

WELCOME

TO MY HONOURED GUESTS

Italy contains 545 registered indigenous grape varieties, though it is estimated that there are over 2,000 throughout the country. There are so many, in fact, that we don't know the exact number, but there are more wine-making grapes native to the land we call Italy than any other country in the world. It is an absolute treasure trove of wine, and we will never cease to uncover its many vinous gems.

Of Italy's 20 distinct regions, every single one contains significant wine-growing areas (an aspect also unique to the country), spanning the length of this 1,200-kilometre peninsula that covers the mountainous regions of the north to the salt-blown coastal regions of the south, and every lush green foothill in between. An astonishing array of styles and colours and flavours are produced from these native grapes, most of which are not found anywhere else in the world.

At Divino, one of our highest goals - and one of my great responsibilities as Sommelier - is to bring these one-of-a-kind, rare, and distinctly Italian wines to your table, to provide as much access as possible to this panoply of wine variety and beauty. This is no easy feat, and not one that we take lightly. But boy, is it fun: every year, we taste hundreds of wines, bringing in only those we think are best, traveling to wineries to learn more about the source behind these gems, and bring it all back to you here, on this wine list, as well as the many events we host every year here at Divino including our tasting menus, bi-monthly wine tastings, Enomatic machine, wine flights, and the many other efforts we take to give you the chance to experience these wines of passion, history, geography, heart.

I hope, wherever you're at on your wine journey or whatever the nature of your visit to Divino today, that in the following pages you will find just the wine for whatever purpose you are looking for or, perhaps, that might just surprise you too. Wine is amazing by itself, better with food, and best with people, and our goal is to combine these elements in such a way as to provide you with the best possible experience, so if there's anything that I or a member of my amazing team can do to enhance your wine or your experience, please let us know.

A couple of points to keep in mind as you peruse this list:

- The wine world is replete with terminology requiring definition - too many to list here - so if you have a question or are unsure what a word or term means, just ask me or one of my colleagues.
- Wine labels (especially Italian ones) are notoriously difficult to understand, so each entry has a basic format: The Wine/Name of the Wine, Producer, Vintage.
- Italian wine is categorized into three tiers of Italian wine law that regulate how it's made (there is a fourth, *Vino da Tavola*, that does not appear on this list) and are indicated throughout this list by their acronym: the second-lowest tier, IGT (*Indicazione Geografica Indica*), then DOC (*Denominazione d'Origine Controllata*), and the highest tier, DOCG (*Denominazione d'Origine Controllata e Garantita*).

So, please, read through this list, be curious and adventurous and open, ask any question you want, read my descriptors and point out my spelling errors, have fun with it and with the extraordinary range of flavours and emotions that Italian wine evokes. Italian wine is a world all to its own, and it is our great privilege to bring you just this small slice of it.

Cheers to you, your loved ones, your meal, and may whatever you drink today bring all of that together even more than it already was.

Salute

Troy D. Sides

Head Sommelier

SPARKLING • ROSE

CHAMPAGNE

PRICE

Cristal Prestige Cuvée, Louis Roederer, 2013*

370

The 'Prestige Cuvée' (or 'Tête de Cuvée') is the top bottling of a Champagne house and is usually given its own name, in this case 'Cristal' by the legendary house, Louis Roederer. A blend of Grand Crus from old vines in Roederer's best vineyards and only made in the best vintages. 60% Pinot Noir, 40% Chardonnay.

Dom Pérignon, Moët & Chandon, 2013*

330

The story goes that a monk named Dom Pérignon fermented his bottle of wine a second time and got so excited that he called to his friends, 'Come quickly, I'm tasting the stars!' This story almost certainly isn't true, but, the legendary status of this Prestige Cuvée is no myth and has been so for decades. Textural, creamy, complex, layered sparkling. 60% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir.

Brut Réserve, Taittinger, NV

120

A blend of 35 Grand Cru and Premier Cru parcels, aged 4 years on its lees. 40% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 25% Pinot Meunier.

Special Cuvée, Bollinger, NV

110

A vivacious blend combining harvest grapes (85% of which are from Grand Cru and Premier Cru vineyards) with Reserve wines in Magnums, some of which are up to 15 years old. 60% Pinot Noir, 25% Chardonnay, 15% Pinot Meunier.

ITALIAN SPARKLING

Italian sparkling wine is undergoing a silent, delicious revolution. The entries here cover three styles of Italian sparkling (Franciacorta DOCG in Lombardia, Trentodoc DOC in Trentino-Alto Adige, and Alta Langa DOCG in Piemonte) that utilise the Champagne or 'traditional' method of production, where the secondary fermentation occurs in individual bottles, rather than in tanks. Such wines are known for having a crisper structure and mouthfeel, more concentrated flavour, and finer, more lively bubbles, as though they're happy to be there.

TRADITIONAL METHOD

Franciacorta Cuvée Prestige 45a Edizione, Ca' del Bosco, NV

130

One of the most famous sparklers to ever come out of Italy; a blend of 197 different vineyards, 162 of which are Chardonnay alone, and made in the rare Extra Brut style, so less sugar than the typical 'Brut' style of sparkler; 25 months aging on its lees. 75% Chardonnay, 15% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Blanc.

Franciacorta, Ferghettina, NV

74

Ferghettina's core sparkler, quintessential Franciacorta, aged 30 months on the lees. 85% Chardonnay, 15% Pinot Noir.

Franciacorta Rosé, Ferghettina, NV

98

Two days on the skins to extract colour, 36 months on the lees to extract flavour and texture. 80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay.

Trentodoc Brut Cuvée, Ferrari, NV

70

From the very first winery to produce Champagne-method sparklers in the now famous Trentodoc DOC, and with no relation to the car, though it just might get your heart racing: 20 months' aging on the lees and made entirely from Chardonnay grapes.

Trentodoc Rosé Maximum, Ferrari, NV

80

Thirty-six months' lees aging on this rare, exceptional sparkling rosé. 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay.

Alta Langa Millesimato Brut, Scrimaglio, 2021

69

The newest DOCG to hit the Italian sparkling scene, and one of the most exciting, is Alta Langa. All sparklers here are required to be Vintage wines by law, and this one by Scrimaglio is aged for 30 months on the lees. 80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay.

SPARKLING • ROSE

PROSECCO

PRICE

Prosecco Millesimato, Biscardo, 2023

42

What makes Prosecco DOC unique, apart from its use of the Glera grape (which is rarely seen anywhere else), is its method of production, the Charmat Method, where secondary fermentation occurs in a large tank. The wine has less contact with the lees and less pressure inside the bottle as a result, producing a fruitier, more forward, elegant style. Lovely as a pairing wine or as an aperitivo.

Prosecco Rosé Millesimato, Biscardo, 2023

40

Prosecco DOC has no minimum aging time, so, with less time on the lees, this is a more fruit-forward style of sparkling Rosé, whose colour comes from 15% Pinot Noir to round out the Glera grapes used in the blend.

ROSÉ AND ORANGE

Ribolla Gialla Amfora, Gravner, 2014

168

What Andrea Pirlo was to the midfield, Josko Gravner is to orange style wine: often copied and what everyone aspires to be, but never quite like the maestro himself. Ribolla Gialla grapes are left in contact with their skins in clay amphora jars for six months (six months!) in underground cellars and then aged in botti, above ground, for six years (six years!). A wine in a category all its own.

Veneto Bianco Amphora, Lorenzo Fidora, 2021

55

Wild-fermented, single-vineyard Pinot Grigio spends four months in terracotta amphora jars, brilliantly-coloured and complex.

Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo, Cingilia, 2022

48

A DOC devoted strictly to rosé wines, this Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo spends a tantalizing 36 hours on Montepulciano skins (most rosé's spend less than half that time macerating), resulting in a brilliantly-hued rosé packed with red fruit flavours, minerality, and the scent of flowers as though you were sitting in the Peligna Valley itself. 13.5% ABV, 0% residual sugar.

Le Rosé, Regaleali, 2023

43

A deeply-hued rosé aged for three months in stainless steel, emphasising freshness and fruit. 100% Nerello Mascalese from Sicilia IGT.

Lagrein Rosato, Mezzacorona, 2023

38

Lagrein is a little-heralded red grape from Trentino-Alto Adige DOC that here produces a crisp, red-fruited rosé.

Bardolino Chiaretto, Bolla, 2023

36

A DOC given specifically for rosé's in 2018; our palest rosé and a classic Veneto blend of 55% Corvina, 35% Rondinella, 10% Molinara.

WORLD WHITE

FRANCE

BURGUNDY

PRICE

Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Morgeot, Domaine du Duc de Magenta, 2002

158

Chassagne-Montrachet is the second most famous commune in the world for Chardonnay (behind only Puligny-Montrachet), is one of the very few white wines in the world known for its aging capabilities, and here comes from the renowned Morgeot Premier Cru, from the Monopole Clos de la Chapelle owned by Louis Jadot. This is full-bodied yet elegant, extravagant yet subtle, aged yet full of life.

Chablis, Domaine Chaude Ecuelle, 2020

64

Chablis is the northernmost region of Burgundy and it shows in this cool-climate bottling: zest, freshness, steel, and minerality combine with Chardonnay's trademark body and elegance. All stainless steel.

LOIRE VALLEY

Amboise Sec Le Clocher, Bonnigal-Bodet, 2023

76

A dry, single-vineyard, extraordinarily aromatic and complete expression of Chenin Blanc from the Amboise region of the Loire Valley.

Pouilly-Fumé, Domaine Favray, 2023

60

The soil around the town of Pouilly-Fumé is high in flint and limestone, producing this smoky, flinty, concentrated style of Sauvignon.

NORTHERN RHÔNE

Condrieu, St.-Cosme, 2022

108

Viognier at its apex: Condrieu is a Cru within the Northern Rhone known exclusively for its Viognier: floral, exotic, rich, full-bodied.

GERMANY

Riesling Dry Schieferkristall, Weingut Karthäuserhof, 2021

69

Karthäuserhof is the 8th-oldest winery in the world and has made a name for itself along the Mosel River and its tributaries for its piercing, fresh, minerally style of dry Riesling, this one from the Schieferkristall vineyard.

Riesling Kabinett Binger Scharlachberg, Weingut Riffel, 2021

51

Most German Riesling is produced with some residual sugar to buffer the searing acidity natural to the grape; this is a balanced, fruity, floral expression of that style so unique to German winemaking.

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WORLD WHITE

SPAIN

PRICE

Godello 'Louro do Bolo' Valdeorras, Rafael Palacios, 2023

64

Godello from northwest Spain is shocking for its elegance, purity, and complexity, as well as for how little it is known or appreciated. Rafael Palacios is one of the top producers of the Valdeorras and I was thrilled when I discovered this evocative expression of Godello.

Albariño Family Estate Selection, Bodegas Castro Martin, 2022

42

The Atlantic Ocean batters the coast of northwest Spain and, in doing, releases fog banks that deposit salt water onto Albariño grapes hanging on the vine that will soon express that fog in its salty, fresh, mineral style of white wine so beloved worldwide.

AUSTRIA

Grüner Veltliner Ried Sandgrube, Rainer Wess, 2022

59

A peppery, spicy, fresh, concentrated single-vineyard expression from Kremstal, a top appellation in Austria for its main white grape.

SLOVENIA

Ribolla, Marjan Simčič, 2023

55

This wine comes from the Brda region, the primary appellation for Ribolla in Slovenia, and is just the other side of the border from Friuli in Italy, where it is known as Ribolla Gialla. Forty-eight hours skin contact lend depth and expressiveness to this elegant style.

GREECE

Santorini Assyrtiko, Artemis Karamolegos, 2022

79

Wine from a volcano! This is a precise, fabulous, and quite powerful expression of Assyrtiko, the most important grape in Greece, with 5% each contributed from two other indigenous varieties, Athiri and Aidani, the latter of which originates on Santorini.

NEW ZEALAND

Sauvignon Blanc, Frost Pocket, 2022

46

The term 'frost pocket' refers to the conjunction where cooler temperatures meet ocean fog, producing this crisp, refreshing, and quite quintessential expression of Kiwi Sauvignon Blanc.

ITALIAN WHITE

TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE

PRICE

Sauvignon 'Lafóá', Colterenzio, 2017

90

Sauvignon Blanc like you've never tasted before: a brief cold soak on the skins, 8 months aging on the lees, and half of the wine fermented in oak barrels, impeccably integrated, producing power, freshness, zest, complexity.

Chardonnay 'Lafóá', Colterenzio, 2022

98

Aging takes place in a combination of new and used oak but the style is a more lean, mineral, medium-bodied, style. Ten months aging on the lees, a further 6 months in bottle prior to release. Like drinking wine etched from stone; Chablis on steroids.

Gewürztraminer, Colterenzio, 2023

51

Dry Gewürztraminer, so that full-bodied unctuousness is pure fruit and winemaking, not sugar. Aromatic, exotic, yet fresh.

Müller Thurgau, Tiefenbrunner, 2022

46

A cross between Riesling and Madeleine Royale, Müller Thurgau was designed to thrive in cooler, northern regions, and that it does in Alto Adige: fragrant, medium-bodied, and fresh, so basically a cross between German and Italian winemaking as well.

VALLE D'AOSTA

Petite Arvine, La Source, 2021

53

The Valle d'Aosta is its own DOC, the smallest region in Italy, and extremely mountainous, so a very cool-climate and a perfect cradle for white wine production; Petite Arvine is native to Valais Valley of Switzerland and has finesse, minerality, balance, and fruit to spare.

FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

Friulano, Livio Felluga, 2023

68

One of the top expressions of Friulano you are likely to come across by a patriarch of Friuli winemaking. A short maceration period followed by 6 months of aging on the lees. Medium-bodied but with that freshness and minerality of Friuli Colli Orientali DOC soils.

Ciallabianco, Ronchi di Cialla, 2014

89

One of those rare finds that I get giddy to come across. Exotic blend of 60% Ribolla Gialla, 30% Verduzzo, 10% Picolit, all native to the Cialla Valley and entirely from the Cialla subzone of the Colli Orientali DOC. With its 10+ years of age, this is a wine of dazzling depth and complexity and with that lovely dance between richness and acidity.

Chardonnay, Vie di Romans, 2023

94

From the renowned Isonzo DOC, known for its famous ponca soil, a mix of marl and sandstone that yields a more powerful, yet restrained, version of the amazing and shadow-shifting Chardonnay grape. This extraordinary effort sees 9 months aging in barrel and on the lees, but they are just part of the ensemble of exotic fruit, minerality, toast, nuttiness.

Collio Riserva, Zuani, 2020

78

A radiant, full-flavoured blend of Friulano, Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, and Chardonnay, all left to ripen a little later than the single-varietal bottlings, which, along with Collio DOC's cherished ponca soil, contributes that little extra punch of texture, aroma, and personality, yet still bristling with acidity. Fermented in steel and then aged in French barrique for 10 months.

Carso Malvasia, Castelvechio, 2023

49

Carso is a little-known DOC and means 'rocky land' in Latin, a reference to the panoply of white limestone soil that grape-growers can only dream of. White wines do just fine in this chalky soil, including this medium-bodied, layered, balanced, and fruity Malvasia.

Carso Vitovska, Castelvechio, 2023

56

Vitovska is indigenous to Slovenia, where the Carso region (see above entry) is known as Kras. Such a unique and rich grape and drinking experience, it is naturally high in acidity and citrus compounds and expresses the minerality of Carso beautifully.

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*ALL VINTAGES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE; ASK YOUR SERVER OR SOMMELIER ABOUT CURRENT AVAILABILITY.

ITALIAN WHITE

VENETO

PRICE

Soave Classico La Rocca, Pieropan, 2022

74

La Rocca is a single vineyard located on one of the few limestone outcroppings in the Soave Classico DOC and helps to produce this layered, rich, concentrated, stunning example of Garganega.

Vespaiolo, Maculan, 2022

58

Only about 100 HA worldwide are devoted to this ancient varietal, most of which are found in Breganze, its homeland and the name of this DOC. It is naturally high in both sugar and acidity, producing a combination of full-bodied fruitiness with a lively beam of acidity.

Gambellara Classico 'Sarò', Cristiana Meggiolaro, 2012

52

'Sarò' means 'I will be' in Italian and refers to the potential of what these Garganega grapes - from low-yield vines planted on volcanic soils rich in basaltic lava, schist, and tufa, in the underrated Gambellara Classico DOC - can become with time.

Pinot Grigio 'Monopolio', Cantina di Gambellara, 2024

38

Classic, fresh, hot-summer-day expression of Pinot Grigio from a cooperative of about 200 family-growers.

Soave Classico 'Sereole', Bertani, 2023

39

From the Sereole vineyard, so you get a touch of its marl-limestone soils, a touch of oak (5 months, large barrel), and a touch of skin contact, all adding nuance and layers to this crisp, light-bodied Garganega, the darling white grape of Soave Classico DOC.

LOMBARDIA

Lugana 'Cromalgo', Corte Sermana, 2019

58

Some people go to Lake Garda for the villas; we go there for the wine. Lugana is a DOC for the white Turbiana grape (or Trebbiano di Lugana), a local and late-ripening varietal, located right off the lake's shores, which supplies climate-moderating winds and minerality.

EMILIA-ROMAGNA

Chardonnay 'Austo', Terre Cevico, 2024

46

Charming Chardonnay with plenty of oak spice, full flavour, and holding its own in the land of balsamic vinegar and prosciutto.

TOSCANA

Bolgheri Vermentino, Antinori Guado al Tasso, 2023

69

This complex yet fresh white benefits from Bolgheri DOC's adjacency to the sea, which mitigates the Tuscan summer sun with its cooling breezes, and from being in the hands of one of the great wineries Italy has ever seen in Antinori.

Vernaccia di San Gimignano, Castellani, 2022

35

In the shadows of San Gimignano's famous medieval towers are some of the most important vines in Italy: Vernaccia di San Gimignano was the very first DOC in the country in 1966 (it is now DOCG); documentation of its value as a wine grape go back to the 13th century.

Vernaccia di San Gimignano Riserva Vigna a Solatio, Falchini, 2012

68

An extraordinary single-vineyard expression given another layer of nuance by the extra year in barrel; the grapes for this came from the very top of the hill, where the one-two punch of optimal sun exposure with cooling breezes is maximised; balanced, rich, exquisite.

BASILICATA

Il Preliminare, Cantine del Notaio, 2021

50

A fascinating white blend from a region and IGT, Basilicata, more known for its reds, and this wine plays its part: 30% Aglianico grapes (a red) are pressed off the skins (like a white) and accompanied by 30% Chardonnay, 20% Malvasia Bianca, 20% Moscato. Brilliant.

ITALIAN WHITE

PIEMONTE

PRICE

Roero Arneis 'Pradalupo', Fontanafredda, 2023

51

Only half of the Arneis grapes are de-stemmed, resulting in a lovely herbal touch to this fresh, fruity white from the Roero DOCG.

Timorasso 'Il Montino', La Colombera, 2014

74

Timorasso knows exactly how Taylor felt in 'You Belong with Me': underappreciated, in the background, not noticed for what it offers, but when given the chance, is elegant, dazzling in its complexity, and is actually what you've been looking for the whole time. From the Colli Tortonesi DOC, this is cryomacerated for 4 days and then fermented in stainless steel, begging for your attention.

GAVI DOCG

Perhaps Piemonte's most famous white wine, based entirely on the Cortese grape, and covering an area so diverse in soils and microclimates that the expressions of Cortese are similarly as diverse, fascinating, and exciting. Limestone, clays, ancient seabed, and volcanic soils all leave their mark on Cortese grapes that, when grown inside the commune of Gavi, will be labelled 'Gavi di Gavi', as opposed to just 'Gavi', which is when the grapes were not sourced within the town of Gavi but from other towns still within the official DOCG zone. Because of the diversity of soils, winemaking, and weather, they will all have their own refreshing, balanced, mineral things to say.

Gavi di Gavi 'La Minaia', Bergaglio, 2024

49

100% Cortese, 100% stainless steel, 100% from the commune of Gavi, 100% delicious.

Gavi Vigneto Ciapon, Bergaglio, 2021

55

An exhilarating, complex single-vineyard expression of Cortese that captivates with its marriage of sweet, dried fruit flavours with earthy, smoky nuances. Surely unlike any Gavi you've ever had but expresses the range and potential of this grape beautifully.

Gavi Riserva Vigna della Rovere Verde, La Mesma, 2020

74

A stunning example of what Gavi and a bit of extended aging can produce. A single-vineyard based entirely on Old Vines from a small estate in Gavi; 18 months in concrete, then 18 months in bottle. Deeply hued and flavoured, with all that Gavi touch and freshness.

UMBRIA

Surely one of the most underrated of all the white wine regions of Italy, Umbria has this unfair advantage of combining top-notch producers (like Tabarrini and this other guy named Antinori), with sensational indigenous varietals like Trebbiano Spoletino, with perfect, hilly growing conditions. Everything here, from the full-bodied Chardonnays to the crisp blends of Montefalco, brims with life and complexity.

'Adarmando' Umbria Bianco, Tabarrini, 2016

69

A jaw-dropping drinking experience whether or not full-bodied, exotic, aromatic whites are your thing: 100% Trebbiano Spoletino (which breaks Montefalco DOC blending regulations, so is IGT) grapes are cryomacerated for 2 days then aged on the lees, in steel, for a full year. No Malolactic, no oak, no chaptalization, nothing like it.

Orvieto Classico Superiore, Antinori San Giovanni della Sala, 2023

71

A complex, precise wine based on Grechetto, the main grape of Orvieto DOC: 50% Grechetto, 25% Procanico, 13% Viognier, 12% Pinot Bianco. Minimal intervention as everything is finished in steel with a few months of lees aging; all that flavour is grapes and provenance.

Cervaro della Sala, Antinori Castello della Sala, 2022

150

Iconic Chardonnay and possibly the most famous to ever come out of Italy. Chardonnay grapes are harvested in the very early morning to preserve purity and acidity and then fermented (but not aged) in barrel for a few months when the remaining 15% of the wine is blended with the indigenous Grechetto, which saw only stainless steel, for further freshness and aromatics. A special wine.

Montefalco Bianco, Arnaldo Caprai, 2023

46

A lovely floral, peppery, salty expression of a classic white blend of the Montefalco DOC: 60% Trebbiano Spoletino, 40% Chardonnay.

ITALIAN WHITE

MARCHE

PRICE

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico Riserva 'Passolento', La Marca di San Michele, 2016 69
Passolento is the top bottling of this estate, from a parcel located on an ancient seabed of this DOCG, and the grapes are aged in 10 hl barrels (botti) to give just a kiss of oak without overwhelming the purity of the fruit and to allow its enormous complexity to develop.

Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico, Fazi Battaglia, 2023 38
The bottle shape famously mimics the Roman amphora jars discovered near the winery, and the wine has equalled it in reputation, one of the first Verdicchio wines to ever be exported and exhibiting that fresh, seaside zing that we all look for in the Castelli di Jesi DOC.

CAMPANIA

Volcanic soils seem to lend their benefits most vividly onto white wines, and that is precisely what makes whites from Campania so special. All four of these - especially the two from Tufo - are DOCGs and continue to benefit from Mount Vesuvius' eruption 2,000 years ago, when loads of tuff and ash and other volcanic debris blew (and has continued to blow) inland, pushed by the sea breezes off the Bay of Naples, and settled on these vineyards. Volcanic soils are high in minerals and nutrients but are difficult for plants to extract, so the extra stress on the vines results in smaller berries, which increases the ratio of grape juice to skins, pulps, acidity, and everything that adds colour and flavour, which is what makes the quality of these wines just as much as anything else.

Fiano di Avellino Pietramara, I Favati, 2022 61
A lively, nutty, single-vineyard expression of one of the great white wines of Italy from one of the great producers in Campania. A short maceration on the lees but no extended aging. Exquisite mouthfeel, a touch of florals, elegant as hell, from high-elevation vineyards.

Fiano di Avellino Riserva, Feudi di San Gregorio, 2022 66
Twelve months of lees aging adds a touch of texture and length to the elegance and finesse of this medium-bodied, nutty, fruity white.

Greco di Tufo Terrantica, I Favati, 2022 59
Tufo is the name of the soil composed of volcanic ash from the Vesuvius (and other) eruptions compacted over time, and contributes about as much here as does this ancient grape. Six months lees aging; a fruity, smoky, peppery, minerally single-vineyard expression.

Greco di Tufo, Rocca del Dragone, 2022 35
A lively, spritely introduction to Campania white wine, capturing the freshness and minerality of the volcanic soil and the Greco fruit.

SARDEGNA

Vermentino 'Saragat', Cantina Atzei, 2024 41
Vermentino loves the sea, whether in Tuscany or here, Sardinia, where it originates. Seashell, salt, lemon, right at home with shellfish.

Vermentino di Gallura Superiore, Sella & Mosca, 2023 48
From the only DOCG on Sardinia and replete with granite soils unique to the area, the northeast corner of the island; this is an enticing, suave rendition of Vermentino with an impeccable mouthfeel and zing of acidity, lending freshness to the fruity, aromatic core

PUGLIA

Verdeca 'Talo', San Marzano, 2023 38
My cat, Bucket, reminds me of Verdeca: chill, playful, full of energy, a little mysterious, expresses itself to you on its own terms, and absolutely loves fish. To add some personality, the wine rests for 3 months in barrel. The cat probably could, too..

ITALIAN WHITE

ABRUZZO

PRICE

Trebbiano d'Abruzzo, Emidio Pepe, 2015

138

It is the attention to fine detail that has helped establish Emidio Pepe as one of the top winemakers of Italy: his wines are foot-pressed, aged in concrete vats to allow purity of expression, and individual bottles are decanted by hand to remove sediments. Such devotion will inevitably show in the final product: this is a Trebbiano of charisma, intelligence, brightness, and flavour upon flavour.

Trebbiano d'Abruzzo Vigneto di Popoli, Valle Reale, 2019

94

An astonishing single-vineyard expression aged in stainless steel for 18 months using wild yeasts, from a small, family-owned winery that has made a habit of producing pure expressions of the land of Trebbiano d'Abruzzo DOC: packed with flavour, intensity, grace.

Trebbiano d'Abruzzo, Gran Sasso, 2024

38

Gran Sasso is the name of this winery as well as Abruzzo's most famous mountain that shields the vines from cold, Apennine winds but allows in just enough to keep the grapes from overripening in the hot summer months; fresh, citrusy, bright.

Pecorino 'Calalenta', Fantini, 2024

40

A portion of this Pecorino is finished in large barrels which lend an extra dash of body, flavour, richness, yet still such freshness here.

Pecorino d'Abruzzo Superiore 'La Canaglia', Fontefico, 2023

54

From the Terre di Chieti subregion of the Abruzzo DOC, this comes from the Vigna Bianca plot, just 1 kilometre from the sea, and lights up the palate with vivid minerality and a zing of acidity and that seems to reverberate; 48 hours on the skins, 6 months on the lees.

SICILIA

Chardonnay, Planeta, 2023

79

An apex and now legendary Chardonnay: 40% new oak, 30% second-use, 30% third-use. Sensual, deep, from Lake Menfi and the DOC.

Grillo, Vigneti Zabu', 2024

36

Good luck finding a Trattoria anywhere on the island that doesn't have an option for this fresh, medium-bodied white, indigenous here.

Sauvignon Blanc 'Urro di Mare', Mandrarossa 2023

49

From clay-limestone soils a stone's throw from the sea, this is coastal, mineral, fully ripe Sauvignon Blanc as only Sicily could produce. Urro di Mare is a reference to the vineyard area of Menfi, within the larger Sicilia DOC, right off the shores of the Mediterranean.

MOUNT ETNA,

in the northeast of Sicily, is the highest elevation to be found anywhere on the island and this, combined with its black-as-night volcanic soil, makes it a world-class DOC and winemaking region. The whites, based on the grape Carricante, are structured, elegant, and reflect the smoky, charred nature of the soils they come from in their profile too, often exhibiting pepper, ash, and minerality in the most vivid, pleasant ways.

Etna Bianco 'Aedes', I Custodi, 2022

65

Fruit from 10 year-old bush vines, aged entirely in stainless steel, so you get what you got: smoke, pure fruit, minerality, zest. Beautiful.

Etna Bianco Contrada Taccione, Planeta, 2022

54

Grapes come from a single Contrada, the Etna equivalent to a village 'cru', measured based on factors like soil and microclimate (not village boundaries), and is a way of capturing the many unique wine-making environments this magical mountain hosts. This wine is finished in 20% new oak but all it does is add a layer of flavour to the typicity of Etna's smokiness, minerality, pepper, acidity.

WORLD RED

FRANCE

PRICE

BURGUNDY

You will see the influence of Burgundy throughout this wine list: it was Cistercian monks in Burgundy in the 1300s that first discovered that wine made in the same way with the same grapes tasted different if they came from a different vineyard. Those monks measured out some of the most reliable vineyards in the world, and to this day, Burgundians rank the quality of their vineyards based in large part on what these dedicated monks measured out centuries ago. And their influence has crossed borders: Barolo and Barbaresco have essentially adopted their 'cru' system (the Burgundian term for a single site) and will always list the vineyard name if it's not a blend. Throughout the Italian section of this list, where you see the words 'Vigna' or 'Vigneto', you can know that this is a single-vineyard wine. Monks really know their booze.

Gevrey-Chambertin Premier Cru Fonteny, Domaine Henri Rebourseau, 1995 170

From one of the great communes for Pinot Noir the world over, Gevrey-Chambertin, known for producing the most powerful versions of the grape in all of the Cote d'Or, but with time, they unfold into wines of great complexity and nuance. Fonteny is a plot of very rocky soil, producing smaller berries, enhancing that power and concentration even further.

Volnay Premier Cru Frémiets, Domaine Parent, 2002 142

Exquisitely aged from a five-star vintage in Burgundy, from the most revered commune in the Côte de Beaune, Volnay, and from the winery whose ancestors supplied Thomas Jefferson with his favourite Burgundies; this is floral, red-fruited, entirely amazing.

Pommard Premier Cru Les Poutures, Domaine Mazilly & Fils, 1988 132

If Volnay (see above entry) is the most famous commune in the Côte de Beaune, then Pommard is surely the next. Known more for power and tannins (for a Pinot Noir), this is a darker, savoury, mushroomy bottling from the famous Poutures vineyard, from a top vintage.

Chiroubles 'Les Gatilles', Château de Javernand, 2022 49

Chiroubles is one of the ten 'Cru' of Beaujolais (where 'Cru' refers to a commune, not a vineyard site) known for producing expressions of the Gamay grape that are darker, more structured, more complex than the typical (and much more common) Beaujolais bottlings you'll find in most Tesco's and Lidl's. This elegant version from Javernand is precise, fruity, and light on its feet while also having depth.

BORDEAUX

Saint-Estèphe, Château Lilian Ladouys, 2016 76

Saint-Estèphe is technically a Left Bank commune (where blends are Cab-dominated), but this wine is led by Merlot: 62%, then 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc. Rich and complex, well-aged Bordeaux.

Margaux Deuxième Cru, Château Lascombes, 1990 220

This is why we play the game, for wines like this. 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, from one of only 14 estates awarded Deuxième Cru status in the 1855 Classification of Medoc; a ridiculous wine, packing flavour upon flavour onto each sip, ranging from fruits to minerals to herbs we've never even heard of, all delivered with aged Bordeaux's restrained, elegant power.

St.-Emilion Grand Cru, Dame Gaffelière, 2014 99

On the right bank, where Merlot is king: 90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc. Fruity, full-bodied, a touch of earth and aged magic.

LOIRE VALLEY

Saumur Rouge, Brendan Stater-West, 2023 73

Phenomenally aromatic, old-vine Cabernet Franc that spends 12 months in neutral oak barrels (225L, 300L, and 400L), six months in stainless steel, and displays Saumur's magical soils all at the same time.

WORLD RED

FRANCE (CONT.)

PRICE

RHÔNE VALLEY

Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Domaine de Villeneuve Vieilles Vignes, 1998

98

An old-school style, with red fruits and spice and florals and, at about 27 years old, a bit of earth and pleasant funk as well; the blend itself is pleasantly funky too: 70% Grenache, 16% Mourvedre, 8% Syrah, 4% Cinsault, 2% Clairette.

Cornas La Sabarotte, Domaine Courbis, 2006

134

Imagine a wine style with a typical flavour profile along the lines of dark fruits, minerality, cured meat, smoke, flowers, blood, pepper, spice. All in the same wine! That is Syrah from the Northern Rhône commune of Cornas. This 2006 is a single-vineyard bottling by Courbis, one of the most hallowed of Cornas producers; 70% in oak, 30% new. Expect a bit of aged nuance in this beast as well.

Crozes-Hermitage 'Equinoxe', Equis, 2022

72

The more fruity, full-bodied side of Northern Rhône Syrah. Plenty of structure, body, black fruits, while showing off Syrah's wild side.

SPAIN

Rioja Gran Reserva, Finca Manzanos, 2015

72

From clay-limestone soils at 400 metres above sea level - a big detail in Rioja - this Tempranillo saw a whopping 8 years of aging: 3 years in barrel (70% French, 30% American), and then 5 years in bottle.

Rioja Reserva, Vivanco, 2017

51

This is Tempranillo in its sweet spot of red fruits with oak and spice, supplemented with 10% Graciano; aged two years in oak, combining French and American as well as new and used oak, and then a further two years in bottle.

Bierzo Mencia, Pittacum, 2019

61

For me, the most underrated red in Spain right now is Mencia, especially when it comes from one of its prime appellations, like Bierzo. Meaty, fruity, complex, yet devastatingly elegant and poised, like a bodybuilder who's mastered a waltz, and just wonderful with food.

ARGENTINA

Malbec, La Mascota, 2022

42

Equal parts fruity and spicy, with Malbec's bewitching ability to combine red and dark fruit flavours, this is soft, full-bodied stuff from the ultra-high elevation vineyards of Mendoza, the main appellation in the world for single-varietal Malbec production.

NEW ZEALAND

Pinot Noir, Wild Earth, 2021

69

From the southernmost wine region in the world, and some of the most famous Pinot Noir in the Southern Hemisphere, Central Otago brings a stunning floral, herbal side to Pinot; this example by Wild Earth captivates with its fruit, minerality, and cool-climate acidity.

ITALIAN RED

PIEMONTE

PRICE

BAROLO

A mountaintop wine, one capable of stealing the show all on its own: Barolo. Made from the indomitable Nebbiolo grape, and traditionally aged in ultra-large barrels known as botti (many of which are taller than the room you sit in), Barolo DOCG has two main things going for it: a spellbinding complexity of flavour that covers everything from flowers to smoke to red fruits to spice to minerals, and the magic trick of having a light-to-medium-bodied frame buttressed by hefty tannins and acidity, like a croissant stuffed with filet mignon. The soils here have two main divisions: La Morra and Barolo soils have higher concentrations of calcareous marl, which produces lower tannins and a more elegant style of wine; the other three major communes (Serralunga d'Alba, Castiglione Falletto, Monforte d'Alba) have more sandstone, which produces wines of elevated tannin, structure, and power. Both styles are quintessential Nebbiolo, glorious with food, and an experience all to themselves.

Barolo Cascina Francia, Giacomo Conterno, 2018

480

Conterno is a wizard with Nebbiolo and his Monfortino is one of the most famous Barolos ever produced, but in 2018 he decided to forego the Monfortino and instead blended those barrels in with his Cascina Francia. The hype around this wine, therefore, has exploded; strike while you can.

Barolo Cannubi, Giacomo Brezza, 2020

150

If ever there was a 'Grand Cru' of Barolo, it would be Cannubi, Piemonte's most famous vineyard that sits almost smack in the heart of the Barolo MGA zone, the surrounding hills and hamlets shielding it from extreme weather and allowing the grapes to reach optimal ripeness and complexity with a long, peaceful growing season. From a traditional producer, Brezza: elegant, approachable, ravishing.

Barolo 'Tre Tine', Rinaldi, 2011

410

Tre Tine is a reference to the three all-star vineyards from which this blend is made - Cannubi San Lorenzo, Ravera, and Le Coste - from three different communes, so you get a little of the best of each resulting in an ultra balanced, elegant, complex version.

Barolo Coste di Rose, G.D. Vajra, 2021

135

It would take a special wine & vintage for me to serve a Barolo so young, having barely spent any time on the shelf since release this year: a gorgeous nose transports you right to the commune of Barolo, where this prized cru originates, located beside the legendary Cannubi cru and right below a forest, which moderates temperature and ensures slow, even ripening. Ready to go right out of the gate.

Barolo, Pio Cesare, 1990

270

Another top name in Piemonte, both for Barolo and Barbaresco, is Pio Cesare, who leans a little more modern with his use of French barrique to age his wines, which lends a little extra roundness to this 1990 vintage, one of the best Barolo has ever seen.

Barolo Sperss, Gaja, 1988

390

Gaja's first commercial release of this wine, from the Marenca-Rivette cru in Serralunga d'Alba, was in 1988, fulfilling the family's long dream of finally owning vineyards in Barolo, and displays the Gaja touch - French barrique aging, shorter fermentations - while also purring with Barolo power and complexity.

Barolo Parussi, Massolino, 2020

210

In many of the world's most renowned wine regions, it's typically good practice to find a producer you like, or who consistently presents quality and a refined touch across their lineup. Massolino is one such producer, this from the esteemed Parussi cru, approachable and complex and wearing the Massolino badge of power, balance, and a gorgeous panoply of flavour.

Barolo, Fratelli Oddero, 1967

410

From a time when the Cru system as it is today didn't even exist, and when fully-ripened Barolo could clock in at 13.5% ABV, Oddero's wines are famous for their ability to age, and this comes from the 5-star 1967 vintage, one of the best of the century in Barolo.

Barolo Riva del Bric, Paolo Conterno, 2018

82

Riva del Bric is a plot within the highly-regarded Ginestra cru in Monforte d'Alba and an early-drinking plot which, along with 24 months' aging in French oak, means this is quite round, balanced, ready to go, and quintessential Barolo.

ITALIAN RED

PIEMONTE (CONT.)

PRICE

BAROLO

Barolo Roncaglie, Eraldo Viberti, 2017

110

Another gem of La Morra, Roncaglie is an underrated cru that's sitting in a perfect place in this version by Eraldo Viberti: finesse, structure, brightness, a lovely touch of spice.

Barolo Brunate, Marcarini, 2013

95

One of my favourite values in the whole book and from the highly esteemed Brunate cru, Marcarini has this lovely, mineral, red-fruited style that leans elegant and, at 12 years old, is in a beautiful spot right now.

Barolo Rocche dell'Annunziata, Renato Molino, 2015

160

A refined, herbal, exquisite Barolo from the famous Rocche dell'Annunziata cru in La Morra, from 50 year-old vines that boast perfect sun exposure on a south-facing hill. Only the best bunches are used for this, aged 40 months in 40 hl botti, and bristles with flavour.

Barolo, Francesco Rinaldi, 1967

380

The 60s and 70s were the golden years of Francesco Rinaldi's wines and they continue to age like it. This one, 1967, was one of Piedmont's great vintages and in Rinaldi's veterans you can expect earth, leather, spice, fresh fruit still, tertiary notes, savoury nuance.

BARBARESCO

Only twenty kilometres from the village of Barolo lies the town of Barbaresco, on the other side of Alba, where the hills don't reach quite as high and so are a bit warmer, and the soils a bit more fertile, meaning the grapes don't experience as much stress, and so the growing season a bit shorter. The wines that result from this environment don't have quite as much tannic bite or power as Barolo, and so Barbaresco DOCG's reputation was set in place as being a more elegant, approachable style of Nebbiolo, but still perfectly capable of going toe-to-toe in terms of complexity, flavour profile, and that inescapable wow factor that well-made Nebbiolo induces out of its drinkers. Barbaresco also abides by the cru system, so vineyard names will occur immediately after the village name, a few of them considered among some of the best single-site vineyards in Italy.

Barbaresco Sori Tildin, Gaja, 2015

540

In the world of Barbaresco, there is no name that has reached the heights of Angelo Gaja. While the Gaja winemaking touch has reached to other regions of Italy, Barbaresco is and will always be his soul, and it shows in the bottles we offer here, starting with perhaps the most famous vineyard he works, Sori Tildin, from an excellent (and warm) vintage in 2015.

Barbaresco, Gaja, 2019

380

You know that scene in Gladiator when Juba, Maximus's friend, first sees the Colosseum and says, 'I did not know man could build such things?' That is how I feel when I drink this wine, a blend of Gaja's best sites, since he decided not to bottle his individual crus that year.

Barbaresco, Produttori del Barbaresco, 1970

290

Founded in 1958, Produttori del Barbaresco is a cooperative of 54 families who own hectares (over 100 total) in the Barbaresco DOCG zone; they grow only one grape, Nebbiolo, and they grow it well. This 1970 is legendary, still going strong, and likely will for some time.

Barbaresco Rabaja, Bruno Rocca, 2020

220

Rabaja is one of the most esteemed crus in the Barbaresco zone, with a soil combining clay, limestone, tuff, and marl, resulting in a wine similarly layered and multifaceted, yet woven together with such grace and seamlessness as only the Rocca family can do.

Barbaresco Roncaglie Riserva, Socré, 2015

150

The estate's most prized cru, Roncaglie, given an extra dose of aging, from the excellent 2015 vintage. The extra year in barrel pushes this on the rich side of Barbaresco yet it's laced with savoury notes, like tinsel across a Christmas tree.

Barbaresco Ovello, Cascina Morassino, 2021*

132

This is classic Barbaresco - spice, finesse, red fruits, flowers - with an extra dose of body lent to it by the high proportion of clay found in the soil of Ovello, one of the top crus in Barbaresco, and it doesn't hurt to have the pedigreed hand of Morassino behind it all.

ITALIAN RED

PIEMONTE (CONT.)

PRICE

BARBARESCO

Barbaresco Albesani, Franco Rocca, 2018*

115

Another top cru of Barbaresco, this Albesani is fermented in stainless steel, with maceration lasting 40 days, and then finished in 50 hl Slavonian oak barrels, so you get a very pure, vibrant, fragrant expression of the Nebbiolo spectrum here.

Barbaresco, Socré, 2017*

89

Socré was founded as a winery in 1869, continues to be run within the same family, and have been sculpting wines of elegance, complexity, and precision now for over 150 years. This is a blend of their estate grapes and is just now starting to hit its stride.

LANGHE, ALTO PIEMONTE, MONFERRATO

Langhe Nebbiolo, Cascina Morassino, 2022

61

Native yeasts, 18 months in large barrels, and Morassino's beautiful calcareous marl soils help deliver the purity and beauty of these old-vine Nebbiolo grapes, most of which come from 50+ year-old vines.

Langhe Nebbiolo Sito Moresco, Gaja, 2017

180

Gaja bought vineyards in Treiso and Serralunga d'Alba from the Moresco family and named this blend of 50% Nebbiolo, 40% Barbera, and 10% Merlot after them. There's plenty of juiciness and fruitiness here but this is poised, elegant, savoury, and light on its feet.

Gattinara, Giacomo Conterno-Nervi, 2017

92

Roberto Conterno is a legend in Barolo but in the 2010s he purchased Gattinara DOCG's most famous estate, Nervi, to capitalise on the northern, cooler, volcanic vines of Nebbiolo (locally known as Spanna) that are just as reliable as they are underrated. Conterno usually bottles his individual vineyards but in 2017 he decided to combine them all, so this punches above its normal weight. Cracking value.

Ghemme Riserva, Cantina Sociale di Sizzano e Ghemme, 1964

120

Just across the highway from Gattinara lies the district of Ghemme, whose hills are of alluvial origin and produce a style of Spanna (the local term for Nebbiolo) in a brighter, herbal, more ethereal style, especially with this much age, where the hefty tannins of the grape are resolved; a rare bottle, displaying the characteristics of an even rarer, long-lived vintage.

Barbera di Nizza Bansella, Prunotto, 2021

61

A stunning single-vineyard expression of Barbera from Nizza, the newest DOCG for Barbera (awarded in 2014), where the vineyards are hillier and have higher concentrations of sand. Nine months' aging in small barrels.

Barbera d'Asti Superiore 'Magister', Cantine di Nizza, 2021

45

Barbera as its fullest, darkest, fruitiest self. In Alba, the best sites are devoted to Nebbiolo, but in Asti, this privilege belongs to Barbera and is part of the reason Barbera d'Asti is a DOCG and Alba a DOC. From calcareous clay soils and prime south-facing slopes.

Barbera d'Alba Superiore, Malabaila, 2020

70

Excellent Barbera for its depth, nuance, and layers upon layers of flavour; from the Alba district and DOC, where Barbera is typically more structured and masculine, this is a lovely mix of that savoury backbone with Barbera's signature dark fruits and spice.

Dolcetto d'Alba 'Dosso', Enrico Serafino, 2020

50

Dolcetto is what Piemontese winemakers drink, every day, when they're not making Barolo; round, supple, fruity, entirely satisfying.

Monferrato Rosso 'Nivö', Rugra, 2011

62

Nivö (or Nibio) is a rare clone of Dolcetto known for its red stems and more earthy, characterful flavour profile, and this aged Monferrato DOC is from a small (2 HA of vines) winery combining earthy elegance with classic Dolcetto fruit, roundness, and charm.

ITALIAN RED

TOSCANA

PRICE

CHIANTI

Chianti is divided into eight subzones, the most famous of which is Chianti Classico DOCG, which is the central, older, and hillier of the subzones, as well as where loads of those ridiculously romantic photos of cypress-lined roads come from. The Classico zone is known for its Albarese soil, sandstone and clay, which contribute acidity and structure, and as a result these wines typically provide that blast of freshness to go with its rustic, cherry, countryside frame. The quintessential wine of Tuscany and the most legendary Sangiovese worldwide.

Chianti Classico Poggio Cheto, Tenute Piccini, 2021 45

Ten percent each of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon serves to add colour, structure, and fruitiness to this warm, enveloping Chianti.

Chianti Classico Riserva, Castello di Meleto, 2020 60

Imagine a Tuscan hillside with wildflowers all around and an ancient clay pot sticking out of the red, iron-laced dirt nearby, wild tomato vines trying to sprout. That is this wine. Includes 5% Merlot, but it's the Sangiovese that sings: 20 months in 54 hl barrels and concrete.

Chianti Classico Riserva, Castello della Paneretta, 2017 72

Special Sangiovese reinforced by a local grape, Canaiolo (10%), as well as one of the best estates in Monsanto, this Chianti Classico is aged for two years in 50 and 30 hectolitre barrels, the big ones, so minimal oak influence that allows the fruit and soil to rule the day.

Chianti Classico Gran Selezione Vigna Monna Lisa, Vignamaggio, 2017 92

Aged 30 months in a combination of small French and large Slavonian oak barrels, this is 100% Sangiovese and Vignamaggio's top bottling, displaying wonderful concentration, power, intensity, with this gorgeous, feral edginess to it.

Chianti Rufina Riserva Vigneto Bucerchiale, Selvapiana, 2020 73

If Chianti Classico is the popular, flashy, good-looking older sibling that gets all the attention, Rufina is the less outgoing, less well-known younger sibling that's just as compelling, when given the chance. The smallest and coolest of the Chianti subzones, where aromatics and single-vineyard bottlings are prioritised. This is a stunning effort from the Bucerchiale cru: finesse, fragrance, freshness.

MONTEPULCIANO

Renaissance-era nobility adored the wines of Montepulciano so much that they requested that plantings of the grape - a biotype of Sangiovese known as Prugnolo Gentile - be increased, so the grape was planted in the Peligna Valley in Abruzzo, where local farmers referred to it as "that Montepulciano grape" and the moniker stuck, resulting in the mass confusion, to this day, between the wines of the Montepulciano grape in Abruzzo and the wines of the Montepulciano town in Tuscany, one of the great DOCGs for Sangiovese in Italy. Once you account for the unlucky name, however, what you get is a beautiful, fuller-bodied and rounded version of Sangiovese, coupled with extraordinary aromatics, balance, and depth. Wine fit for a king, it turns out.

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Tenuta Valdipiatta, 2020 71

One of those wines you wish they'd make a candle out of, the aromatics on this are just insane, reinforced by 15% Canaiolo.

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Vigna d'Alfiero, Tenuta Valdipiatta, 2019 90

From one of the estate's treasured vineyards, planted in the 1960s, and produced only in exceptional years - and 2019 certainly was that - this is 100% Prugnolo Gentile macerated for 4 weeks, aged for 18 months in large barrels, and refined in bottle another year.

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva, Il Macchione, 2016 106

Pure Sangiovese glory here, 100% Prugnolo Gentile aged for 36 months in large barrels that seemed to only help the Sangiovese along towards what it does best: savoury, complex, meaty power reined in by Tuscan rusticity and finesse.

ITALIAN RED

TOSCANA (CONT.)

PRICE

MONTALCINO

Montalcino is a walled town sitting on the precipice of a hill, which is no small metaphor. The wines here have garnered international fame and are considered some of the best Italy has to offer, based entirely on a clone of Sangiovese called Brunello, a thicker-skinned version of Italy's most-planted grape, which means its wines are a bit more robust, full, and structured than Chianti's or Vino Nobile's. There is more limestone around Montalcino as well, and the Monte Amiata range to the southeast protects the region from sudden rain or hail. At its best, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG is a full-bodied, richly flavoured tour de force that beckons us to slow down and notice the many things it can do to our palates, capable of aging as well as wowing us right now.

Brunello di Montalcino, Canalicchio di Sopra, 2016

160

Brunello, more than many other varietals, wears the vintage on its sleeve, and this is nowhere more apparent than the now legendary 2016, a growing season so precise and balanced that the wines display the same characteristics: harmony, elegance, this wonderful tug-of-war between ripeness and freshness. Red fruit flavours meet meatiness, savoury nuance, and attitude in this bottling.

Brunello di Montalcino, Conti Costanti, 2015*

174

Andrea Costanti has firmly established himself as one of the top winemakers in the region; such is his pursuit of quality that he intentionally sat out the sub-par 2014 vintage because he didn't believe in its quality. That changed (and then some) with 2015, a widely acclaimed vintage whose big, powerful wines are in a lovely place right now. Muscular, energetic, serious wine.

Brunello di Montalcino, Biondi-Santi, 2017*

420

In 1842, Feruccio Biondi Santi isolated a clone of the Sangiovese grape that became known as Sangiovese Grosso, or 'Brunello' due to the brownish-orange colour it adopted in the glass. The Biondi-Santi family continues to craft one of the best expressions of this famous grape: fiercely flavoured with elegance, structure, purity of fruit, and a mouthfeel almost as legendary as the family name.

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 'Pian di Conte', Talenti, 2016*

190

Riccardo Talenti's top bottling, made only in exceptional vintages, and using grapes from the estate's oldest vines on sandy soils with lots of stones, which radiate sunlight to enhance ripening, meaning the balance with the high elevation here is extraordinary. Six years' aging includes 2 years in large barrel, combining French tonneaux with 15-25 hl Slavonian botti.

Brunello di Montalcino, Fuligni, 1999

145

From the 5-star 1999 vintage and in one of Brunello's sweet spots: earthy funk combines with red fruits, florals, tobacco spice, leather, an amazingly alive mouthfeel, deeply complex, with a zest for life that keeps you wanting more of it, and vice versa.

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva, Gianfranco Soldera, 2005

1,349

Soldera's wines have developed an impassioned cult following among Montalcino enthusiasts, producing some of the most sought-after Brunello's since they started fermenting grapes in 1970. His wines are rare and hard to find, especially the Riservas, especially at this age, especially since his passing in 2019...this is truly rare, cherished juice here.

Brunello di Montalcino Columbaio di Montosoli, Baricci, 2017

135

This was a warm year so you feel the heat and the body from such a vintage but this wine matches it with lift and complexity and distinction, in part because of the influence of the Montosoli vineyard, which the Baricci family does not market as a 'cru' but could, from which 100% of these Sangiovese Grosso grapes come.

Brunello di Montalcino, Fossacolle, 2020

98

Winemaker Adriano Bombagioni learned his craft under Giacomo Tachis, the single most famous winemaker Italy ever produced. Vines here come from 300 metres elevation from clay & limestone soils: ripe, full, rich, balanced, lingering Brunello.

Brunello di Montalcino, Il Poggione, 2013

115

One of my favourite producers - Poggione always manages to combine pristine elegance and restraint with the wild, rustic character of powerful Brunello - and from an underrated, cooler vintage: light on its feet (for a Brunello), impeccable structure, red-fruited, lovely.

Rosso di Montalcino, Il Poggione, 2022

60

From the same Brunello grapes as its older, more famous siblings above, but from younger vines and without as much aging, yet still bringing plenty of that Sangiovese Grosso character, this 'Baby Brunello' is open and lush and from a top, traditional producer.

ITALIAN RED

TOSCANA (CONT.)

PRICE

BOLGHERI, MAREMMA, 'SUPER TUSCANS'

It all started in 1968, when Piero Antinori decided to release commercially the Cabernet Sauvignon-based blend that he had made for family and friends. He called this wine Sassicaia, a wine produced entirely from non-native grapes, a category of Italian wine not supported by the new Italian wine laws (the DOC system, launched in 1966), and so this ground-breaking wine was labelled at the lowest tier an Italian wine could have: *Vino da Tavola*, table wine. But the wine, and the style, caught the eye of critics and consumers, and eventually a whole new tier in Italian wine law (IGT) would be created for this daring, revolutionary category of Italian wine (usually labelled Toscana IGT). Most of the wines below don't carry the prestigious DOCG labelling, but they don't care, and that's perhaps the best thing about them, the thing that makes them just a little extra delicious: they had a vision and crafted wines of quality, the way they wanted to, regardless of the lawmaking noise around them.

Sassicaia, Tenuta San Guido, 2003* 510

Sassicaia was initially categorised 'Vino da Tavola', and now it's the only wine in Italy to have its own DOC: Bolgheri Sassicaia DOC. And probably Italy's most famous wine, to boot. 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Cabernet Franc of dark, intense, shockingly coherent and balanced wine, from rocky, gravelly soils very similar to Bordeaux, on which the blend is based. An experience, and slice of history.

Ornellaia, Tenuta dell'Ornellaia, 1999* 540

Piero Antinori's brother, Ludovico, set out in 1985 on his own project and created a blockbuster: Ornellaia, produced in the highly-regarded Bolgheri DOC, along the coast. The 1999 is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and they combine in what is a stunningly complete, full-bodied masterclass in concentration of flavour, in harnessing of structure and aromatics into one sip.

Tignanello, Marchesi Antinori, 2015* 310

The brainchild behind this Antinori masterpiece is Giacomo Tachis (who also produced Sassicaia), far and away the most famous winemaker Italy has ever produced. Tignanello was the first Sangiovese to be aged in barriques, the first red wine in the Chianti region that didn't use white grapes (which used to be the norm), by far the most influential IGT; Tignanello is a benchmark. 85% Sangiovese, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon in a wildly complex wine, combining finesse and Sangiovese's savoury feral side with dark, brooding fruits.

Cepparello, Isole e Olena, 2015* 180

This is a winery based in Chianti Classico whose most famous wine is a Toscana IGT: 100% Sangiovese from the estate's best sites, 400m in elevation on Galestro (a highly-valued schist-clay soil) where the Borro Cepparello, an old stream, originates, and lends its name to the wine. 100% barrel-aged for 20 months, a third in new oak, a third in second-use, and a third in third-use, all after extensive use of delestage. 'Burgundy'-style Sangiovese: elegance, red fruits, minerality, tertiary notes, ample fruit, and a bit of awe.

Campora, Falchini, 1996 120

From San Gimignano, this is the estate's top red bottling: a Toscana IGT blend of 98% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Merlot; 4 years' aging, 2 in French oak and then 2 more in bottle. From the cooler 1996 vintage, still brimming with life and energy; full-bodied, fruity, earthy.

Carnasciale, Podere Il Carnasciale, 2016* 105

Have you ever heard of 'Caberlot'? I hadn't either. It's a legit grape, a crossing of Cabernet Franc and Merlot, and combines their qualities beautifully in this inky-black, concentrated wine, which leans a bit Cab Franc in terms of flavour. Magnificent at this age.

Botrosecco Cabernet, Antinori Le Mortelle, 2022 94

Antinori's estate in Maremma DOC, southern Tuscany, a powerful blending of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Cabernet Franc whose tannins are actually quite reined in for such a young age and so is wonderful to drink today, full of Cab character, and yearning for food.

Terrine, Castello della Paneretta, 2016 89

Astonishing aromatics on this Toscana IGT blend of 50% Sangiovese and 50% Canaiolo, aged 2 years in a mixture of new and used oak.

ITALIAN RED

TOSCANA (CONT.)

PRICE

BOLGHERI, MAREMMA, 'SUPER TUSCANS'

Morellino di Scansano, Barbi, 2022

49

Morellino is the local term in Maremma for Sangiovese, and is a DOCG when Sangiovese comprises at least 85% of the blend, in this case 90% plus 10% Merlot, and an entirely underrated category of Sangiovese in its own right. Six months aging in French oak.

Promis, Gaja Ca' Marcanda, 2021*

90

An aromatic, bold, and polished Toscana IGT, as only Angelo Gaja (maestro of Barbaresco) could do, with 55% Merlot, 35% Syrah, and 10% Sangiovese to add that Mediterranean warmth. One year aging in barrel to give it depth, drinking wonderfully right now.

Il Seggio, Poggio al Tesoro, 2022

70

A full, rich example of Bolgheri DOC, blending 50% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Cabernet Franc, and 10% Petit Verdot, from vines at sea level with lots of cooling breezes from the Tyrrhenian, aged for 15 months in 30% new and 70% used Allier barriques.

CARMIGNANO

Carmignano 'Villa di Capezzana', Capezzana, 2020

79

The power and tannins of Cabernet Sauvignon combine with the savoury spine of Sangiovese in this full-bodied, historic blend, a DOCG that was the very first appellation in all of Italy - even before the big Super Tuscans - allowed, by law, to blend in Cabernet.

LOMBARDIA

If you were part of my wine class, and I had to take you all on one field trip to one place, it would be Valtellina. A DOCG of impossibly steep vineyards, UNESCO-listed stone walls holding the vined terraces together, jagged mountain peaks in the distance, and loads of small, family wineries producing this very elegant, alpine, textural expression of the Nebbiolo grape, locally known as Chiavennasca.

Valtellina Superiore Valgella Vigna Cà Morei, Sandro Fay, 2019

80

This is 'light-bodied' Nebbiolo, but with enough punch of tannins to remind you of what we're dealing with; 12 months aging in barrel, a single-vineyard expression from Fay's Cà Morei cru that remains one of my favourite values on this list.

Valtellina Superiore Valgella Vigna Carteria Riserva, Sandro Fay, 2019

99

From the finest cru in Fay's range, Carteria is aged for 12 months in 30 hl oak casks and then another year in bottle. An elevation of nearly 500 metres ensures that the spicy complexity of the Chiavennasca grapes is supported by a firm backbone of refreshing acidity.

TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE

Teroldego Rotaliano Superiore Riserva, Castel Firmian, 2020

47

Teroldego is a magical varietal, exhibiting many of the same traits as Syrah - of which it is a cousin - with its dark fruit, capacity for aging and complexity, and consistent structure without ever overwhelming. Two years' aging, one of which was in Allier oak barrels.

Pinot Nero Riserva 'St. Daniel', Colterenzio, 2022

64

Pinot Noir is not widely-planted in Italy, most of the peninsula being too hot, but it has found a cool-climate home in Trentino, and this is a beautifully constructed Riserva by one of the region's top producers; two years' aging, one in barrel and another in bottle.

ITALIAN RED

VENETO

PRICE

Valpolicella Classico, David Sterza, 2023

42

All stainless-steel production highlights the beautiful flavours in this light, elegant blend of 70% Corvina, 15% Rondinella, 15% Molinara.

Valpolicella Classico Superiore Terre di Cariano, Cecilia Beretta, 2019

49

The best bunches from harvest are sorted for this wine, which then matures for 16 months in barrel, followed by 6 months in bottle. An exquisite mouthfeel on this, and at six years old is sitting in a sweet spot. 60% Corvina, 20% Corvinone, 20% Rondinella.

Valpolicella Classico Superiore, Meroni Il Velluto, 2017

69

A special bottling from Saint'Ambrogio wherein the grapes are dried for 30 days after harvest, essentially making it a 'Baby Amarone', yet striking in its classy, elegant delivery and precision of flavours. 30% Corvina, 30% Corvinone, 30% Rondinella, 10% Molinara.

Valpolicella Ripasso Superiore 'Maciòn', Collina dei Ciliegi, 2021*

57

One of the most complete and refined Ripasso's I've tasted. The vineyards are the highest in the Valpantena, which results in a longer growing season due to the high diurnal shifts, up to a month longer than the valley floor, which results in grapes much higher in aromatic complexity. Ten-day fermentation on Amarone and Recioto pomace, 12 months in tonneau. 70% Corvina, 25% Corvinone, 5% Rondinella.

AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA DOCG

Amarone della Valpolicella, Tedeschi, 2011

140

Exceptional Amarone from no shortage of bold winemaking decisions: 60-day fermentation after an October harvest; 3 years in oak; 16% Vol.; blends a whopping 7 varietals: 30% Corvina, 30% Corvinone, 30% Rondinella, 10% Osoleta, Rossignola, Negrara, Dindarella.

Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Riserva, Biscardo, 2011

120

High-elevation vines consisting of 75% Corvina, 20% Corvinone, and 5% Rondinella are aged in Slavonian oak tonneaux for 21 months.

Amarone della Valpolicella Classico, Corte Lenguin, 2018

87

A fascinating blend combines 50% Corvina with 50% Rondinella, a grape usually added for its acidity, so this brings some nice lift to balance the 16% alcohol and exceptional fruit in this full-bodied, luscious tippie.

Amarone della Valpolicella Classico, David Sterza, 2020

105

Sterza brings such a unique style with his touches of pepper-spice, umami, and smokiness but still showcases all the hallmarks of Amarone; 90-day appassimento follows 24 months aging in barrel. 60% Corvina, 20% Corvinone, 17% Rondinella, 3% Osoleta. 16% Vol.

Amarone della Valpolicella, Arco dei Giovi, 2020

96

Lovely cut and definition to this, 50% Corvinone, 30% Molinara, 20% Rondinella; 30-day fermentation in steel, 3-month appassimento, 3-year aging in tonneaux, 6-month refinement in bottle. Complex, fruit-forward, very minimal oak influence, plenty of passito influence.

Amarone della Valpolicella, Torre del Falasco, 2019

82

Steep, terraced hillside vines in Valpantena with poor, chalky soil. Appassimento lasts four months, or until 40% of their weight is lost to evaporation, then allowed to mature for 18 months in barriques. 85% Corvina, 10% Corvinone, 5% Rondinella.

FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

Refosco dal Penducolo Rosso delle Venezie, Tenuta Sant'Helena, 2014*

48

Refosco dal Penducolo Rosso is the longest grape name in the world and one of the few indigenous reds of Friuli, and a powerhouse to boot: plenty of tannic structure, fruit, intensity. Fans of savoury wines will love this beast, especially with this much age.

ITALIAN RED

LIGURIA

PRICE

Rossese di Dolceacqua Superiore, Tenuta Anfosso, 2016

63

Dolceacqua is an old, quaint-as-you-like little town near the Ligurian coast, famous for its cute stone bridge - Claude Monet even has a painting depicting it - and when I first went there, I didn't know the Rossese di Dolceacqua grape (which is also the name of the DOC) even existed. Boy, do I now. Herbs, flowers, minerals, red fruits, a dazzling mouthfeel, like a cross between Pinot Noir and Chianti.

EMILIA-ROMAGNA

Merlot Appassimento, Austo, 2022

46

Merlot grapes go through a partial passito process where they are dried for a brief period of time after harvest: round, full, fruity.

UMBRIA

Montefalco Rosso 'Ziggurat', Tenute Lunelli, 2020

48

The classic blend of Umbria reds from the hilltop town from which it gets its name and DOC, full-bodied and layered and meaty, 70% Sangiovese, 15% Sagrantino, 15% Merlot.

Montefalco Rosso Vigna Flaminia-Maremmiana, Arnaldo Caprai, 2021

59

Not quite a 'single' vineyard bottling but sourced from three plots located along Via Flaminia, an old road that connects Umbria with Maremma. An at once brooding yet refined Montefalco DOC blend of 70% Sangiovese, 15% Sagrantino, 15% Merlot.

Montefalco Sagrantino Colle Grimaldesco, Tabarrini, 2010

89

Sagrantino is the most hallowed grape, by far, of the region of Umbria, and shows off all of its full-bodied, vivacious, and feral potential in the 100% Sagrantino bottlings, typically labelled Montefalco Sagrantino DOCG, that most estates in the area release. Tabarrini produces so many incredible single-vineyard versions that we have two: this one is the fuller-bodied, fruitier version.

Montefalco Sagrantino Vigna Campo alla Cerqua, Tabarrini, 2009

99

Sagrantino from Giampaolo Tabarrini's smallest vineyard, Campo alla Cerqua, and probably his most refined. Drinking this is like watching a bear take a nap - you know there is power in there, but it comes across so peacefully, so soothingly.

MARCHE

Rosso Piceno, Franco Aurora, 2022

48

Rosso Piceno is a little-known DOC typically combining the local Montepulciano grape with Sangiovese, and in this case, a touch of Cabernet Sauvignon to boost colour and structure. Six months aging in large, used barrel.

Cùmaro Conero Riserva, Umani Ronchi, 2020

84

Cùmaro is a nod to the Greek name for the nearby Conero Mountain, after which this DOC is named. Montepulciano grapes are aged for 14 months in oak and aided by the proximity to the sea, lending its salty breezes and calcareous soil. Power, red fruits, herbs, spice.

Lacrima di Morro d'Alba, Velenosi, 2021

36

Lacrima di Morro is a red grape indigenous to Marche and just about the only place you'll find it. Floral, herbal, bright, mouth-filling.

ITALIAN RED

ABRUZZO

PRICE

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo DOC is one of the most important red wines in all of Italy, a remarkable thing to be able to say as the grape, and its corresponding appellations, had to survive the history of sharing the same name with the town in Tuscany that produces Sangiovese-based wines. But alas! Here we are, still in awe of the range and diversity that can come from this varietal, indigenous to Abruzzo, but it is most famous (and loved) for its full-bodied, fruity, unctuous styles that have won over hearts and critics alike.

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Riserva Villa Gemma, Gianni Masciarelli, 2018 160

Masciarelli's top bottling which has received somewhat of a cult status, this is low-yield Montepulciano grapes as they were meant to be. Thirty-day maceration in oak barrels lends plenty of power and flavour that was then tempered and layered by 18 months' aging in barrel followed by another 24 months in bottle.

A stunning mouthfeel: concentration, blasts of flavour, full-bodied, harnessed power.

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Vigneto Sant'Eusanio, Valle Reale, 2020 71

*After I tried this wine I didn't stop thinking about it for weeks. Stainless steel fermentation and aging (one year), from a single vineyard delightfully buried in a pine forest not far from the coast and at 500 metres, this remarkable bottling showcases a less showy but suave side to Montepulciano, like that kid in secondary school who was popular *and* volunteered at the old folks' home on the weekends.*

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Colline Teramane, Gran Sasso, 2017 54

A superlative wine by most measurements: high ripeness and high alcohol meet two years' aging in oak: chocolatey, fruity, rich stuff.

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Gianni Masciarelli, 2020 49

That the same winemaker is responsible for the Villa Gemma bottling, above, as this one just goes to show the remarkable range on hand in the Masciarelli lab. This is all stainless-steel production, showing the herbal, savoury, red-fruited side to this remarkable grape.

Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 'La Lepre', Diversitas, 2023 41

Easy-drinking as you like, with gobs of fruit and a lovely kiss of oak from 6 months in barrel; classic representation of Abruzzo's red grape.

MOLISE

Aglianico del Molise Riserva 'Contado', Di Majo Norante, 2017 59

Aglianico del Molise DOC is in southeast Molise, near the coast, and enjoys a cooler climate with a long growing season; grapes were harvested in late October, fermented in steel, then aged three years, one of which was a combination of small and large barrel.

Biferno Rosso, Palladino, 2019 35

A deep, dark, earthy, delectably satisfying combination of 70% Montepulciano and 30% Aglianico, a blend typical of the Biferno DOC located along the river of the same name; this is aged for 18 months in large oak barrels and then for 18 months in stainless steel.

BASILICATA

Aglianico del Vulture, Donato d'Angelo, 2020 60

From a small estate sitting at 500m in elevation with a panoply of exposed volcanic soils from Mount Vulture - an extinct volcano from which the wine and DOC gets its name - to produce old-vine Aglianico at its spicy, fruity, smoky best. Aged 18 months in large barrel.

ITALIAN RED

PUGLIA

PRICE

Primitivo Di Manduria Riserva 'Anniversario 62', San Marzano, 2019

72

Puglia style at its apex: grapes from the Manduria DOC are left to overripe slightly, fermentation occurs in steel but not to completion, so there are trace amounts of residual sugar in this big, beautiful beast. 18 months' aging in French oak barriques. Lip-smacking stuff.

Susumaniello, Podere Don Cataldo, 2021

44

An unheralded varietal of Puglia, Susumaniello brings a fresher, herbal side to the Puglia fruit and alcohol and pairs really well with food.

Canace, Cantina Diomede, 2022

61

100% Nero di Troia, there is nothing shy about this inky-black wine, aged in 12 months in new French oak; lots of fruit, oak spice, body.

Negroamaro 'I Muri', Vigneti del Salento, 2024

37

Negroamaro means 'black bitter' in Italian but this varietal is actually on the lower end in terms of tannins among Puglian grapes, but the 'black' part of the name is accurate: dark fruits with earth and chocolate and a nice acidity to keep things bright.

Salice Salentino Riserva, Ducale, 2020

38

From the Salice Salentino DOC located on Salento, a peninsula in southern Puglia known for its red blends; this is a blend of 80% Negroamaro, 20% Malvasia Nera, and is aged for a full two years in oak before release.

CAMPANIA

Taurasi 'Ensis', Vesevo, 2013

66

100 year-old Aglianico vines at 500m are cooled by the breeze from the Bay of Naples, the same natural force that has, over time, blown volcanic soil inland from Vesuvius. This is prime grape-growing material that makes the Taurasi DOCG so famous. 70% of the wine is aged for 18 months in 50 hl chestnut casks, and the rest is finished in 225L French barriques hand-picked by the winemaker.

Mastroberardino Taurasi Riserva, 2009*

140

There is perhaps no single wine more famous in or from all of Campania than this Taurasi DOCG bottling by Mastroberardino, the great pioneer of Campanian indigenous varietals since 1878. From the highest portion of the Montemarano estate, this wine is aged 5 years in total: 30 months in French and Slavonian oak, 30 months in bottle after that. Sensual, smoky, smooth, sculpted Aglianico.

Sciapo', Terre di Valter, 2018

75

In the film Jurassic Park, Ian Malcolm - played so brilliantly by Jeff Goldblum - makes the point that it's possible to get random results from normal systems, where you can get chaos out of order, what he calls 'Chaos Theory'. That is this wine. What seems like perfectly orderly Aglianico grapes from the unassuming Irpinia Campi Taurasini DOC undergo 'chaos': partial appassimento, old withered vines, 12 months in barriques, so you get smoke and roasted fruits and meat and chocolate and funk. That, that's Chaos Theory.

Falerno del Massico Riserva 'Onn'Anto', Nuges, 2015

89

A stunning, full-bodied blend from one of the most historic DOCs in the country - the Romans used to make a wine known as Falernum, most likely using Aglianico and Piediroso grapes, which make up 70% and 20% of this blend, respectively, supported by 10% Primitivo. Aged 24 months in French oak. Plummy, dark, complex, mouth-filling.

CALABRIA

Ciro Rosso Classico 'Segno', Librandi, 2022

38

Gaglioppo is native to Calabria and is its main DOC, making red-fruited, elegant wines with wonderful structure and earthiness.

Ciro Rosso Classico Superiore Vigna Franco, A Vita, 2010

56

Deep, layered, nuanced, savoury Gaglioppo; 30-day maceration is followed by 12 months' aging in large barrel. Some aging notes too.

ITALIAN RED

SARDEGNA

PRICE

Cannonau di Sardegna 'Bantu', Antichi Poderi Jerzu, 2022	41
<i>Cannonau is the native name for Grenache, but from the Cannonau di Sardegna DOC, it's light-to-medium bodied, red fruited, extravagantly floral, and carries the island's signature rustic freshness. This version is easy-drinking, low in tannins, wonderful with food.</i>	
Cannonau di Sardegna Riserva 'Berteru', Cantina Gungui, 2017	89
<i>Old vine, high-elevation Cannonau is fermented in steel and then aged in 30 hl casks for 12 months. You feel like you're on the island - there's saltiness, herbs, something pleasantly rustic about it - and this, as well as its red fruits, are delivered with poise and elegance.</i>	
Monica 'Saragat', Cantina Atzei, 2022	38
<i>Some of the oldest vines on the island are Monica, another indigenous grape, the everyday wine for the locals; herbal, earthy, lovely.</i>	
Carignano del Sulcis, Cantine Mesa, 2021	39
<i>Carignano is the same grape as Carignan, in France, and Cariñena, in Spain, where it likely originates. In Sardinia, it has its own DOC, Carignano del Sulcis, and is reminiscent of earth, violets, game, red fruits. This version is aged 18 months in large barrel.</i>	
Carignano del Sulcis Riserva, Rocca Rubia Santadi, 2021	66
<i>Robust yet refined Carignano, from poor, well-draining sandy soils typical of the Sulcis DOC and which always seem to produce wines of high aromatics and finesse, and that combined with the heft added from 12 months' aging in new and used oak is a profound experience.</i>	
Montessu Isola dei Nuraghi, Agripunica, 2022	72
<i>A collaboration between Santadi and Tenuta San Guido, the author of Sassicaia, this 'Super Sardinian' is a powerhouse of a blend based on Carignano (60%) with 10% each Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Syrah; from a portion of Isola dei Nuraghi IGT rich in sandy clay-limestone, aged in cement a few months, then bottled. Luscious, fruity, feral, high-ABV (14.5%), but integrated and poised.</i>	

SICILIA

Etna Rosso, Planeta, 2022	64
<i>This wine is 100% Nerello Mascalese grapes, indigenous to the island and to Europe's most active volcano, Mount Etna, but the wine is labelled 'Etna Rosso' because it is the old, volcanic soil and the elevation of this DOC that the mountain provides (in this case, 600-800 metres above sea level) that make the wine just as much, if not more, than the grapes: minerality, smoke, exquisite balance, elegance.</i>	
Etna Rosso 'Idda', Gaja, 2020	82
<i>Do you remember that sound of applause you heard all of a sudden in 2017? That was the Italian wine world reacting to the news that Angelo Gaja, most heralded of Barbaresco winemakers, had purchased vineyards in the Etna DOC, and in this wine you taste the touch, equal parts, of volcano and winemaker: smoke, minerality, balance, plenty of acidity, precise flavours, and an ethereal mouthfeel.</i>	
Nero d'Avola 'Sherazade', Donnafugata, 2023	44
<i>Nero d'Avola is the most important grape in Sicily, the most-planted and the most-exported, and is similar to Malbec and other such grapes with its beguiling red and dark fruit flavours, lovely spice, full body, and friendly fruit-forward nature. From the Sicilia DOC.</i>	
Frappato, Mandrarossa, 2023	36
<i>Frappato is a delightfully light-bodied and light-hued varietal native to the Ragusa area of Sicily whose build and body is similar to a Pinot Noir, only lighter. One of those reds you could not go wrong chilling, if it's hot out. From the large Terre Siciliane IGT.</i>	

DESSERT WINES

ITALIA

	50ML	BOTTLE
Recioto di Soave Classico Le Colombare, Pieropan, 2020 (500ml) <i>In the Veneto dialect, recie means 'ears' and refers to the select 'ears' of grapes that are selected for this hallowed category of dessert wine, known as Recioto, and in Soave has earned DOCG status. Le Colombare is only produced in the best vintages, when Garganega 'ears' are left to dry for 5 months on bamboo cane mats. Only the free-run juice is used, which is aged 2 years in 25 hl acacia barrels.</i>	9	72
Torcolato, Maculan, 2021 (500ml) <i>From the wildly creative producer Maculan, Vespaiolo from the Breganze DOC are left to dry 4 months, then aged 1 year in French oak.</i>	8	68
Recioto della Valpolicella, Allegrini Corte Giara, 2022 (500ml) <i>The 'red' DOC of Recioto, using 70% Corvina and 30% Rondinella, dried for 4 months, or until about 50% of the weight is lost, and then fermented and aged 5 months in steel, matured a further 15 months in Slavonian and second-use barriques, then 6 more in bottle.</i>	8	62
Vin Santo del Chianti 'Serelle', Ruffino, 2020 (375ml) <i>Tuscany's most famous sweet wine, from the Vin Santo del Chianti DOC, Malvasia Bianca and Trebbiano Toscana are dried for 2 months, undergo a long fermentation in French oak, and then are aged in small barrels for 3 years before being blended and bottled.</i>	7	52
Primitivo Dolce 'Arcano', Tenuta Giustini, 2023 (750ml) <i>Late-Harvest Primitivo, naturally high in sugars, are left on the vine to concentrate those sugars to produce a big, sweet, fruity wine.</i>	7	58
Passito di Noto, 2024, Planeta (500ml) <i>Moscato Bianco grapes from Noto DOC's beautiful, chalky-white limestone soils undergo appassimento for 5 weeks, then are finished in steel and bottled, no oak treatment, so you get this fresh, mineral style that highlights the soil and grape with lovely transparency.</i>	8	65
Moscato d'Asti, Contero, 2023 (750ml) <i>Fun fact: Moscato has some of the highest concentrations of aromatic compounds (yes, we can measure this) of any wine grape in the world, so in any style it will showcase this gorgeously fragrant style. In this DOCG, ultra sweet, a touch sparkling, sitting at 5% ABV.</i>	-	39

DESSERT WINES

FRANCE

Sauternes Premier Cru Classé, Château Suduiraut, 2003 (375ml)

Sauternes is the most renowned of wines that utilise *Botrytis Cinerea*, or 'Noble Rot', a beneficial mould that is allowed to grow on the grapes to dehydrate them and to relay its own unique flavours into the wine. This comes from the ultra-famous Château Suduiraut, one of only 11 Châteaux to earn the 1er Cru Classé distinction in the famous 1855 Classification. From the 5-star 2003 vintage, this is a uniquely complex, tantalising dessert wine experience. 90% Semillon, 10% Sauvignon Blanc.

50ML

10

BOTTLE

88

Sauternes Premier Cru Supérieur Classé, Château d'Yquem, 2006 (375ml)

If I had to guess what wine Jesus turned the water into at the wedding in Cana, I would guess Château d'Yquem Sauternes: the Noble Rot mould develops on the grape to impart flavour (from death to life, if you will), made in a sweet style (as most wines were in the ancient world), and from the only begotten Premier Cru Supérieur estate in the famous Sauternes Classification of 1855, Château d'Yquem, a name that demands our worship. 80% Semillon, 20% Sauvignon Blanc, nectar of the gods, worthy of any special occasion.

-

380

HUNGARY

Tokaji Azsú 5 Puttonyos, Grand Tokaj, 2019 (500ml)

'The Wine of Kings, and the King of Wines' as Tokaji Azsú has been known through antiquity, the first style of wine to utilise Noble Rot in its production, and with varying degrees of sweetness as measured by the number of 'Puttonyos', or baskets of dried grapes used per barrel of wine, so at 5 Puttonyos this wine has between 12 to 15% residual sugar. From 100% Furmint grapes; delicate, honeyed, floral.

9

72

PORTUGAL

Late Bottled Vintage Port, Sandeman, 2019 (750ml)

Dark, chocolatey, luscious juice; Late Bottled Vintage Port is produced every year (whereas Vintage Port is made only in the best years), is aged 6 years in barrel, and then bottled. A blend of 43% Touriga Franca, 29% Touriga Nacional, 15% Tinta Roriz, 8% Barroca, 5% Cão.

8

65