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“This is another strong set of releases from Rivera, one of Puglia’s leading producers. Even better, the wines remain very fairly priced considering the quality of what is in the bottle.”

Antonio Galloni

IL FALCONE, Castel del Monte Riserva doc 2005

91 points

The 2005 Il Falcone, a French oak-aged blend of 70% Nero di Troia and 30% Montepulciano, is Rivera’s top red. Freshly cut roses, earthiness, smoke, red berries and spices come together beautifully in this graceful mid-weight red. The finish could use a touch more polish, but another year or two in bottle should help the tannins soften. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2017.

CAPPELLACCIO, Castel del Monte Aglianico Riserva doc 2005

91 points

The 2005 Aglianico Riserva Cappellaccio is a beautiful, racy wine endowed with layers of wild cherries, sweet herbs, menthol, tobacco and cured meats. This bold, juicy Aglianico offers gorgeous overall balance, but the firm tannins suggest the wine is best paired with equally bold, rich dishes. Clean, mineral notes frame the exquisite finish. Today the fruit remains quite primary, and a few additional years of bottle age will only do the Cappellaccio good. This is a very serious wine for the money. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2022.

TRIUSSCO, Primitivo Puglia igt 2006

89 points

The 2006 Primitivo Triusco is one of the more refined, elegant and restrained Primitivos readers are likely to come across. The aromatics and fruit preserve lovely freshness, with notes of blackberries, blueberries and flowers that caress the palate in a soft, generous style. Tar, smoke and new leather linger on the finish. The Triusco is made from vineyards in two distinct zones; Manduria and Gioia del Colle. This is another delicious, value-priced wine from Rivera. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2014

VIOLANTE, Castel del Monte Nero di Troia doc 2007

88 points

The 2007 Nero di Troia Violante is deep and textured in its vibrant dark fruit. This is another delicious, juicy wine from Rivera that offers incredible quality for the money. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2012.

RUPICOLO, Castel del Monte doc 2007

87 points

The 2007 Castel del Monte Rupilolo is 70% Montepulciano and 30% Nero di Troia. This plump, engaging wine is loaded with dark fruit, minerals and earthiness. It is ideal for drinking over the next two to three years. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2012.

PRELUDIO N.1, Castel del Monte doc 2009

87 points

The 2009 Chardonnay Preludio N° 1 is a pretty, mineral-laced white with expressive citrus notes and a long, refreshing finish. There isn’t much varietal character, but the wine nevertheless delivers lovely balance and a crisp, refreshing personality. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2011.