

Brunello di Montalcino: production method

Here follow the production method of the famous Italian wine:



1) Brunello di Montalcino is produced using only **Sangiovese grapes**. The **harvest** is carried out strictly **by hand** and generally takes place at the end of **September**;

2) The bunches of grapes are de-stemmed (the berries are separated from the stalk) using a de-stemmer. After a **thorough selection**, the grapes are **gently pressed to get the must**.



3) The **must** is poured into large stainless steel containers and is left inside of them for a few days at a controlled temperature of about 7° C, thus allowing the **cryomaceration** to take place (*1);

4) After the cryomaceration, thanks to selected yeasts, the **fermentation** begins: this leads to a progressive transformation of the sugar into alcohol. During this phase, 'pumping overs' (*2) and 'breaking ups' (*3) are usually performed;

5) During the fermentation takes place also the **maceration**. Thanks to this process (among other things), the skins and the grapeseeds release the tannins that characterize Brunello so much;

6) The **racking** phase follows: using a 'soft' press, the solid part of the must is gently separated from the liquid one (the wine);



7) A new fermentation is started (always in steel containers), the **'malolactic' fermentation**: using a particular type of bacteria, the malic acid present in the wine is transformed into lactic acid;

8) The **'aging'** period begins: the wine is placed in oak barrels where it will remain for at least two years. The following refinement in the bottle must last instead at least four months (or six in the case of the 'Riserva');

It's important to stress the fact that Brunello di Montalcino cannot be marketed before **at least five years since the harvest**. In the case of **'Riserva'** wine, **at least six** are required.

Notes:

*1: **'Cryomaceration'**, also known as 'cold maceration', leads to the extraction of a greater quantity of substances from the solid part of the grape: this improves the organoleptic characteristics of the wine;

*2: The **'pumping over'** is a cellar technique that consists in extracting a part of the must from the lower part of the stainless steel silos in which it is fermenting, pumping it to the top, where the pomace (the solid part) floats. This technique is used to accelerate the extraction of tannin, color and aromas from grape skins;

*3: The **'breaking ups'** consist of mechanically breaking the layer of pomace ('cap') that forms in the upper part of the must during fermentation, re-immersing the fragments in the must itself. This technique leads to greater aeration and acceleration of alcoholic fermentation;



Read more:

<https://www.webfoodculture.com/brunello-di-montalcino-history-information-interesting-facts/>