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Tasting the new Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona Brunellos To launch the sublime new Brunellos of Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona, what better venue in London than Café Murano, where Angela Hartnett's classic Italian food pairing lunch involved not one, not two, but three meat courses. Adjusting his belt was Victor Smart who tasted the new Brunello di Montalcino DOCG 2018, Rosso di Montalcino DOC 2020 and Brunello di Montalcino Pianrosso 2008 in the company of the estate's Alex Bianchini. "Some of the younger – and cheaper – Brunellos already rival some of the pricier, more venerable wines at least for sheer drinking pleasure," writes Smart. Brunello di Montalcino is a wine that I fell for from my first taste. Some reds are powerful, others have finesse and elegance. Brunello has both. It's understandably one of Italy's most internationally celebrated wines, prized

courtesy of one of the top producers, Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona . Where better to try out the new Brunello than Café Murano in St James's, where Angela Hartnett pays homage to classic Italian cuisine. The lunchtime atmosphere is laid-back, but the food is serious. The pasta course is agnolotti with braised rabbit and we have not one but two other meat dishes to follow: risotto ossobuco and then ox cheek with parmesan polenta.

Substantial fare befitting substantial wines. Ciacci is a family business and we are hosted by Alex Bianchini, grandson of the estate manager who inherited the Tuscan property in 1985 on the death of the childless

Countess Elda Ciacci. Located in the south east of the Montalcino region close to medieval village of

Castelnuovo dell'Abate the estate can trace its roots back to the 17th century. The firm has a total holding of 1/1