88)	16.75	17	15.5	Rich, full and waxy with hints of pear and saffron. Intense palate with concentrated fruit flavours and an impressive breadth.	13.5%	2014-2019	N/A UK	www.agricolasangiovanni.freshcreator.com
Tenuta Scuotto, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.5 (88)	17	16.5	16	Big, deep and dense with complex aromas and flavours of yellow stone fruit and a long, peppery finish.	13.5%	2014-2019	N/A UK	www.tenutascuotto.it
Amarano, Cardenio, Greco di Tufo 2011	16.25 (87)	15	16.5	17	Very ripe and full with developed fruit and nut flavours. Ripe, mature and ready.	13.5%	2014-2015	£18.75	Vini Italiani
Antico Castello, Fiano, Irpinia 2012	16.25 (87)	16.5	15	17	Very minty and stony nose that then gains in structure on the palate with ripe yellow fruit, pear nectar, herbs and minerals.	13%	2014-2017	£18	Immersus Emergo
Feudi di San Gregorio, Pietracalda, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16.25 (87)	16.25	15.5	17	Very mineral aromas of wet stone and then white peach, lemon and apple. Full, ripe and creamy palate with some length.	13.5%	2014-2017	£19	Hallgarten Druitt, Hangingditch, Good Wine Shop
Le Masciare, Settepietre, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.25 (87)	16.75	14	17.75	Clean, bright and fresh tropical fruit with apple and herbs. Quite complex, smooth and long.	13%	2014-2015	N/A UK	www.lemasciare.com
Luigi Maffini, Pietraincatenata, Cilento 2011	16.25 (87)	16.5	16.5	15.5	Long with high acid lift to the apple and pear aromas and flavours. Nutty and densely textured. Good.	13.5%	2014-2016	£22	Lea & Sandeman
Quintodecimo, Giallo D'Arles, Greco di Tufo 2012	16.25 (87)	15.75	16.5	16.5	Ripe baked apples with cinnamon and lemon curd on the nose and then a very sweet and upfront palate of candied peel. Decent acidity.	14%	2014-2015	£24	Justerini & Brooks
Tenuta Cavalier Pepe, Refiano, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16.25 (87)	17	16	16	Slightly smoky, rubbery quality to the aromas and flavours of juicy stone fruit and ripe citrus. Strong, muscular body and very serious.	13%	2014-2017		Casa Giulia
Vesevo, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16.25 (87)	17.5	16	15.5	Intense floral tones with ripe yellow fruit aromas and a hint of walnut. Simple but surprisingly concentrated.	13%	2014-2016	£13.99	widely available
Vigne Guadagno, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16.25 (87)	16.75	17	15	Seductive, ripe nose of tropical fruit with hints of wax and honey. Clean and long with a mineral finish.	13.5%	2014-2018	£12.95	
Villa Matilde, Falerno del Massico 2012	16.25 (87)	16.25	16.5	16	Bright, fresh aromas and flavours of green apple, nectarine, chlorophyll and anise. Decent finish with some definition.	13%	2014-2017	£16	Eurowines
Cantine Antonio Caggiano, Béchar, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16 (86)	16	16	16	Floral-toned and full palate with creamy and nutty aromas. Well-made and long but maybe a little too minty.	14%	2014-2017	£17	Great Western Wine, Pall Mall Wine
Cautiero, Fois, Falanghina del Sannio 2012	16 (86)	16.5	14.5	17	Ripe citrus, apple and pear flavours with a strong peppery quality at the back. Big boned in comparison to many other Falanghinas.	14%	2014-2016	N/A UK	www.cautiero.it
Filadoro, Greco di Tufo 2012	16 (86)	16	16	16	Sweet and ripe with floral and ginger notes. The palate is creamy with apple and custard flavours.	13%	2014-2018	N/A UK	www.filadoro.it
I Favati, Terrantica, Greco di Tufo 2012	16 (86)	16.5	16	15.5	Broad, ripe and nutty with a hint of nettles. Then, fresh lime and lemon acidity lifts it at the back to give it a light-on-its-feet character.	13.5%	2014-2017	£16	Avery's, D Byrne, Eton Fine Wines, Megan & Duncan, Prohibition, Valvona & Crolla, Vinum
Quintodecimo, Exultet, Fiano di Avellino 2012	16 (86)	16.75	16.5	15	Intense and ripe nose of stone fruit and flowers: lovely fragrance. Broad and fleshy with good peachy flavours of real depth.	14%	2014-2016	£24	Justerini & Brooks
Terredora, Loggia della Serra, Greco di Tufo 2012	16 (86)	16	17	15	Fresh and floral with a fair intensity of waxy ripe fruit. Ripe and developed flavours with honeyed and spicy notes.	13.5%	2014-2015	£14.99	The Oxford Wine Co
Vigne Guadagno, Greco di Tufo 2012	16 (86)	16.25	15.5	16.5	Clean and fresh aromas and flavours of white flowers and peach. Quite big, ripe and full style with crisp, lemony acidity.	13.5%	2014-2017	£14 (2011)	The Flying Corkscrew
Capolino Perlingieri, Preta, Falanghina del Sannio 2012	15.75 (85+)	16	16	15	Lifted, slightly floral aromas with a hint of fig. Round and smooth but lacks the clarity and focus of the best wines.	13.5%	2014-2017	£16.5	Vini Italiani
Feudi di San Gregorio, Falanghina del Sannio 2012	15.75 (85+)	16.25	15	16	Peach and spice aromas of some intensity. Round, medium and full with fair concentration of fruit.	13%	2014-2017	£14	Hallgarten Druitt, Hangingditch, Good Wine Shop

Recommended (continued) 15–16.75pts (83–89pts)

Wine	Score	IDA	MG	EOH	Tasting note	Alc	Drink	Price	Stockists
La Guardiense, Janare Selezione Greco, Sannio 2012	15.75 (85+)	16.5	14.5	16.5	Very serious Greco and immediately recognisable as such. Full bodied, oily and rich in texture and fruit concentration.	13.5%	2014-2017	£10.30	Armit, Aveyrs
Tenuta Cavalier Pepe, Nestor, Greco di Tufo 2012	15.75 (85+)	16.5	15.5	15.5	Fresh, long, creamy and sweet, with ripe custard apple and pear aromas and flavours. Nice length.	13.5%	2014-2017	N/A UK	Casa Giulia
Villa Matilde, Tenute du Altavilla, Greco di Tufo 2012	15.75 (85+)	16.5	15.5	15	Mint, apple and tropical fruit but light and lively. Well made and not as astringent as most.	13%	2014-2017	£18	Eurowines
Mont'Antico, Fiano di Avellino 2011	15.5 (85)	15	15	16.5	Gingerbread on the nose then Bramley apples and cloves on palate. Has a sense of both baked and fresh fruit.	13.5%	2014-2015	N/A UK	www.montantico.com
Tenuta Cavalier Pepe, Bianco di Bellona, Coda di Volpe, Irpinia 2012	15.5 (85)	16.25	15.5	14.5	Very refined aromas and flavours of mineral and minty herbs, white stone fruit and fresh citrus that lingers nicely.	13%	2014-2018	N/A UK	Casa Giulia
Terredora, Fiano di Avellino 2012	15.5 (85)	16	16	14.5	Super-ripe aromas, then cleaner and leaner characters on the palate but with bright, fresh acidity giving the savoury flavour.	13.5%	2014-2017	£16.99-£18	Milroy's of Soho, Jeroboams, Tanners
Tenuta Scutto, Oi ni, Campania 2011	15.25 (84)	13	16	16.5	Aromas of candied yellow fruit and aromatic herbs. Big, ripe and juicy with full texture and high alcohol.	14.5%	2014-2017	N/A UK	www.tenutascutto.it
Benito Ferrara, Greco due Chicchi, Campania 2011	15 (83)	16	15	14	Smells and tastes of Greco, with an astringent tone to the palate lifting the bright, ripe tropical fruit and smoky citrus notes on the long finish.	12.5%	2014-2016	£14	Vini Italiani
Cantina Bambinuto, Greco di Tufo 2012	15 (83)	14.5	16.5	14	Broad, ripe and nutty. Fair intensity and creaminess. Well made, though lacks a little charm.	13.5%	2014-2017	N/A UK	www.cantinabambinuto.com
Tenuta Scutto, Fiano di Avellino 2011	15 (83)	15	14	16	Confected and sweet in its pineapple and papaya flavours. Too ripe and lacks the staying power and freshness it should have.	13.5%	2014-2014	N/A UK	www.tenutascutto.it
Terredora, Falanghina, Campania 2012	15 (83)	15	15.5	14.5	Minty quince and green apple aromas are perked up by juicy citrus and pear hints. Finishes bright with decent length.	13.5%	2014-2017	£8.99	Noble Green
Vigne Guadagno, Falanghina, Irpinia 2012	15 (83)	15	15	15	Quite perfumed with tropical fruit notes. Full and fleshy though has a rather clumsy alcoholic finish.	13%	2014-2017		

Fair 13-14.75pts (76-82pts)

■ Cantine Antonio Caggiano, Falanghina, Campania 2012 (14.75) ■ Casebianche, Cumalè, Fiano, Cilento 2012 (14.75) ■ Cautiero, Trois, Sannio 2012 (14.75) ■ Oppida Aminea, Filari 1-13, Coda di Volpe, Sannio 2011 (14.75) ■ San Giovanni, Paestum 2012 (14.75) ■ Vesevo, Greco di Tufo 2012 (14.75) ■ Villa Diamante, Vigna della Congregazione, Fiano di Avellino 2011 (14.75) ■ Villa

Matilde, Tenute du Altavilla, Fiano di Avellino 2012 (14.75)

■ Casa di Baal, Fiano di Baal, Colli di Salerno 2011 (14.5) ■ Di Meo, C, Coda di Volpe, Campania 2012 (14.5) ■ I Cacciagalli, Aorivola Falanghina, Roccamonfina 2012 (14.5) ■ Casa di Baal, Bianco di Baal, Colli di Salerno 2012 (14) ■ Colle di San Domenico, Falanghina del Sannio 2012 (14) ■ Oppida Aminea, Caracena, Falanghina del Sannio 2012 (14) ■ Vesevo, Falanghina, Beneventano 2012

(14) ■ Cautiero, Erba Bianca, Campania 2012 (13.75)

■ I Cacciagalli, Leneo, Roccamonfina 2012 (13.25) ■ Mustilli, Fiano, Sannio 2012 (13)

Faulty

■ Capolino Perlingieri, Vento, Greco, Sannio 2012 (oxidised)

For full UK stockist details, see p102

Expert summary: Tom Hyland

A good tasting in which the 2012 vintage performed well, and Fiano came out top in the scoring. It also highlighted several unheralded estates that deserve recognition



Tom Hyland is the author of *Beyond Barolo and Brunello: Italy's Most Distinctive Wines*

DESPITE IT BEING a hot and dry vintage, the results show a clear preference for 2012 as compared to the 2011 vintage. The former is along classic lines with more pronounced aromatics while the latter vintage offered wines that are a bit more forward and ripe, but which lack the overall power and mineral expression of the 2012s.

Fiano di Avellino received higher marks than its DOCG peer Greco di Tufo – 10 versus three of the top 16 wines. This is a typical result when tasting these wines young, given the more restrained styles of most Grecos as well as their more subtle aromatic profile as the delicate citrus fruit perfumes of Greco are not as showy as the tropical fruit notes that often define Fiano.

The performance of Coda di Volpe, with two Highly Recommended wines, was a pleasant surprise, as this grape is generally used in blending and rarely on its own. Though not as refined as Greco or Fiano, Coda di Volpe does offer attractive citrus fruit and white flower perfumes in a delicate framework; these are wines for early consumption.

While only one Falanghina made the top 16, the variety performed well, if not spectacularly. This can be attributed to the current renaissance of this variety, as some of the area's producers are looking to capitalise on the wine's recent market success. As the grape is planted in all five of

Campania's provinces, it's hard to pinpoint a specific style; in addition, quality is varied, given the 'drink-young' approach taken by many producers with this variety. Thus it was gratifying to note the high ratings for Falanghina specialists such as Villa Matilde and Fattoria La Rivolta.

Tastings such as this help to create greater awareness of high-performing unheralded estates; among those justly rewarded were Di Meo, Quintodecimo and Tenuta Sarno. This last winery, managed by Maura Sarno, has only one product, a Fiano di Avellino, that has routinely been one of the top performing of its type the past few vintages.

Unfortunately there are still too many one-dimensional wines from this region that lack focus, as the results showed. Clearly, there needs to be more attention paid to site-specific wines such as the Sarno Fiano or Villa Raiano's Contrada Marotta Greco di Tufo if Campania is to gain greater respect as one of the world's most distinctive white wine territories. **D**

'Unfortunately there are still too many one-dimensional wines from this region that lack focus'

My top three

Ian D'Agata

■ **Cantina del Taburno, Amineo Coda di Volpe, Beneventano 2011** Given its price tag and the fact this wine never misses, it's one of Italy's top 10 buys, and has been for years. It always exudes a unique honeyed peach, floral and round personality, but with real complexity. **18/20 (93/100)** Drink 2014-2018

■ **Mustilli, Falanghina del Sannio Sant'Agata dei Goti 2012** From the family that rediscovered Falanghina in the 1970s and '80s and allowed a previously forgotten Italian grape variety to become a world star. An austere, logical version that eschews the ridiculous tropical fruit notes atypical of true Falanghina. **16.75 (89)** Drink 2014-2017

■ **Fattoria La Rivolta, Coda di Volpe, Sannio Taburno 2012** Another mesmerisingly good Coda di Volpe, from a producer that has a real talent with the variety. More mineral and austere than some renditions, but always with that peachy, honeyed character that is so endearing. **17.5 (91)** Drink 2014-2016

My top three

Michael Garner

■ **Luigi Maffini, Kratos Paestum 2012** I don't know this IGT denomination in southwest Campania well, so it was a real pleasure to discover how well-made this Fiano is. Great structure and a surprise to note the potential for ageing from a vintage which, on the whole looks best for early drinking. **17.5/20 (91/100)** Drink 2015-2017

■ **Di Meo, F Fiano di Avellino 2012** The nose on this excellent example remains for now quite restrained but the palate is a real pot pourri of ripe fruits laced with spice, herb and mineral notes. I was particularly impressed by its overall balance and poise and how those ripe fruit flavours don't lack focus. **18 (93)** Drink 2014-2017

■ **Tenuta Sarno, Sarno 1860 Fiano di Avellino 2012** A more opulent style of Fiano from a specialist Fiano grower based in Candida. High-quality fruit from a high-altitude vineyard (630m above sea level) shines through, and the nutty, creamy ripe fruit flavours are underpinned by crisp and lively acidity. **18 (93)** Drink 2014-2017

My top three

Emily O'Hare

■ **Cantina del Taburno, Amineo Coda di Volpe, Beneventano 2011** A renowned co-operative in the province of Beneventano, this is a thoroughly modern white made from a very ancient grape. It smells of the sea and of fresh flowers, and on the palate it is light and dry with flavours of orchard fruit and sea spray. It deserves to be drunk with fresh crab. **18/20 (93/100)** Drink 2014-2018

■ **Amarano, Dulcinea Fiano di Avellino, 2011** The word minerally just isn't fashionable anymore, so I would say this white tastes really 'volcanic'. A smoky, ashy perfume combines with green pears and zesty lemon pith, then on the palate those aromas evolve into flavours which continue through to the finish. **17.5 (91)** Drink 2015-2018

■ **Feudo di San Gregorio, Pietracalda Fiano di Avellino 2012** The wines from this estate are consistently of a very high quality and are also smartly priced. This Fiano has a vibrant citrus aroma which is pleasing enough, but the palate is much more intriguing with an apple skin waxiness and a long finish. **17 (90)** Drink 2014-2017

NB: the tasters' top wines are not necessarily their top-scoring, rather those which, on learning the wines' identity, they feel are the most notable given their provenance, price or other factors