

# DiWINEtaste

Wine Culture and Information

International Edition

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## Summer, a Glass and Good Wine

Here we go. We are at the hottest time of the year that, at least in Italy, has been preceded by a spring at times very cold and then suddenly reached quite high temperatures. This summer – at least from the premises – is rather torrid, the heat is already quite high, making the days very sultry. We wine lovers, in any case and regardless of the season or temperature, don't let ourselves be discouraged and, certainly, we don't give up a good glass. With the heat, however, the desire of uncorking a bottle of red – especially a robust and full bodied one – is not that tempting. It must however be said, in case the right occasion should arise, we do not certainly give up to even appreciate a good red wine, despite the summer and the heat. In case we want to appreciate a bottle of wine, of course – in this season – we usually prefer wines that can be served at cool temperatures, capable of promising some relief from summer heat.

The possibilities of finding the right refreshment from wine against summer heat, in fact, are many, however remembering that moderation too is the right way to appreciate wine, regardless of the season. Too obvious to suggest white and sparkling wines, whether they are produced with the classic or Charmat methods. During the summer, however, on my favorite wine list there are also rosé wines, as their quality – at last – has increased and clearly improved in the last ten years. The choice in favor of rosé wines is also dictated by another habit of my summer table, that is the frequent presence of vegetables and fish. These two dishes, in fact, pair well to rosé wines, not least with pizza, which is – in any case – a preparation that accompanies me throughout the year, not only in summer. Talking about pizza, it should be needed a much more in-depth article, as it is true art that is too often mistreated and roughly interpreted, rendered in indecorous and ignoble ways.

Moreover, pizza is an extremely fascinating subject for me, as I like to make it and to enjoy it all year round. I admit I am quite demanding and I have hardly found pizzerias capable of fully satisfying my fussiness, both for the lack of care and quality of the dough and flour, and for the disputable condi-

ments, too often made with materials of dubious quality, used or processed in questionable way. I am also aware of being, so to speak, unconventional when I decide to appreciate pizza. For me, the best pairing to this complex as well as tasty pearl of Italian cuisine, is wine, not least, sparkling wine. I can imagine, perhaps, the dissent of many of you who are reading these words, disagreeing with this habit of mine, preferring – maybe – the most *classic* and common combination with beer or others drinks. I appreciate beer – not all, to tell the truth, because even in that sense I am very demanding – but with pizza I undoubtedly prefer to pair it to wine.

In the glasses accompanying my summer, in any case, I also pour sparkling wines, preferably classic method without forgetting about those produced with the Charmat or Martinotti method, provided they are of good quality. It is not, however, a choice dictated by the fact these wines can be served at decidedly low temperatures and therefore promising a relief from the summer heat. After all, I have always thought a vintage classic method served at a temperature lower than 10 °C means, at least for me, to destroy the beauty of its aromas as well as making it *anonymous* to the taste. This is particularly true, in my opinion, for rosé classic method sparkling wines – my great passion – and that only a few, if not very few, are capable of satisfying my fussiness. Let me be clear on this, I have no prejudice against rosé wine in general, on the contrary, for what concerns me, it is a wine I really appreciate. I must however say a rosé wine, sparkling or not, must convince me from the beginning and from the color which should be a *gentle female pink*, therefore I don't appreciate very much those that excessively tend to red tones. A rosé must be a rosé, therefore not a wine dressed in red.

Red wines. Yes, red wines. Up to this point it would seem in summer I tend not to favor this style of wine. If it is true we tend more to associate red wines to the colder seasons, indeed in this category we can find a rich selection capable of being enjoyed with pleasure in hot summer days. In particular, those wines which are not excessively astringent and can be served at cooler temperatures, possibly vinified in steel tabs. The

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choice, in this sense, is decidedly vast and such to satisfy my summer desire for red wine, especially at the table, even with the rich fish cuisine, from grilled and roasted ones, to tasty soups. I must admit that, in summer, the red wine I drink the most is dry Lambrusco. Not only for the fact it can be served at a decidedly summer temperature and for the modest alcohol volume, but also for its joyful expression of bubbles that smell of red and black fruits. If I have to choose a red wine for the summer, my choice often goes in favor of dry Lambrusco, provided I am successful in finding one of good quality, a task not always simple to achieve.

Another wine I appreciate on hot summer days is Moscato d' Asti, including the sparkling style, or Brachetto d' Acqui, because of its low alcohol content and the fact it can be appreciated at low temperatures while however expressing the richness of its aromas. What about fortified wines? I like drinking them too in summer, in particular Dry Jerez Fino and Marsala Vergine. In both cases, I find them also suitable for light, tasty yet joyous meals, in the style suggested by the richness of the Spanish *tapas*. In any case – besides these two fortified wines – in the summer I tend to prefer wines with a lower alcohol content, however, should the opportunity arise, I do not renounce a glass of Sagrantino or Barolo. They are clearly not the wines I think the most in summer, but I certainly don't exclude them. By considering in summer the intake of alcohol does not exactly help to fight the torrid temperatures, the rule – which should always be followed – a little but of good quality, is more easily respected. Good summer to all our readers, with a fine glass in order to make the summer heat more bearable and joyful. Finally – hoping to find you all here in September – like I am always used to end the episodes of our podcast, my wish to you all to have “a good wine, in moderation, provided it is always a quality wine”. Enjoy your summer!

*Antonello Biancalana*



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### WINE TASTING

## Contrasts of Grüner Veltliner and Timorasso

The most widespread white grape variety in Austria compared to the noble and rare variety of Colli Tortonesi in Piedmont

So many times, in these pages, we have highlighted the enormous wealth of wine grape varieties present in Italy, a heritage that – without fear of denial – has no equal in any other country in the world. They are not the only grapes used for the production of wine, of course, and also in Italy the varieties originating from other countries is quite numerous. There are, in fact, many grapes used for the production of wine and which originated outside Italy – European countries, in particular – and which are undoubtedly the absolute protagonists of the world wine scene. When one thinks about the so-called “international” – or allochthonous grapes – France is certainly the country that counts the greatest number of varieties and it is clearly the first country most would mention in this sense. Few, probably, think about Austria, however one of the two grapes of the tasting by contrast of this month – Grüner Veltliner – has its origin from this country.

This interesting white grape variety does not enjoy the fame of other and more famous allochthonous grapes, however it has been successful in some countries, particularly in Europe, giving proof of considerable enological interest. From the huge viticultural heritage of Italy, this month we have chosen a variety not very common outside its original territory, but with proven enological quality. Timorasso – this is the variety we will compare with Grüner Veltliner – finds its maximum expression in the territory of Colline Tortonesi, in the province of Alessandria, Piedmont. A variety recently rediscovered thanks to the initiative and the will of some producers, it is in fact evident Timorasso, outside its territory of origin, produces very different results although of good quality. Two varieties – Grüner Veltliner and Timorasso – very different one from each other, therefore perfect for a comparison by contrast, with substantial differences that will be evident at every stage of sensorial evaluation.

### Grüner Veltliner

Grüner Veltliner is undeniably the main enological glory of Austria and it is the most cultivated variety in this country. A controversial grape in some respects, this variety is in fact capable of making both ordinary wines and extraordinary bottles, Grüner Veltliner had a moderate success and spreading even outside the borders of Austria. This variety is in fact cultivated in several countries of Europe – including Italy, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Germany – also being successful in countries as far away as Australia and the United States of America. Grüner Veltliner is a grape having decidedly ancient origins and lost in remote times of civilization. A mystery that does not seem to be solved yet, including the determination of its place of origin and which, in any case,

is believed to be Austria. To make things even more complicated, to the enigma of the origin of this variety is also added the name – Grüner Veltliner – as its literal meaning is “Green from Valtellina”.

This name, in fact, could suggest an *Italian* origin and specifically to Valtellina, near the Alps, in the province of Sondrio. Research conducted on the genetic profile of Grüner Veltliner, however, excluded any link with Italy and Italian grapes, establishing that – in fact – this Austrian variety originated from a spontaneous cross. It has been found out Grüner Veltliner is a cross between Savagnin and St. Georgener-Rebe, an almost extinct Austrian variety originating from Sankt Georgen am Leithagebirgem in the Burgenland region. The modern success of Grüner Veltliner is undeniably due to the famous and celebrated Austrian vitner Lenz Moser, who, thanks to a particular breeding system – *hochkultur*, literally “high cultivation” – has managed to enhance this variety in order to make wines of enormous and proven value. The best wines from Grüner Veltliner stand out for their good structure and a spicy olfactory character in which can be recognized white pepper. However, it is a variety difficult to cultivate and to make wine from, because – lacking true quality production criteria – it gives rather ordinary, anonymous and non very expressive wines.

## Timorasso

Timorasso owes its recent fame and success both to the initiative and will of some producers and to Colli Tortonesi, its territory of origin. A variety of ancient origins, before the advent of phylloxera and the consequent devastation, Timorasso was widespread in the territories of southern Piedmont as well as in the neighboring Lombardy and Liguria. Before the arrival of phylloxera, Timorasso was in fact one of the most cultivated and widespread varieties of these territories, a supremacy it then lost, as a result of these ominous facts, in favor of Cortese grape. The historical mentions related to Timorasso are many and, curiously, in the past it was mainly praised as a “table grape”, that is a grape intended for the consumption as fruit. After a long period of disinterest, also due to the lower presence in the vineyards of these territories, in the 1980s Timorasso got a new and strong interest. It was in fact thanks to the initiative and will of some producers in the province of Alessandria, who committed to the cultivation and quality vinification of Timorasso and made it achieve results of undeniable enological value.

Timorasso seems to have found its best territory in the Colline Tortonesi, in province of Alessandria, Piedmont, today recognized as a *Denominazione d'Origine Controllata* (Denomination of Controlled Origin). It is in fact a rather demanding variety that scarcely adapts to climatic and environmental conditions different from those of its territory of origin, a characteristic making it – today – a rare and refined grapes with a consequent low production of wines. In the Colline Tortonesi, Timorasso gives its best in the production of the three valleys of this area: Val Grue, Val Curone and Valle Ossona. In addition to the province of Alessandria, Timorasso is also found, and allowed for the production of wine, in the provinces of Asti and Cuneo. This rare white grape, over the years, has proven to

make excellent wines and with a pretty good enological versatility, including the production of sparkling wines. Timorasso has also proven to make wines with excellent longevity potentials and aging in bottle, not least, it has also given good results when vinified in wood.

## The Tasting

It is now the time to choose the wines of the tasting by contrast of this month. Grüner Veltliner, as we have already said, is cultivated in various wine making countries of the world – including Italy, Alto Adige in particular – however the best bottles of this wine are produced in Austria. Our choice, regarding this variety, is in favor of the interesting Austrian production, particularly that of the Wachau area, in the eastern part of Austria. As for Timorasso, our choice is clearly in favor of the interesting production belonging to the *Denominazione d'Origine Controllata* Colline Tortonesi, in the province of Alessandria, Piedmont. In both cases, we will pay attention to both the composition of the wine and the aging, making sure they are produced with the respective varieties alone and vinified in inert containers, preferably in steel tanks. The wines belong to the most recent harvest, served in tasting glasses at a temperature of 10 °C. (50 °F)

Let's pour Grüner Veltliner and Timorasso into their respective glasses and begin the tasting by contrast of this month, taking into consideration the appearance of both wines. The first wine we evaluate is Grüner Veltliner. By tilting the glass over a white surface – for example a sheet of paper – and by observing the base of the glass, where the mass of the wine is thicker, let's evaluate color and transparency. We can see a brilliant greenish yellow color and a high transparency, allowing the perfect vision of the object eventually placed between the glass and the white surface. Let's now look at the edge of the wine, towards the opening of the glass, in order to evaluate its nuance: also in this case we notice an evident greenish yellow color. Let's move on to the evaluation of the appearance of Colline Tortonesi Timorasso and observe the wine at the base of the glass. The Piedmontese wine shows an intense straw yellow color, often tending to golden. Let's now look at the opening of the glass: the nuance of Timorasso confirms the



The color of Grüner Veltliner

straw yellow hue.

Grüner Veltliner and Timorasso make wines with distinctly different olfactory profiles, in both cases very interesting. In wines produced with the Austrian variety are often recognized spicy aromas recalling the pleasant scent of white pepper, however sensations reminiscent of fruit and flowers are also rich: in wines produced with Grüner Veltliner can be perceived aromas recalling citrus fruits, in particular grapefruit, as well as peach, apple, pear and plum. As for the sensations recalling flowers, wines produced with this Austrian variety are characterized by acacia aromas. Moreover, sometimes can also be perceived aromatic herbs. The olfactory profile of Timorasso is very different, in which are perceived aromas of white pulp fruits – apple and pear, in particular – in addition to floral sensations of acacia, hawthorn and broom. A characteristic often found in Timorasso wines is a marked sensation of minerality and, with time and aging, it is possible to perceive aromas of honey and even hydrocarbons.

Let's continue our tasting by contrast and move on to the evaluation of the olfactory profiles of the wines of this month, starting from the Grüner Veltliner. By keeping the glass in vertical position and, without swirling, let's proceed with the first smell in order to evaluate the opening, that is the first aromas emerging from the glass and distinguishing the wine. On the nose are perceived intense and refined aromas of grapefruit, pear and apple, as well as a pleasant aroma in which can be recognized acacia. After having swirled the glass, let's proceed with the second smell in order to complete the evaluation of the olfactory profile of Grüner Veltliner. The Austrian wine is completed with pleasant sensations of peach and the unmistakable aroma of white pepper that is often combined with dill and pineapple sensations. Let's now pass to the evaluation of the aromas of Colline Tortonesi Timorasso, keeping the glass in vertical position in order to examine the opening of this wine. To the nose are perceived intense and clean aromas of apple, pear and plum, followed by sensations reminiscent of hawthorn and acacia. After having swirled the glass, the profile of Timorasso is completed with peach, medlar, citronella and broom, as well as floral perceptions recalling rose and the characteristic minerality that can sometimes recall flint stone.

The differences between Grüner Veltliner and Timorasso are clearly evident also in the gustatory evaluation of the two wines. Let's take a sip of the Austrian wine and evaluate its attack, that is the first gustatory sensations perceived in the mouth. Grüner Veltliner is characterized by a good acidity and a structure which can be defined average, the pseudo-burning sensation of alcohol is modest and balanced by acidity. In the mouth we perceive the flavors of grapefruit, apple, pear and peach, confirming the good correspondence to the nose. Let's now pass to the evaluation of the opening of Colline Tortonesi Timorasso and take a sip of this wine. It is perceived, just like the previous wine, the pleasant crispness given by the acidity and a good structure, the pseudo-burning sensation of the alcohol is balanced, having, also in this case, good elegance and finesse. In the mouth can be perceived flavors of apple, pear, medlar and plum, confirming the good correspondence to the nose.

Let's move on to the last phase of the tasting by contrast of this month, that is to the evaluation of the final sensations the wines leave in the mouth after swallowing. The first wine of

which we evaluate the finish is, just like in the previous phases, Grüner Veltliner. The persistence of the Austrian wine – one of the primary factors determining quality – is very long and lasts for several seconds, during which it is possible to perceive the flavors of grapefruit, apple, pear and peach, well supported by a good and pleasant acidity. The finish of Colline Tortonesi Timorasso is obviously not inferior and, also in this case, persistence is definitely good, clearly perceptible for several seconds, in the mouth can be perceived flavors of apple, pear, medlar and plum, sometimes followed by a sensation reminiscent of almond. Let's evaluate again the gustatory profiles of the two wines, by first taking a sip of Grüner Veltliner and then Timorasso: the differences in the mouth, especially in the perceived flavors, are evident.

## Wines of the Month

### Score legend

- ◇ Fair – ◇◇ Pretty Good – ◇◇◇ Good
- ◇◇◇◇ Very Good – ◇◇◇◇◇ Excellent
- ★ Wine that excels in its category
- 🍷 Good value wine

Prices are to be considered as indicative. Prices may vary according to the country or the shop where wines are bought



### Brunello di Montalcino Vigneto Poggio Doria 2012 Tenute Silvio Nardi (Tuscany, Italy)

🍷 Sangiovese

Price: € 90.00

Score ◇◇◇◇◇



👁 Intense ruby red and nuances of garnet red, little transparency.

👂 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of black cherry, plum and dried violet followed by aromas of raspberry, dried rose, blueberry, chocolate, clove, pink pepper, mace, tobacco, licorice, graphite, vanilla and menthol.

👄 Tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing roundness.


👅 Very persistent finish with long flavors of black cherry, plum and raspberry.



-  30 months in cask, at least 36 months in bottle.
-  *Game, Roasted meat, Stewed and braised meat, Hard cheese*





**Brunello di Montalcino Vigneto Manachiara 2012**  
Tenute Silvio Nardi (Tuscany, Italy)


 Sangiovese


Price: € 90.00


Score 


 Brilliant ruby red and nuances of garnet red, moderate transparency.

 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of black cherry, plum and dried violet followed by aromas of raspberry, blueberry, dried rose, chocolate, cinnamon, coffee, tobacco, mace, licorice, leather, vanilla and menthol.

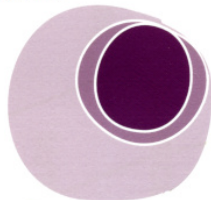
 Tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

 Very persistent finish with long flavors of black cherry, plum and raspberry.

 18 months in barrique, 12 months in cask, 2 years in bottle.

 *Game, Stewed and braised meat, Roasted meat, Hard cheese*

AGLIANICO  
DEL VULTURE  
Denominazione  
di Origine Controllata  
2016




TENUTA I GELSI


**Aglianico del Vulture 2016**  
Tenuta I Gelsi (Basilicata, Italy)


 Aglianico

Price: € 8.00


Score 


 Intense ruby red and nuances of garnet red, little transparency.

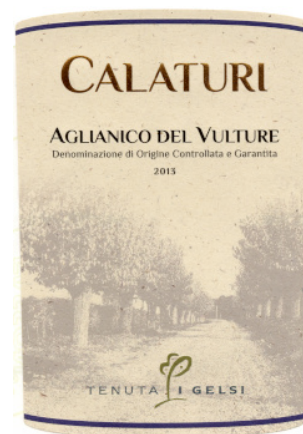
 Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of black cherry, plum and blackberry followed by aromas of violet, blueberry, raspberry, pomegranate, carob and tobacco.

 Properly tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

 Persistent finish with flavors of black cherry, plum and blackberry.

 Aged in steel tanks.

 *Broiled meat and barbecue, Roasted meat, Stewed meat with mushrooms, Cheese*





**Aglianico del Vulture Superiore Calaturi 2013**  
Tenuta I Gelsi (Basilicata, Italy)


 Aglianico


Price: € 16.50


Score 


 Intense ruby red and nuances of garnet red, little transparency.

 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of black cherry, plum and blackberry followed by aromas of violet, blueberry, chocolate, tobacco, licorice, mace, vanilla and menthol.

 Properly tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable.


 Persistent finish with flavors of plum, black cherry and blackberry.

 24 months in cask, 24 months in bottle.

 *Broiled meat and barbecue, Roasted meat, Stewed meat with mushrooms, Cheese*





**Vermentino di Gallura Superiore Beru 2015**  
Siddura (Sardinia, Italy)


 Vermentino


Price: € 30.50


Score 


 Intense golden yellow and nuances of golden yellow, very transparent.

 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of plum, apple and honey followed by aromas of grapefruit, bread crust, butter, hawthorn, thyme, flint, croissant, almond and vanilla.

 Crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing roundness.


 Persistent finish with flavors of plum, grapefruit and honey.

 8 months in barrique.

 *Stuffed pasta, Roasted white meat, Roasted fish, Broiled fish, Cheese*





**Moscato di Sardegna Passito Nuali 2015**  
Siddura (Sardinia, Italy)


 Moscato Bianco


Price: € 20.50 - 375ml


Score 


 Brilliant amber yellow and nuances of amber yellow, transparent.

 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of raisin, dried apricot and peach jam followed by aromas of quince jam, candied fruits, lychee, honey, citrus fruit peel, dried fig, dried rose, date, thyme and nail polish.

 Sweet and round attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

 Persistent finish with flavors of raisin, dried apricot and lychee.

 Aged in steel tanks.

 *Dried fruit and jam tarts, Confectionery, Piquant cheese*





**Barolo Castelletto 2014**  
Manzone Giovanni (Piedmont, Italy)

 Nebbiolo


Price: € 40.00


Score 

 Brilliant ruby red and nuances of garnet red, moderate transparency.


 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of cherry, plum and violet followed by aromas of

raspberry, rose, cinnamon, pink pepper, tobacco, chocolate, licorice, leather, vanilla and menthol.

 Tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.


 Persistent finish with flavors of cherry, plum and raspberry.

 30 months in cask.

 *Game, Roasted meat, Stewed and braised meat, Hard cheese*





**Barolo Bricat 2014**  
Manzone Giovanni (Piedmont, Italy)


 Nebbiolo


Price: € 40.00

Score  ☆


 Brilliant ruby red and nuances of garnet red, moderate transparency.

 Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of cherry, plum and violet followed by aromas of raspberry, rose, blueberry, rhubarb, blackberry, chocolate, cinnamon, tobacco, mace, menthol and vanilla.

 Tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

 Persistent finish with flavors of cherry, plum and raspberry.

 30 months in cask.

 *Game, Roasted meat, Stewed and braised meat, Hard cheese*


NOT JUST WINE

## Aquavitae

Review of Grappa, Distillates and Brandy




**Grappa Weissburgunder Invecchiata**  
Roner (Alto Adige)


 Pomace of Pinot Blanc


Price: € 43.65 - 70cl


Score  ☆

 Brilliant amber yellow, limpid and transparent.

 Intense, clean, pleasing and refined with aromas of apple, honey, vanilla, hazelnut, dried fig, orange peel candied fruits and praline, with pretty perceptible alcohol pungency.

 Intense flavors with perceptible alcohol pungency which tends to dissolve rapidly, pleasing roundness, balanced sweetness.

 Persistent finish with flavors of apple, honey and praline.

 Double distillation in bain-marie alembic still. 12 months in oak and cherry barrique.

EVENTS

## News

In this column are published news and information about events concerning the world of wine and food. Whoever is interested in publishing this kind of information can send us a mail to the address [Events@DiWineTaste.com](mailto:Events@DiWineTaste.com).

# Wine Guide Parade

April 2019

The best 15 wines reviewed in our Guide and voted by Di-WineTaste readers

Rank	Wine, Producer	Votes
1	Salice Salentino Rosso Numero 0 2018, Menhir Salento	9793
2	Il Moro 2015, Valle dell'Acate	8006
3	Sannio Falanghina 2017, Mustilli	7810
4	Franciacorta Dosaggio Zero Gualberto 2009, Ricci Curbastro	7699
5	Verdeca 2018, Menhir Salento	7579
6	Tramonto Rosso 2016, Tenute Iacovazzo	7515
7	Sale 2018, Menhir Salento	6577
8	Sannio Piediroso 2017, Mustilli	6231
9	Ityos 2017, Tenute Iacovazzo	6108
10	Franciacorta Demi Sec, Ricci Curbastro	6079
11	Franciacorta Brut, Ricci Curbastro	5506
12	Primatem 2016, Tenute Iacovazzo	5413
13	Pietra Susumaniello 2017, Menhir Salento	5054
14	Sannio Sant'Agata dei Goti Piediroso Artus 2016, Mustilli	4597
15	Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico 2015, Valle dell'Acate	4559