

DiWINEtaste

Wine Culture and Information

International Edition

www.DiWineTaste.com

Issue 32, Summer 2005

Red Wine: Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot Only?

Among the many letters we receive from our readers, we are frequently asked about our opinion concerning the same subjects and, despite we cannot reply to each of them, in case the subject becomes frequent, the best way to answer everyone is by means of our pages. It is right the frequent subject found in many letter which suggested us to cover it in this issue's editorial. The subject is - in its nature - pretty simple, however the answer which can be given are many and each case must certainly be considered accordingly. Since many months, many readers keep on asking us our opinion about the frequent presence of some grapes in most of red wines. In particular Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, even in case they have nothing to do with the wine history of some places, most of the times radically changing the nature and the tradition of many wines.

Indeed, by considering the grapes used for the production of many red wines, the recurrent and insistent presence of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon is pretty high. The introduction of these grapes has also been done in those areas in which wine was traditionally made with other grapes since ever. Moreover, they were recognized new appellation areas in which these grapes are used alone for the production of mono varietal wines. This latter case - undoubtedly - has nothing to do with the traditions of those places, with the exception - of course - of French areas from which these grapes are from. For example, if we consider Italy - the country for which our readers mainly rise their criticisms - Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are frequently added in variable quantities to the classic - and certainly excellent - typical red grapes of the many regions, such as Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Nero d'Avola and Montepulciano, as to mention some examples.

Why are these grapes so widely used in the production of red wines as to *change* the secular traditions of many places and - in many cases - by completely replacing them? If we do not consider traditional reasons - evidently excluded in this case - and by

considering the goal of producers is also selling wine, we could consider commercial reasons only. However, if we carefully evaluate this problem, it is clear the solution is not exclusively found in commercial issues only, but also in cultural, fashion and interests matters. Let's consider everything from the beginning by premising something important. It is undeniable Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon have both proven their enological value and the quality of their wines in many occasions. Therefore this is not - and it cannot be - a war against these two grapes as every good connoisseur understands their indisputable value. Maybe it is because of these indisputable values they are believed to work miracles in the production of wines, by transforming a mediocre wine into a divine nectar?

By seeing the frequency with which these grapes are being used in wines, this could also be the case. Let's consider this issue from another point of view instead. Organoleptic qualities of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are so easily recognizable which is pretty hard not to notice them in a wine. Moreover, their organoleptic qualities are also pleasing, *easy* and *immediate* to understand. Merlot, with its roundness and its pleasing aromas, is undoubtedly capable of making a *harsh* wine *smoother* and more agreeable, as well as Cabernet Sauvignon can give a certain organoleptic *importance* to many wines. These qualities do not require attention or competence in order to be appreciated, therefore the wines produced with these grapes meet the taste and the favor of a wide number of consumers. Of course, we

Contents

Red Wine: Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot Only?	1
MailBox	2
ABC WINE	
Franciacorta	3
WINE TASTING	
Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir	5
Wines of the Month	7
WINE PRODUCERS	
Tre Monti	12
Cellar Journal	15
EVENTS	
News	15
CORKSCREW	
Matching Cheese and Wine	15
NOT JUST WINE	
Truffle	17
Aquavitae	19
Wine Parade	20

DiWINEtaste OnLine

- ▷ Home Page - www.DiWineTaste.com
- ▷ Wines Guide ▷ Aquavitae ▷ EnoForum
- ▷ EnoGames (EnoQuiz - EnoGlass - EnoTemp)
- ▷ Serving Wine ▷ Back Issues ▷ Wine Services Directory
- ▷ MailBox ▷ Wine Parade ▷ Mailing List
- ▷ Tell a friend about DiWineTaste

are just generalizing. We truly understand there are many Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon wines with a remarkable organoleptic complexity requiring all the attention - and pleasure - of a taster.

If it is true Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes are more acceptable and preferred by consumers, this also explains the commercial reason: these wines are more easily sold. A simple and practical rule of marketing which easily ensures profits: it is being produced what it can be sold. This is a logic - according to the producer's point of view, who undoubtedly makes wine for passion as well - which is unexceptionable. How many examples could be mentioned about wines that, before providential adding of Merlot or Cabernet Sauvignon, were almost unknown and not very considered by consumers and have then experienced a sudden notoriety and appreciation? We are sure every reader who sent a mail about this subject knows at least one name of such a wine. However, the subject is worth of more consideration, which can also be cause of concern and of which we cannot certainly be happy. If it is true the organoleptic qualities of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon - pretty typical and evident - are found in many wines, how strong is the danger of making wines all alike? According to our opinion - and maybe the opinion of our readers as well - this "danger" is pretty high.

Anyway, we cannot complain about this that much, because if these wines meet the favor and the taste of consumers, this means most of wine lovers ask and look for such wines. A wine which is not sold would not be produced anymore, as it has always happened to many wines - even glorious - which have seen the end of their story or have undergone appropriate *corrections*. If consumers ask for *easy* and *immediate* wines, therefore the problem is also cultural, as well as about laziness and scarce interest to explore less obvious wines and with organoleptic qualities requiring higher attention. It is also appropriate to remember that in case a wine is good and well made - despite the grapes used for its production - it should be considered for what it really expresses. However it is undeniable this trend will lead to a sort of homologation in wines - all the same, all alike - a perspective for which it is hard to be happy for, or at least, it does not make us happy. That's why we believe the solution must basically come from wine lovers and consumers. Without denying Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon - once again, we fully understand their high and undeniable value - we should be more attentive and open to any wine, by approaching the glass with the complete and humble intention of *listening* to its history, its character and its

personality.

MailBox

In this column are published our reader's mail. If you have any comment or any question or just want to express your opinion about wine, send your letters to our editorial at Mail@DiWineTaste.com or fill in the form available at our site.

What is the difference between Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and Montepulciano d'Abruzzo?

Clare Price – London (England)

Despite Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and Montepulciano d'Abruzzo are both red, the two wines have no characteristic in common. Vino Nobile di Montepulciano is produced in Montepulciano - a city of Tuscany in the province of Siena - with Prugnolo Gentile (a variety of Sangiovese Grosso), Canaiolo Nero, Colorino and Mammolo grapes. Montepulciano d'Abruzzo is named after the homonymous grape - Montepulciano - which does not have any connection, neither historical nor genetic, with the grapes used for the production of Nobile. Moreover, the two wines are also different according to an organoleptic and enological point of view, however in both cases can be found wines with high and remarkable quality and value. Montepulciano d'Abruzzo - thanks to its moderate acidity - is usually round and tannic, with deep colors and with aromas resembling black skinned fruits. Vino Nobile di Montepulciano - which is also available as reserve - generally have a fuller body and aromas recalling violet and wild fruits.



In summertime I usually prefer having slightly sparkling wines served very cool. Can you please suggest me some good matching for these wines?

Jean-Claude Delpeuch – Paris (France)

During summertime the preference of consumers is mainly about white, slightly sparkling and sparkling wines, even because they can be served at low temperatures and therefore more agreeable. Slightly sparkling wines - besides being consumed as aperitifs - can also be successfully used for the matching of foods. The main qualities of such wines, of course, are effervescence - caused by the presence of carbon dioxide - and acidity, two qualities which can be well matched with fatty and basically sweet foods, such as pasta, rice and grains as well as fish and crustaceans. For this reason, slightly sparkling wines - as well as sparkling wines - are welcome in summertime meals because in this season foods are usually lighter and fresher. A good summertime matching can be made with a slightly sparkling wine served with a rice salad or pasta salad, as well as with boiled fish or crustaceans or cooked with a light sauce.

DiWINEtaste

Independent periodical of wine culture and information

Published by
Antonello Biancalana

Address

WEB: www.DiWineTaste.com E-Mail: Editorial@DiWineTaste.com

Contributors:
Stefano Passerini

Copyright © 2005 by Antonello Biancalana, DiWineTaste

All rights reserved under international copyright conventions. No part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without permission in writing from DiWineTaste. Inquiries should be sent to Editorial@DiWineTaste.com

ABC WINE

Franciacorta

In the Iseo lake area, in the province of Brescia, are being produced the great Italian bubbles, a history which came a long way and that today is also expressed by excellent table wines

In Lombardy there is a small region, just below the Iseo lake and near the city of Brescia, that since many years has been successful in spreading its fame worldwide for the quality of its precious bubbles - be careful not to call them *spumante* - and which are called Franciacorta, a historical wine area having ancient origins and its wines, since past times, were known and appreciated for their qualities. Today the noble bubbles of Franciacorta belong to the small group of excellent wines of the world, a remarkable success achieved thanks to tenacity and seriousness and in a relatively short period of time, in less than 40 years. The way walked by producers in Franciacorta is a brilliant example of how sharing seriousness and passion in order to achieve quality in the wines of the area, allowed reaching truly high goals in a short time, and to confirm all that, there are facts, those facts which undeniably are confirmed in a good glass of Franciacorta. In this area - today famous for bubbles - are also produced white and red table wines, once again, examples of good quality.

Franciacorta and wine have been connected since many centuries, not only *still* table wines, but also the ones which could be defined as the “ancestors” of modern sparkling wines and at those times were called *mordaci* wines, in other words, slightly sparkling wines. In the Franciacorta area were being produced and commercialized slightly sparkling wines since 1200’s and few centuries later, around the half of 1500, Agostino Conforti wrote in his documents about a slightly sparkling wine called *Cisiolo*. They certainly were wines so different and distant - not only in time - from modern and bubbly Franciacortas, they however are enough to prove here bubbles have a long history. However it should be remembered the recent production style in Franciacorta has no traditional and historical connection with slightly sparkling wines of the past: it was - to tell the truth - the introduction of the *classic method* in this area following the commercial success of bubbles produced in the neighboring France.

The name with which this important wine area is being defined - Franciacorta for sparkling wines, Terre di Franciacorta or Curtefranca for table still wines - has a controversial origin and many are the hypothesis and legend about its meaning. The most probable hypothesis comes from *franchae curtes*, that is *corte franca*, cities and towns that were under the protection of Benedictine monks and which obtained the exemption of paying taxes. However there also are other hypothesis about the origin of Franciacorta name, some of them being legendary - such as the name *piccola Francia* (little France) given by Charlemagne, as well as the cry “*Francese fuori! Qui Francia sarà corta!*” (French get out, here France will be short) of the revolting people to the occupation of Charles of Angiò - or derived from local expressions to emphasize the not truly florid conditions of people



Fig. 1: Franciacorta area

“*a curt de franc*”, that is “short of money”. Legends and hypothesis apart, in the historical documents of this place - the Municipal Statute of Brescia - the first mention of the name *Franzacurta* - or *Franzia Curta* - is dated back to 1277, and since those times it already was an important area for the production of wines and from which the city of Brescia got its wine.

The success of the precious and noble bubbles of Franciacorta is however a fact of recent history. Everything began at the end of the 1950’s when a young wine maker, Franco Ziliani, conducted his first experiments in the famous cellars of Guido Berlucchi. In 1958, Franco Ziliani - considered the father of Franciacorta - after some attempts, is successful, without having never been in French Champagne, to make sparkling wines, by means of the technique of the refermentation in bottle, thanks to the techniques learnt during the lessons he attended at school. By using a still table wine produced by Guido Berlucchi, he decided to make use of Pinot Blanc for his sparkling wine and soon after that wine - *spumante Pinot della Franciacorta*, produced in white and rosé styles - became famous all over Italy, and the requests forced Berlucchi to buy grapes outside the Franciacorta area. In the 1970’s, the fame of Berlucchi’s *spumante*, convinced other producers of the area to start the production of this wine, including Domenico De Filippo, Barone Pizzini Piomarta, Fratelli Lenza, Lantieri de Paratico, Bersi Serlini, Riccafana and Ca’ Del Bosco. At those times - precisely in 1967 - Franciacorta was already recognized as DOC *Denominazione di Origine Controllata* (Denomination of Controlled Origin).

Among the many figures who have contributed to the recent history of Franciacorta’s bubbles, a fundamental role for the development of the image and quality of these wines was played by Maurizio Zanella, founder of the renowned Ca’ del Bosco. In 1980, the volcanic Maurizio Zanella - after having studied at the *Station Œnologique de Bourgogne* and at the University of Enology in Bordeaux, by taking inspiration from the famous wines of Champagne, he decided to start his business about the produc-

tion of sparkling wines. A striking success and soon after Ca' del Bosco's Franciacorta became an important reference point for the whole area. In 1980 was established the *Consorzio per la Tutela dei Vini Franciacorta* (Consortium for the Safeguarding of Franciacorta Wines), and in 1985 the area is recognized - thanks to the important efforts of Ricci Curbastro and Comolli - as *Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita* (DOCG) (Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin), the only Italian classic method spumante to which was recognized such a high appellation. An important characteristic of Franciacorta is represented by its producers. As opposed to other areas in which are being produced classic method sparkling wines, here there are no big wineries which gather grapes from other producers, in Franciacorta are mainly found small wineries which produce wines with the grapes harvested in their vineyards and the yearly production for each of them rarely exceeds 400,000 bottles.

Franciacorta is not bubbles only. In the same area are also produced still table wines, both white and red, to which is recognized the appellation *Terre di Franciacorta* or *Curtefranca*, to honor two of the names with which the area was known in past centuries. The choice of not considering the past of Franciacorta - although important - and not to stick to ancient traditions, has allowed producers in this area to develop an innovative production model in order to achieve quality: a choice which favored the introduction of specific grapes for the production of sparkling wines - Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Noir - as well as grapes for the production of red wines, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Nebbiolo and Barbera. The production of white wines is obtained from Pinot Blanc and Chardonnay grapes. Today Franciacorta - with its table and sparkling wines - represents an important Italian wine making model, a remarkable success obtained by means of tenacity and qualitative reliability of its producers, a great Italian proud today known worldwide.

Classification of Franciacorta

The qualitative classification of Franciacorta wines is recognized and regulated by the Italian system according to type. Still table wines - both red and white - belong to the Denomination of Controlled Origin (DOC) "Terre di Franciacorta" or "Curtefranca", whereas the renowned sparkling wines belong to the Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin (DOCG). Franciacorta sparkling wines are all produced according to the classic method of the refermentation in bottle and are the only Italian sparkling wines produced with this method to belong to the DOCG appellation. According to the disciplinary regulating the production of these wines, in Franciacorta labels cannot be mentioned neither the generic term *spumante*, nor references to the production method, such as *metodo classico* (classic method) or *metodo tradizionale* (traditional method). For this reason Franciacorta must exclusively be called - by law - Franciacorta only, with no other definitions.

The production disciplinary of Franciacorta can be considered among the strictest and more scrupulous in the world for the production of sparkling wines. For example, *non vintage* Franciac-

orta must be aged for a minimum of 25 months, of which at least 18 in the bottle on the lees, whereas for *vintage*, the minimum aging time is 37 months, of which at least 30 in the bottle on the yeast. Franciacorta can be produced both as *senza annata* (non vintage) or *millesimato* (vintage) - white or rosé - as well as in the *Satèn* style, characterized by a lower pressure. Franciacortas are produced in many levels of sweetness: *Non Dosato* (or *Pas Dosé*, *Dosage Zéro*, *Pas Opéré* or *Nature*), Extra Brut, Brut, Sec and Demi-Sec. It should be noticed Satèn - exclusively obtained from white berried grapes Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc - is uniquely available in the Brut style, whereas Franciacorta Rosé does not include the Extra Brut style.

Production of Franciacorta

Franciacorta is produced according to the *Metodo Franciacorta* (Franciacorta Method) - basically, classic method - in which the production procedures, control and aging follow pretty strict and scrupulous criteria, probably like no other sparkling wine in the world. Exactly as set by the *classic method*, the production of Franciacorta begins with the preparation of base wine - or *cuvée* - which must have, by law, a minimum alcohol volume of 9.5%. The production of the base wine can also be done with any possible aging in cask of different sizes, and for *non vintage* Franciacorta, is also allowed the use of wines belonging to different vintages, whereas for *vintage* Franciacorta, can be used grapes belonging to the vintage mentioned in the label only. Grapes allowed for the production of Franciacorta are three, of which two white berried ones, Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc, and one red berried variety, Pinot Noir. These grapes can be used for the production of wines in different percentages, however for Franciacorta Rosé the minimum percentage of Pinot Noir is of 15%, whereas Franciacorta Satèn can exclusively be produced with white berried grapes.

The production of base wine from Pinot Noir is made *in white*, that is by avoiding any contact of the must with the skin, whereas for rosé wines it is allowed a maceration of the skins according to the color and the organoleptic qualities wished by the producer. During springtime, base wines begin their journey inside a bottle in order to be enriched with refined bubbles. To the base wine is added the so called *liqueur de tirage*, a mixture of sugar and yeast in order to start the second fermentation. It is good to remember every 4 grams of sugar added to one liter of base wine produces a pressure of one atmosphere, therefore the quantity of sugar usually added is of 24 grams in order to obtain the usual pressure of 6 atmospheres. Exception to this rule is Franciacorta Satèn, whose pressure cannot exceed 4.5 atmospheres. The base wine is then bottled and therefore beginning the next phase of the refermentation. During fermentation, yeasts consume sugar, therefore producing alcohol and carbon dioxide, responsible for the effervescence in Franciacorta.

At the end of the fermentation yeast sediments on the side of the bottle - left in horizontal position - and begins the phase of aging *sur lie*, that is *on the lees*. For *non vintage* Franciacorta the minimum aging period is of 18 months, whereas for *vintage* Franciacorta it is 30 months, periods which are - in general terms

- prolonged in order to give the wine more complexity and structure. During this period, the yeast - by means of a process called *autolysis* - gets decomposed and gives the wine its aromas and flavors, therefore giving Franciacorta a higher complexity and finesse. After the aging period, it is now the time to remove the sediment of yeast. Bottles are then put downside in special wood supports (*pupitres*), where the patient process of *remuage* will begin, the famous operation of shaking and rotating the bottles in order to push the sediment towards the opening. At the end of *remuage*, when the bottles get a vertical position in *pupitres*, sediment is now ready to be removed.

At this point the neck of the bottle is being plunged in a liquid solution at a temperature of about -20°C (-4°F) in order to rapidly freeze the sediment. The next operation - disgorgement or *dégorgement* and which allows the elimination of the sediment - consists in opening the bottle. The internal pressure will expel the frozen mass of exhausted yeast, while ensuring a very limited loss of wine and leaving the wine perfectly limpid. At this point the bottles are refilled with a special solution - called *liqueur d'expédition* or *dosage* - which also has the purpose of giving the right sweetness to the wine according to style. Dosage is usually made of the same wine, or even by wine aged for a long time, to which is added sugar: a secret *recipe* giving the typical producer's *style*. According to the quantity of sugar added to the dosage, are being obtained Extra Brut, Brut, Sec or Demi-Sec styles. It is good to remember Franciacorta Satèn can uniquely be produced as Brut and the dosage used for Pas Dosé does not make use of any sugar. At this point the bottles are closed with the typical mushroom shaped cork and shaken accordingly in order to mix the dosage to the wine and, after a proper period of aging in the cellar for some months, Franciacorta is ready for commercialization.

Terre di Franciacorta or Curtefranca

In this area are produced - besides wines with noble bubbles - table wines classified as "Terre di Franciacorta" or "Curtefranca" DOC. The production is both about white and red wines. White Terre di Franciacorta is produced with Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc grapes - alone or together - to which can also be added Pinot Noir vinified in white. Red Terre di Franciacorta is produced with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Nebbiolo and Barbera grapes. Because of the confusion that could exist between the two denominations of the area - Terre di Franciacorta for table wines, Franciacorta for sparkling wines - it was recently proposed the denomination "Curtefranca" for table wines, and that should help consumers to distinguish the two appellations. Table wines produced in this denomination, both white and red, have pretty interesting organoleptic qualities, in particular red wines, where Nebbiolo and Barbera give pleasing touches of crispness to Merlot and Cabernet.

WINE TASTING

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir

Three classic grapes of French origin, everywhere considered international, tell this month their stories in the glasses of our comparative tasting

After the comparative tasting about aromatic white grapes, this month we will study three red berried varieties, known since many years in every wine producing country of the world and considered as *international*, important symbols of French enology. This month's tasting will examine Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot - whose origin is from Bordeaux and widely used for the production of wines all over the world - as well as Pinot Noir, emblem of red wines in Bourgogne. Whereas Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot have conquered the vineyards in every country of the world - frequently used together with local grapes - Pinot Noir still possesses higher personality, even because of the difficulty in the cultivation and vinification of this grape. Grapes producing truly different wines and it will be interesting to discover their characteristics and specific qualities.

Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir are everywhere considered grapes capable of producing elegant and important wines, however the personality of each will let them express a truly different elegance one from each other. Cabernet Sauvignon undeniably represents power, Merlot smoothness and Pinot Noir elegant class. Grapes producing wines with different structures to which contributes the use of casks and barriques as well. The goal of our comparative tasting - besides studying the specific qualities of each grape - is to understand how every grape gives different structure to wine, different organoleptic qualities - not only aromatic - as well as different gustatory evolution. We will discover, for example, how the pleasing acidity of Pinot Noir contributes to its elegance, whereas roundness will be the charming side of Merlot, as well as the appreciable astringency of tannins will give Cabernet Sauvignon its typical body.

The Wines of Our Tasting

The wines selected for our comparative tasting will be produced with the three grapes - Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir - alone, that is the wines will be mono varietals. The wine making techniques used for the production of these wines - all being aged in cask - will let us understand how wood influences the many organoleptic qualities. We will understand how wood is being used in different ways according to the type of grape - more intense for Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, lighter for Pinot Noir - while giving, in many aspects, the typicality generally recognized to the wines produced with these grapes. Another interesting aspect of our tasting is the study of organoleptic similarities in Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, and how Pinot Noir is drastically different from these two renowned varieties.



The three wines of our comparative tasting

The wines selected for the tasting offer interesting elements for the goal of our comparison. The first wine we will examine is Produttori Termeno's Alto Adige Pinot Nero Schiesstandhof, an interesting Pinot Noir in which can be found all the typical qualities of the grape and in which is also possible to recognize the effects of wood in the aging. The second wine is Rocca Bernarda's Colli Orientali del Friuli Merlot Centis, interesting example of this renowned grapes and having useful similarities with the third wine, Casale del Giglio's Cabernet Sauvignon. This latter wine has very interesting qualities typical of the grape, an useful characteristic for the purpose of our comparative tasting. In case it is not possible to have the wines we just proposed, we suggest choosing - as an alternative - wines coming from the same areas and aged in barrique. Concerning vintages, it will be chosen the most recent ones. The three wines will be served at a temperature of 18°C (64°F) in three ISO tasting glasses. We can therefore let our tasting begin: let's pour the three wines on the three glasses.

Appearance Analysis

By observing the three wines, it will be noticed that one of them is very different in the aspect from the other two. Whereas color and transparency in Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot are pretty similar, the aspect of Pinot Noir will show a paler color and a higher transparency. This quality is perfectly corresponding to the type of grape, as well as it is for the other two grapes. Despite a wine having a less intense color and a higher transparency usually makes people believe it is a lesser quality product, this characteristic is absolutely normal and correspondent in wines produced with Pinot Noir. It will be Pinot Noir the first wine we will examine. By holding the glass tilted over a white surface, the color shows a brilliant ruby red color whereas the nuance - which can be observed in the edge of the liquid mass towards the opening of the glass - shows an evident garnet red color. A precise sign which is absolutely coherent with its age, as Produttori Termeno winery usually release this wine after about three years from vintage.

The second wine we will examine is Rocca Bernarda's Merlot. In this case the color is evidently more intense and deep as opposed to Pinot Noir, even in this case, absolutely correspondent to the type. It will be observed - by holding the glass tilted over a white surface - a brilliant ruby red color and nuances of garnet red, with a lesser transparency than Pinot Noir. It is good to remember the colorant capacity of Pinot Noir is not high, therefore the comparison with Merlot will directly highlight the qualities of the two grapes. Then, we will observe the color of Casale del Giglio's Cabernet Sauvignon. The color will be intense ruby red, deeper than both Merlot and Pinot Noir, and the nuances will show the same color. This characteristic makes us understand this wine is relatively young - Casale del Giglio release its Cabernet Sauvignon after about three years from vintage - as well as highlighting a higher longevity than Merlot. It should also be remembered the coloring capacity of Cabernet Sauvignon is pretty high, therefore the color in these wines will generally be intense and deep, as opposed to Pinot Noir which has a truly lesser coloring capacity.

Olfactory Analysis

The olfactory comparison of the three wines will be pretty interesting. We will understand, first of all, how Pinot Noir is different from Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, which will have in common interesting aromatic analogies. Of the three wines, the one having the more delicate aroma certainly is Pinot Noir: in fact this will be the first wine we will examine. By holding the glass still - that is without swirling it - let's smell Pinot Noir in order to assess its opening aromas. They will be perceived strong aromas of cherry and raspberry, two aromas - and in particular cherry - which are identifying of this variety. After having swirled the glass, let's now smell the glass for the second time: we will discover all other aromas are now accentuated. In this second phase it will be possible to perceive aromas of strawberry jam, dried rose, geranium and plum. This Pinot Noir also have more *complex* aromas because of the aging in wood - Schiesstandhof ages for 9 months in barrique - such as vanilla, licorice and cocoa.

The second wine we will examine is Rocca Bernarda's Colli Orientali del Friuli Merlot Centis. The evaluation of opening aromas - by holding the glass still - will reveal hints of black cherry, plum and black currant, three aromas typical in Merlot - and we will discover in Cabernet Sauvignon as well - therefore the wine is correspondent to the variety. By swirling the glass and by smelling the wine again, it will be perceived an aroma of blueberry as well as an aromatic series typical of the aging in wood - a wine making practice frequent for Merlot and in this case corresponding to 15 months - such as vanilla, licorice, cinnamon and cocoa. This Merlot also offers aromas which could surprise some tasters. In fact they will be perceived aromatic qualities of vegetal origin, in this specific case bell pepper and hay. The aroma of bell pepper can be an identifying quality of Merlot - however it is more typical in Cabernet Sauvignon and in particular in Cabernet Franc - more frequent in case the grape comes from cool climate areas or harvested when not perfectly

ripe.

The last wine we will examine is Casale del Giglio's Cabernet Sauvignon. In this wine the opening aromas, appreciable by holding the glass still, will reveal hints of black cherry and black currant, a quality which we have already found in Merlot and which is absolutely typical - as well as plum - in Cabernet Sauvignon. The second smell - done by swirling the glass - will reveal aromas of plum, violet and blackberry as well as aromas derived from the aging in wood - for this wine is about 20 months in barrique - such as vanilla, licorice and cocoa. It will also be noticed a clean aroma of bell pepper, already found in Merlot, which is to be considered a peculiarity of Cabernet grapes. Other aromas emerging from the glass include tobacco and hints of leather. Finally it will be noticed an "unusual" aroma with a strong *balsamic* nature: it is eucalyptus, an aroma which generally develops with the aging in barrique and which is frequently found in Cabernet Sauvignon.

Gustatory Analysis

During the gustatory analysis, the three wines will reveal their differences instead of their similarities. The first wine we will taste is Pinot Noir. The first impact will reveal one of the qualities making this grape unique, an appreciable acidity - which does not disturb at all and which gives the wine a good elegance - as well as an appreciable astringency because of tannins. These characteristics are absolutely typical in Pinot Noir, and in particular its not excessive astringency as the grape does not have high quantity of tannins. It will also be noticed an appreciable alcohol volume and how it is useful in keeping the wine's acidity perfectly balanced. It will also be noticed a good smoothness, as the result of the aging in wood. Let's examine the structure of this wine: a characteristic we will compare with the other two wines. In the mouth will be perceived flavors of cherry, raspberry and strawberry, therefore confirming its correspondence to the nose.

The second wine we will examine is Merlot. The sensations perceived in the mouth will completely be different from Pinot Noir. In this wine it is smoothness the quality which is perceived in the beginning, the structure is evidently higher as well as the astringency of tannins. Smoothness is in fact one of the main qualities of Merlot and which are easily appreciated, for this reason it is frequently used for assembling wines in order to make them rounder and less harsh. In the mouth this Merlot will confirm its correspondence to the nose: it will be possible to perceive flavors of plum, black cherry and black currant. After that, we will proceed by tasting Cabernet Sauvignon. The impact is very different from the other two wines and here will be the higher structure to be noticed in the beginning - also reinforced by the higher astringency of tannins - while however having a pleasing smoothness because of the aging in barrique. It should also be noticed the alcohol volume and how it contributes in determining the wine's balance. Even this Cabernet Sauvignon confirms its correspondence to the nose by means of the perception of black cherry, plum and black currant flavors, the same perceived in Merlot as well.

Final Considerations

The final sensations the three wines leave in the mouth are different one from another, however in all the three cases, it will be noticed a good taste-olfactory persistence. The finish of Produttori Termeno's Pinot Nero Schiesstandhof will be characterized by pleasing flavors of cherry, raspberry and strawberry, perfectly coherent with its type. The finish of Rocca Bernarda's Merlot Centis will be characterized by flavors of plum, black cherry and black currant, once again, typical qualities of Merlot. It is interesting to notice how the finish of Casale del Giglio's Cabernet Sauvignon will leave in the mouth flavors of black cherry, plum and black currant, however they will be more intense than Merlot, therefore confirming the typical organoleptic qualities of this grape. During the evaluation of finish, it should be examined the impact of structure and astringency: it will be low in Pinot Noir, medium high in Merlot, very high in Cabernet Sauvignon. The end of the tasting will let us understand some similarities in Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as the evident differences of Pinot Noir.



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



Friuli Grave Chardonnay 2004 Di Lenardo (Italy)

Grapes: Chardonnay

Price: € 5.00

Score: ◆◆◆ ★ *

The wine shows an intense greenish yellow color and nuances of greenish yellow, very transparent. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas that start with hints of banana and acacia followed by aromas of pineapple, litchi, broom, apple and pear. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and however balanced, good body, intense flavors. The finish is persistent with flavors of banana, pineapple and pear. This Chardonnay ages in steel tanks for 5 months.

Food match: Fried fish, Pasta and risotto with fish and crustaceans, Sauteed fish



Just Me 2003
Di Lenardo (Italy)

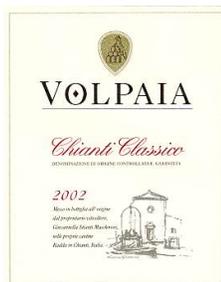
Grapes: Merlot

Price: € 15.00

Score: ◇◇◇◇

This wine shows an intense ruby red color and nuances of ruby red, little transparency. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of black cherry, plum and black currant followed by aromas of coconut, blueberry, violet, licorice, eucalyptus, cocoa and vanilla. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, good tannins. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry, plum and black currant. Just Me ages for 18 months in barrique followed by 3 months of aging in bottle.

Food match: Stewed and braised meat, Roasted meat, Hard cheese



Chianti Classico 2002
Castello di Volpaia (Italy)

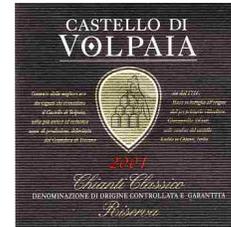
Grapes: Sangiovese

Price: € 10.90

Score: ◇◇◇◇

This Chianti shows a brilliant ruby red color and nuances of ruby red, moderate transparency. The nose denotes intense, clean and pleasing aromas that start with hints of black cherry and plum followed by aromas of pomegranate, cyclamen, strawberry, violet and vanilla. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a slightly tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, good tannins. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry and plum. This Chianti ages in cask for about 14 months.

Food match: Broiled meat and barbecue, Stewed meat, Sauteed meat, Stuffed pasta



Chianti Classico Riserva 2001
Castello di Volpaia (Italy)

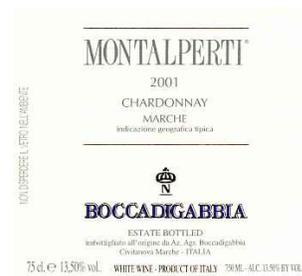
Grapes: Sangiovese (90%), Merlot, Pinot Noir, Syrah (10%)

Price: € 17.20

Score: ◇◇◇◇★

This Chianti shows an intense ruby red color and nuances of garnet red, moderate transparency. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of black cherry, plum and blackberry followed by aromas of violet, licorice, tobacco, vanilla and cinnamon. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a slightly tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, good tannins. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry, plum and blueberry. This Chianti Reserve ages for 24 months in cask.

Food match: Roasted meat, Broiled meat and barbecue, Stewed and braised meat



Montalperti 2001
Boccadigabbia (Italy)

Grapes: Chardonnay

Price: € 20.00

Score: ◇◇◇◇◇

This wine shows an intense straw yellow color and nuances of straw yellow, very transparent. The nose reveals good personality with intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of jasmine, apple and plum followed by aromas of citrus fruits, banana, pineapple, hawthorn, broom and vanilla. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and pleasing roundness, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of plum and apple. Montalperti ferments and ages for 4-5 months in barrique followed by at least 6 months of aging in bottle.

Food match: Stewed fish with mushrooms, Roasted fish, Stuffed pasta, Roasted white meat



**Akronte 2001
Boccadigabbia (Italy)**

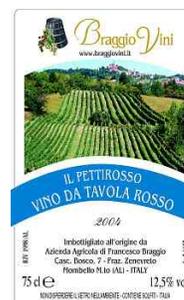
Grapes: Cabernet Sauvignon

Price: € 40.00

Score: ◆◆◆◆◆

This wine shows an intense ruby red color and nuances of garnet red, little transparency. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas which start with hints of black cherry, plum and black currant followed by aromas of blueberry, violet, vanilla, licorice, tobacco, bell pepper, black pepper, lavender, cocoa, cinnamon and menthol. The mouth has very good correspondence to the nose, a tannic attack and good roundness, however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, good tannins, agreeable. The finish is very persistent with long flavors of black currant, black cherry, plum and blueberry. A well made wine. Akronte ages in barrique for 18-20 months.

Food match: Game, Roasted meat, Stewed and braised meat, Hard cheese



**Il Pettirosso 2004
Braggio (Italy)**

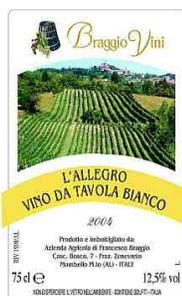
Grapes: Bonarda

Price: € 4.00

Score: ◆

This wine shows a brilliant ruby red color and nuances of ruby red, moderate transparency. The nose reveals intense and clean aromas which start with hints of cherry, violet and plum followed by aromas of blueberry and raspberry. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a slightly tannic attack and appreciable crispness, good body, intense flavors. The finish is persistent with flavors of cherry and raspberry.

Food match: Sauteed meat, Pasta with meat



**L'Allegrò 2004
Braggio (Italy)**

Grapes: Cortese

Price: € 4.00

Score: ◆

The wine shows an intense golden yellow color and nuances of straw yellow, transparent. The nose denotes intense and pleasing aromas that start with hints of apple and pear followed by aromas of plum and hawthorn. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and however balanced, good body, intense flavors. The finish is pretty persistent with flavors of apple and plum.

Food match: Vegetables and fish appetizers, Pasta and risotto with vegetables



**Chardonnay-Chenin 2004
Trivento (Argentina)**

Grapes: Chardonnay (50%), Chenin Blanc (50%)

Price: € 4.50

Score: ◆◆

The wine shows a brilliant straw yellow color and nuances of straw yellow, very transparent. The nose denotes intense, clean and pleasing aromas which start with hints of banana and pear followed by aromas of hawthorn, acacia, broom, lemon and peach. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and pleasing roundness, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors. The finish is pretty persistent with flavors of banana and peach. This wine ages in steel tanks.

Food match: Aperitifs, Fish and crustaceans appetizers, Pasta and risotto with vegetables



**Shiraz-Malbec 2004
Trivento (Argentina)**

Grapes: Syrah (50%), Malbec (50%)

Price: € 4.50

Score: ◇◇

The wine shows a brilliant ruby red color and nuances of ruby red, moderate transparency. The nose denotes intense, clean and pleasing aromas that start with hints of plum and raspberry followed by aromas of black cherry, blueberry, black currant and hints of black pepper. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a slightly tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, good tannins. The finish is pretty persistent with flavors of plum and blueberry. This wine ages in steel tanks.

Food match: Sauteed meat, Cold cuts, Stuffed pasta



**Bianco di Custoza Superiore Campo del Selese 2003
Albino Piona (Italy)**

Grapes: Garganega (30%), Trebbiano Toscano (30%), Chardonnay (30%), Tocai Friulano (10%)

Price: € 9.50

Score: ◇◇◇◇★

The wine shows an intense golden yellow color and nuances of golden yellow, very transparent. The nose reveals good personality with intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas which start with hints of apricot, pear and apple followed by aromas of citrus fruits, banana, broom, litchi, honey, hazelnut, peach and hints of vanilla. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and pleasing smoothness, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of apricot, banana and pear. A well made wine. Campo del Selese is produced with overripe grapes, a part of this wine ages for 9 months in barrique and ages for 4 months in bottle.

Food match: Roasted fish, Broiled fish, Stuffed pasta, Roasted white meat



**Bianco di Custoza Passito La Rabitta 2002
Albino Piona (Italy)**

Grapes: Garganega, Cortese, Riesling, Trebbiano Toscano

Price: € 19.00 - 50cl

Score: ◇◇◇◇★

This wine shows a pale amber yellow color and nuances of amber yellow, transparent. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas which start with hints of dried fig, raisin and date followed by aromas of candied fruit, peach jam, almond, honey, quince, lavender, walnut and vanilla. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a sweet and smooth attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of dried fig, peach jam, raisin and honey. A well made wine. La Rabitta ferments and ages in barrique for 12 months followed by 4 months of aging in bottle.

Food match: Hard cheese, Dried fruit tarts



**Antinoo 2003
Casale del Giglio (Italy)**

Grapes: Chardonnay (66%), Viognier (34%)

Price: € 9.00

Score: ◇◇◇◇*

The wine shows an intense straw yellow color and nuances of straw yellow, very transparent. The nose denotes intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of banana, apple and plum followed by aromas of pineapple, grapefruit, hawthorn, toasted wood, vanilla, hazelnut and praline. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and pleasing roundness, however well balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of plum, banana, pineapple and apple. A well made wine. Antinoo ages in barrique for 6-8 months followed by 6-12 months of aging in bottle.

Food match: Stuffed pasta with mushrooms, Roasted fish, Roasted white meat



**Mater Matuta 2001
Casale del Giglio (Italy)**

Grapes: Syrah (85%), Petit Verdot (15%)

Price: € 24.00

Score: ♦♦♦♦♦

This wine shows an intense ruby red color and nuances of garnet red, little transparency. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas which start with hints of black cherry, black currant, plum and blackberry followed by aromas of blueberry, violet, vanilla, licorice, tobacco, black pepper, cocoa, cinnamon and eucalyptus. The mouth has very good correspondence to the nose, a tannic attack and good roundness, however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense, flavors, good tannins, agreeable. The finish is very persistent with long flavors of black currant, black cherry, plum and blueberry. A well made wine. Mater Matuta ages for 22-24 months in barrique followed by 6-8 months of aging in bottle.

Food match: Game, Roasted meat, Braised and stewed meat, Hard cheese



**Colli Orientali del Friuli Ribolla Gialla 2004
La Viarte (Italy)**

Grapes: Ribolla Gialla

Price: € 11.30

Score: ♦♦♦♦♦

The wine shows a pale straw yellow color and nuances of greenish yellow, very transparent. The nose denotes intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of apple, plum and hawthorn followed by aromas of broom, acacia, pineapple, pear and yeast. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and however well balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of pear, apple and plum. This Ribolla Gialla ages for 7 months in steel tanks.

Food match: Fried fish, Crustaceans appetizers, Pasta and risotto with fish and crustaceans, Sauteed fish



**Siùm 2001
La Viarte (Italy)**

Grapes: Picolit, Verduzzo Friulano

Price: € 19.50 - 375ml

Score: ♦♦♦♦★

This wine shows a brilliant amber yellow color and nuances of amber yellow, transparent. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas which start with hints of dried fig, honey and quince jam followed by aromas of apricot jam, peach jam, caramel, date, almond, lavender, hazelnut and vanilla. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a sweet attack and pleasing smoothness, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of dried fig, peach jam, apricot jam and honey. A well made wine. Siùm ferments and ages in barrique for at least two years followed by at least 6 months of aging in bottle.

Food match: Hard cheese, Confectionery, Dried fruit tarts



**Talento Trento Cuvée Brut Rosé
Cesarini Sforza (Italy)**

Grapes: Pinot Noir

Price: € 12.40

Score: ♦♦♦♦★

This wine shows a brilliant salmon pink color and nuances of onion skin pink, very transparent, good effervescence, fine and persistent perlage. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of raspberry, cherry and strawberry followed by aromas of bread crust, banana, yeast, pear, rose and plum. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, an effervescent and crisp attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of raspberry, strawberry and cherry. Part of the base wine used for this Talento ages in cask. It ages for 36 months on its lees.

Food match: Stuffed pasta with mushrooms, Roasted fish, Stewed fish, Roasted white meat



**Talento Trento Classico Millesimato 2000
Cesarini Sforza (Italy)**

Grapes: Chardonnay (80%), Pinot Noir (20%)

Price: € 12.10

Score: ◆◆◆◆

This Talento shows a pale straw yellow color and nuances of greenish yellow, very transparent, good effervescence, fine and persistent perlage. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of pear, apple and pineapple followed by aromas of acacia, hawthorn, banana, bread crust, yeast, hazelnut and grapefruit. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, an effervescent and crisp attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of pear, pineapple and banana. A small part of the base wine used for this Talento ferments in cask. It ages for 24-36 months on its lees.

Food match: Stuffed pasta with mushrooms, Broiled fish, Roasted white meat

WINE PRODUCERS

Tre Monti

An ambitious project started in the beginning of the 1980's with the goal of reaching high quality levels, is today an extraordinary winery producing excellent wines every year

Emilia Romagna - the welcoming region in northern Italy - is since ever associated to nice food and, with its countless and famous food products, sitting down near a table is always a pleasure. Not only rich and tasty foods, in this land also wine represents an essential reference point for the tradition of the region. From Emilia to the sea coasts of Romagna, wine changes its face and history, its expression is made of different grapes, although always keeping its fundamental role in the many areas of the region. Right in this region is located Tre Monti winery, which since more than twenty years is involved in the production of quality wines both by using the typical grape varieties of the territory - such as Albana, Trebbiano Romagnolo and Sangiovese - as well as renowned international varieties, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc, present in the winery's vineyards since many years. Tre Monti's wines, both the ones produced with autochthonous grapes and international grapes, confirm every year the excellent quality level of this winery.

Tre Monti winery was established in the beginning of the 1960's by Sergio Navacchia and his wife Thea, important figure of reference for the winery until she passed away, in 1989. At the beginning of the 1980's Tre Monti winery concretely begins to change its production by aiming to the goal of reaching high levels of quality, a real and proper change even for the enology of Emilia Romagna in which - just like most of Italian regions - quantity generally was the priority of most of the wineries. It was understood this change should begin in the vineyard, by introducing new varieties, lowering the yields per hectare as well as doing an accurate selection. The process should have been continued in the cellar by ensuring the winery the support of important and skilled professionals. It was then hired wine maker Francesco Spagnoli - at those years very young - followed by Vittorio Fiore and then Donato Lanati, the present wine maker of Tre Monti. Today the winery is run by David and Vittorio Navacchia brothers, with the help of their father Sergio, as well as Attilio Scienza, agronomy consultant.

A prestigious team, which believes in the shared passion of achieving quality in every phase of the production, always researching for new products, by studying new varieties and the qualities each one of them can express in the territory, even by reusing ancient grape varieties, most of the times abandoned because believed not to be productive. Tre Monti winery owns two estates of which the first one is located in the hills of Imola - in the province of Bologna - and the other being near Forlì, both located in the heart of very important wine areas. The estates cover a total surface of about 50 hectares (about 124 acres), all destined to vineyards. The vinification cellar is located at Bergullo - near Imola - where are being processed grapes coming from the winery's estates only. Tre Monti winery pays particular attention to the autochthonous varieties of the area - Albana, Trebbiano Romagnolo and Sangiovese - and thanks to the supervision of Prof. Attilio Scienza and Dr. Francesco Lizzio - is being conducted a comprehensive study about the zonation of the estate. In the purpose of this study were also introduced *international* varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay (cultivated in the vineyards since 1985), Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc.



A top view of Tre Monti Winery



Vittorio, Sergio and Davide Navacchia

An interesting aspect is represented by the Albana variety cultivated in the estate at Imola, a pretty rare variety and known as *Albana della Serra*, with a golden yellow bunch and capable of making round wines of good quality. The estate at Imola - where the Tre Monti winery is located at - covers a surface of about 30 hectares (about 74 acres) exposed towards south - south/east in which are being cultivated Albana, Trebbiano Romagnolo, Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc varieties. The Petrignone estates - located in the hills of Forlì and covering a surface of about 25 hectares (about 61 acres) - is completely used for the cultivation of the classic varieties of Romagna: Albana, Trebbiano Romagnolo and Sangiovese Grosso. After a substantial work of renewal, the vinification plant is today modern and rational. Particular care and attention are paid in every phase of the vinification, from the selection of grapes to aging.

The winery has a capacity of about 50,000 liters (about 13,208 gallons), divided among barriques and casks of large sizes. Tre Monti represents a solid reference point for the enology of Emilia Romagna, thanks to the quality which has always increased in the past years. Tre Monti winery is in fact among the official providers of Presidency of Italian Republic and it is present with four wines. About the 60% of the production is destined to the Italian market and the distribution is mainly done by wine shops and high class restaurants. Even export plays a major role: every year are released in foreign markets about 120,000 bottles, mainly in the European countries - in particular Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Poland and Austria - in the United States of America, Canada, Switzerland, Peru, Cayman Islands and Cyprus.

The production of Tre Monti winery is of excellent qualitative level with a very interesting range of wines. White wines are produced both with autochthonous and international grapes. Of excellent level are the wines produced with the Albana grape. Vigna della Rocca, vinified as dry and partially aged in cask, offers truly valuable organoleptic qualities. Even the sweet style of the Albana is truly interesting for its aromas and for its structure enriched by the aging in barrique. Among white wines there is also Salcerella, produced with Albana aged in cask to which is

added 35% of Chardonnay aged in steel tanks. Also the production of red wines is of excellent quality and good interest. Are mentioned the Sangiovese Riserva - produced with Sangiovese Grosso aged for 3 months in barrique - and the very good Boldo, produced with Sangiovese Grosso and Cabernet Sauvignon aged for 6 months in barrique. A prestigious wine and flagship of Tre Monti winery is Sangiovese Thea - dedicated to the mother of Navacchia brothers and aged in barrique for 6 months - a wine with a very good personality and body however having a charming elegance and grace.



Wines are rated according to DiWineTaste's evaluation method. Please see score legend in the "Wines of the Month" section.



Albana di Romagna Vigna della Rocca 2004
Tre Monti (Italy)

Grapes: Albana

Price: € 6.00

Score: ♦♦♦♦ *

This wine shows a pale golden yellow color and nuances of straw yellow, very transparent. The nose denotes intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of pear, pineapple and apple followed by aromas of hawthorn, broom, almond, peach and plum. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of pear, plum and almond. Part of this wine ages in cask.

Food match: Fish soups, Fried fish, Pasta and risotto with fish and crustaceans



Colli di Imola Chardonnay Ciardo 2004
Tre Monti (Italy)

Grapes: Chardonnay

Price: € 9.00

Score: ♦♦♦♦ *

This Chardonnay shows a pale golden yellow color and nuances of straw yellow, very transparent. The nose denotes intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of pear, acacia and banana followed by aromas of hawthorn, green apple, pineapple, peach, plum and vanilla. In the mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors. The finish is persistent with flavors of pear, apple, pineapple and plum. Part of this wine ages in barrique.

Food match: Stuffed pasta, Sauteed fish, Broiled fish, Roasted white meat



**Colli di Imola Bianco Salcerella 2003
Tre Monti (Italy)**

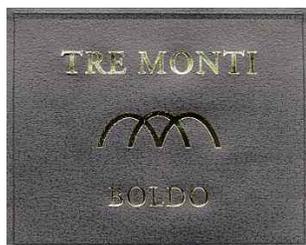
Grapes: Albana (50%), Chardonnay (40%), Sauvignon Blanc (10%)

Price: € 12.00

Score: ◆◆◆◆ ★

This wine shows an intense golden yellow color and nuances of golden yellow, very transparent. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas which start with hints of apple and almond followed by aromas of acacia, ripe banana, vanilla, plum, hawthorn, pineapple, grapefruit and honey. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a crisp attack and pleasing smoothness, however well balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of plum, apple, banana and grapefruit. A well made wine. Salcerella ages in cask.

Food match: Roasted fish, Stewed fish with mushrooms, Stuffed pasta, Roasted white meat



**Colli di Imola Rosso Boldo 2003
Tre Monti (Italy)**

Grapes: Sangiovese (45%), Merlot (35%), Cabernet Sauvignon (20%)

Price: € 14.00

Score: ◆◆◆◆

The wine shows an intense ruby red color and nuances of ruby red, little transparency. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing

and refined aromas which start with hints of black cherry, plum and vanilla followed by aromas of black currant, blueberry, violet, licorice, cinnamon and hints of menthol. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a slightly tannic attack and however well balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, good tannins. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry and plum. This wine ages for 10 months in barrique.

Food match: Roasted meat, Stewed meat with mushrooms, Hard cheese



**Sangiovese di Romagna Superiore Thea 2003
Tre Monti (Italy)**

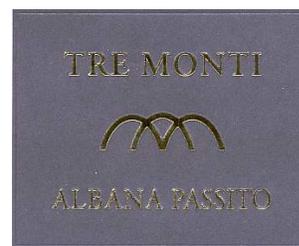
Grapes: Sangiovese

Price: € 18.00

Score: ◆◆◆◆ ★

The wine shows a brilliant ruby red color and nuances of ruby red, moderate transparency. The nose reveals good personality with intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of black cherry and plum followed by aromas of rose, blackberry, tobacco, licorice, cyclamen, lavender, violet, vanilla, cocoa and mace. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, good tannins. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry, plum and blackberry. A well made wine. Thea ages in barrique for 10-12 months.

Food match: Stewed and braised meat with mushrooms, Roasted meat, Hard cheese



**Albana di Romagna Passito 2003
Tre Monti (Italy)**

Grapes: Albana

Price: € 14.00 - 50cl

Score: ◆◆◆◆

The wine shows an intense golden yellow color and nuances of golden yellow, transparent. The nose denotes intense, clean, pleasing and refined aromas which start with hints of dried apricot, raisin and honey followed by aromas of candied fruit, citrus fruit peel, almond, honey, pear and vanilla. The mouth

has good correspondence to the nose, a sweet attack and pleasing crispness, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of dried apricot, honey and dried fig. This Albana Passito ferments in barrique.

Food match: Confectionery, Hard cheese, Fruit tarts

Tre Monti - Via Lola, 3 loc. Bergullo - 40026 Imola, Bologna (Italy) - Tel. ++39 542 657116 Fax. ++39 542 657122 - **Winemaker:** Donato Lanati - **Established:** 1972 - **Production:** 220.000 bottles - **E-Mail:** tremonti@tremonti.it - **WEB:** www.tremonti.it

Cellar Journal

This section is reserved to wine producers who want to publish news and information about their business, to announce new products or just for communicating to its customers information and promotions about their products and activity. Send news to be published at the e-mail address CellarJournal@DiWineTaste.com.

EVENTS

News

In this section 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 at the address Events@DiWineTaste.com.

CORKSCREW

Matching Cheese and Wine

Cheese and wine represent high enogastronomical values in the cultures of many countries, they are good allies of the table and can make fabulous matchings

Since the times humans have learnt the dairy techniques for the production of cheese - a practice being thousands years old - this precious food has always represented an important element in the enogastronomical cultures of the countries where it is being produced. It is more likely the production of cheese was invented in order to keep and concentrate milk and its nutritional properties, therefore ensuring a good reserve of proteins, fats and mineral salts. Cheese is also a complex world, vast and rich in aromas and tastes, it certainly is to be considered among the most complex foods produced by humans. In the course of centuries



A classic matching: Marsala Superiore Riserva and Gorgonzola cheese

the dairy art has evolved and adapted to the many countries in which cheese represented a precious food; techniques have developed, also thanks to the providential help of casual discoveries that - despite their initial and apparent negative effect - turned to be fundamental for the production of many cheeses while making them unique in their kind. The connection with wine is very strong: according to the type of milk, the place and the production technique - including time and method of aging - are virtually obtained countless results.

The Production of Cheese

The production of cheese makes use of techniques and methods which vary according to the type of product to be obtained. No matter the type, the production of cheese is always the result of milk coagulation, a process which transforms milk into a solid matter having different consistences. It will be the processing of this solid matter - called curd - to make cheese the way we are used to see it on our tables. The whole production process begins - of course - by milk. There are many types of milk which can be used for the production of cheese and each of them has proper organoleptic characteristics that will give personality to the final product. The most common milk types used for the production of cheese are the ones of cow and sheep, however are also very important goat and buffalo milks. Cheese can be made with the milk of a particular type only, or by blending different types. However it is good to remember the organoleptic qualities of cheese do not depend by the type of milk only, but also by the type and quality of animal's feeding, latitude and area of grazing.

Milk can be used both fresh of milking, as well as after an appropriate pause of 12-24 hours, provided it is kept at a temperature of about 10°C (50°F). Before processing, the milk is being skimmed in order to determine the quantity of fats in cheese. Methods used for skimming the milk are two: spontaneous cropping up of the cream, or by means of the mechanical process

of centrifuge. Moreover, before the process begins, the milk is properly treated - generally by means of pasteurization - in order to make it more hygienic and to eliminate any possible pathogen bacteria, a practice which is indispensable for average aged cheese. In the production of *blue* cheese, it can be now added spores of the *Penicillium* species. After the appropriate treatments - including the adding of starter serum in order to promote acidification - the milk is now ready to begin the procedure that will transform it into cheese.

The next phase consists in coagulation, that is the process allowing the separation of protein and fat substances - mainly casein - from whey. Coagulation can happen in two different ways: acid coagulation and enzymatic coagulation. Acid coagulation happens because of the effects of some micro organisms capable of transforming lactose into lactic acid and, as a consequence, determines the precipitation of casein, the main protein contained in milk. The result is a pretty creamy curd rich in humidity and this is the process used for the production - for example - of yogurt and other fresh and creamy cheeses. Enzymatic coagulation is obtained by using rennet, a substance extracted from the stomach of calves, lambs and kids. Coagulation occurs thanks to the action of some enzymes found in rennet and which form a curd separated from whey, rich in calcium, very elastic and not friable. With this type of coagulation are being obtained - for example - Grana and Emmenthal.

The curd is then allowed to stay and therefore processed in order to obtain small pieces - operation called *breaking* - by using specific tools. According to the type of cheese to be produced, the breaking of the curd is done in different ways. For *cooked* or *semi cooked* cheeses, the breaking is preceded by an appropriate heating at a temperature of 45-60°C (113-160°F); in case of *spun paste* cheese, such as mozzarella, the curd is allowed to stay in the hot and acid whey for some hours. The curd is then extracted from the boiler by using a cloth and therefore having the whey to drip. In the production of *soft cheese*, the dripping of whey is done naturally, that is by leaving the curd suspended in a cloth. In *hard paste* cheeses, the curd is put into a mold - also having the purpose of giving the cheese its typical shape - and the dripping of whey is done by means of compression. Whey can be used for the production of *ricotta* cheese or it can be skimmed and used for the production of butter.

The curd molds undergo now the process of salting, both by plunging them in brine, or by covering the surface with salt. At the end of salting, the cheese is kept in specific rooms in order to allow a proper aging according to style and type to be produced. The aging of cheese is a critical and fundamental operation which will give the product its typical organoleptic qualities and requires all the experience of a talented dairyman. At the end of aging, the cheese is now ready to be packed and commercialized. The production of cheese is essentially an artisan work and it is thanks to the differences and the skill of every artisan the cheese always have different and personal qualities. These qualities are also determined by the type of milk used for the production and by the area in which the grazing is located, the type of feeding for the animals from which it is obtained milk, as well as the culture and tradition of the place.

Classification of Cheese

According to a commercial point of view, cheese is classified according to many productive, physical and chemical qualities. There are many factors to be considered in the classification of cheese, including acidity, the contents in fats and the area of production. A cheese with a quantity of lipidic substances higher than 42% is defined as fat, from 20% to 40% is semi fat; light in case it was produced with skimmed milk, a condition not allowed by the Italian law. Another important factor for classification is the consistency of the paste. Cheeses with a quantity of water greater than 40% are considered as *soft paste*, a quantity lesser than this value defines *hard paste* cheeses. The paste is also classified according to the method used during the production. Are called *raw paste* those cheeses whose curd was not heated after the breaking. Fresh and soft cheese usually belongs to this category. In case the curd is being heated after the breaking at a temperature of 44-45°C (111-113°F), the cheese is classified as *semi cooked paste*, at a temperature of 54-55°C (129-131°F) are being classified as *cooked paste* instead.

Are classified as *spun paste* the cheeses whose curd is allowed to age in the warm and acid whey for some hours in order to give plasticity to the paste. The paste is then spun in water at a temperature of 70-90°C (158-194°F) in order to give the cheese its typical shape and aspect. Belong to this category, for example, Mozzarella, Provolone and Caciocavallo. Are being classified as *blue*, those cheeses to which was added in the milk spores of *Penicillium Glaucum* or *Roqueforti* that, thanks to the holes made in the paste and allowing the introduction of air, will develop the typical mold. Spores of *Penicillium* are also used for the treatment of the crust, in particular for those cheeses classified as *flowered crust*, which can be recognized by the layer of white micro-flora covering the whole crust. In this case are being used spores of *Penicillium Album* and belong to this category - for example - Taleggio, Brie and Camembert. In order to avoid the formation of molds that could be detrimental for the quality of cheese, the crust can be *washed* in a solution of water and salt, however it can also be used oil, paraffin as well as materials made of wax or synthetic substances which replace the crust. Even aging defines the classification of cheese, which can be *slow* in case it is more than 6 months, *average* from 1 to 6 months, *rapid* in case it is lesser than one month, *absent* for cheeses destined to an immediate consumption.

Cheese and Cooking

The use of cheese in cooking is pretty frequent, from immediate consumption to the use as an ingredient for the preparation of many recipes. Cheese - consumed as it is produced - is a food rich in proteins and fats, it can therefore make a course of its own as well as replacing a meat recipe. The consumption of cheese with no other processing is also used in appetizers and desserts; in fact it is preferred by many connoisseurs at the end of a meal instead of having a dessert. A typical way of serving cheese - in particular at the end of meals - is to match them with honey made of different flowers, of which the most common ones are acacia,

chestnut and lime. Cheese can be well matched to fruit jams, as well as vegetables jams, including sweet mustards - either produced with fruit or vegetables - characterized by the typical piquant and pungent taste.

The use of cheese as an ingredient in cooking is common in those country where it is being produced. Cheese is an ingredient for the preparation of many pasta and risotto dishes, added at the end in order to exalt flavors and to give a creamy consistence. It is also a fundamental ingredient for puddings, soufflé and the preparation of sauces to be used for pasta and meat. Cheese can also be served cut in thick slices and broiled, just like a steak. Hard and ground cheese is used for the preparation of pies, pizza and buns, whereas cubed can give taste and structure to many salads. Even in pastry cooking the use of cheese is pretty common, in particular soft cheeses, ricotta and mascarpone cheese. Among the many desserts made of cheese are mentioned *tiramisù* - made with mascarpone - and *cannoli alla Siciliana* and *cassata alla Siciliana* in which ricotta cheese represents a fundamental ingredient.

The Matching of Cheese and Wine

Cheese is a very complex food, with pretty intense aromas which can even be pungent, tastes varying from delicate to complex and strong. For this reason, the matching of cheese and wine is not always easy even because of the wide selection of products available in the many countries in which it is being produced. According to a nutritional point of view, cheese is rich in proteins, fats and mineral salts, present in pretty variable quantities according to the type. According to an organoleptic point of view, cheese is a pretty *invading* food and therefore it requires the matching with a wine having equal *invading* characteristics. A very aromatic cheese requires a wine having an equal aromatic strength, a cheese with strong taste and a long gustatory persistence, requires a wine with intense flavors and long persistence. It is usually believed the best matching with cheese is obtained with red wines, indeed this "rule" has not practical reason because of the many types of cheese available and the many organoleptic qualities. Soft cheeses, in which it is appreciable a certain acidity - such as Mozzarella, Crescenza and Robiola - can be perfectly matched with many white or rosé wines.

Generally speaking, the higher the structure of the cheese - represented by the hardness of the paste and of aging - the higher the structure of the wine. Therefore an average aged cheese - such as Emmenthal or Asiago - can be matched with red wines having a good body, whereas aged cheeses - such as Parmigiano Reggiano and hard Pecorino cheese - require the matching with a full bodied red wine. A particular consideration should be done for *piquant* cheese with pungent and strong tastes, such as *blue* cheese or cheese aged for a long time. In this case it will be appropriate a robust red wine with an appreciable roundness and alcohol volume. An excellent matching is obtained with sweet and fortified wines, because of their good roundness, alcohol volume, structure and sweetness. For example Roquefort can be wonderfully matched to Sauternes, and Gorgonzola can be matched with aromatic sweet wines - such as Passito di Pantel-

leria - as well as a fortified wines with an appreciable sweetness, such as Marsala Superiore Riserva. The matching of cheese with sweet wines probably represents the most amazing choice thanks to the perfect balance which can be obtained, however this is a matching that is appropriate only in case cheese is served at the end of a meal or when the cheese is consumed alone and makes the only course of the meal.

NOT JUST WINE

Truffle

Present in the cultures of many countries, since ancient times it has contributed to enrich foods with its characteristic and unmistakable aroma

Truffle is a mushroom living underground, having the shape of a tuber, whose inside is made of a fleshy mass and covered by a rind. According to a botanical point of view, truffle is a mushroom, belonging to the *tuber* family, but, as opposed to *epigeous* mushrooms - the ones that in a particular point of their life sprout out of the earth - truffles are *hypogean*, that is live underground. As opposed to plants, mushrooms - and therefore truffles as well - have a different life cycle: the growth of mycelium, that is the dense web of filaments which spreads for a long radius; the development of the fruit, known as "truffle"; the emission of spores during reproduction. As the spores are ripe, truffle emits its intense aroma: this is the signal it is now ready to pick it out of the earth. In nature truffle's spores have a very resistant external rind - suited for being eaten, digested and evacuated intact by animals which eat these kind of mushrooms - so they can return to the earth and begin a new reproductive cycle.

The life of truffles is strongly connected to the one of plants. In fact, truffles live in symbiosis with them, or better to say, with their roots: poplar, hazelnut, lime, willow, pine and many more. The mushroom helps the plant in the searching of water and of other nutritional substances. As it does not have any chlorophyll, the plant provides to the hypogean mushroom all the substances it cannot synthesize itself, in other words, the plant provides sugar and vitamins, whereas the mushroom provides mineral elements to the plant. Thanks to the high development of *hyphae* in the ground, truffle can occupy a larger area than a single root can do, therefore increasing the nutritional capabilities of the plant. As truffles live in symbiosis with a tree, the organoleptic qualities of a truffle will change according to the hosting plant. For example, the presence of oak will give the mushroom a more pungent aroma, whereas lime will give a more aromatic smell.

Truffle in History

Concerning the existence of truffle, the first information are dated back to 1700 - 1600 BC, during the age of Sumerians. Ancient Romans supported the idea the best truffles were the ones from Greece and Libya; according the Cremonese physi-

cian Bartolomeo Platina, lived in the 1400's, the best ones were those from Greece, Africa and Syria. Greeks called it *hydra* or *Hydnon*, from which derives *hydno*logy, the science which studies truffles. Latins called it *Tuber*. The first book completely dedicated to the truffle is dated back to 1564, written by Alfonso Ciccarelli, an Umbrian physician. In Europe it was also called "rich garlic" because of its light aroma of garlic; Alexandre Dumas defined it as the *Sancta Sanctorum* of the table.

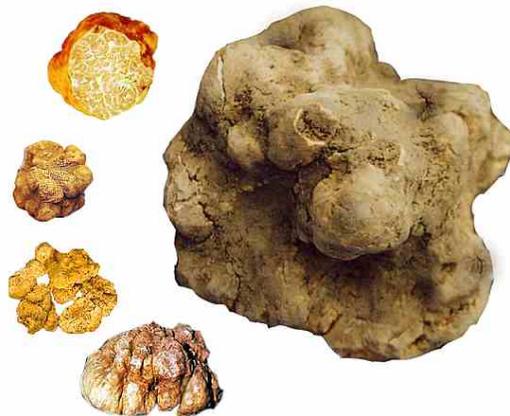
In the Eastern world, truffle is found in China and Japan. It seems native Indians of America knew truffle but there are no information about the use they made of it. In France, Bourgogne and Provence are famous places for truffles. In Germany, since 1700's, in the areas of Brandenburg and Saxony, truffles are being used. In Italy truffles are found in almost the whole territory. Since many years they are trying, with no appreciable results, to reproduce the necessary environment for mycorization - that is the ideal environment for the cultivation of truffles - but it seems these conditions are hardly reproducible, or maybe there are not enough information or knowledge about this subject.

Varieties of Truffles

When truffles are mentioned, it is never appropriate to generalize, as there are many varieties. **Esteemed White Truffle**, whose scientific name is *Tuber Magnatum Pico*, is considered by many as the best truffle, also known as "Alba's Truffle" or "Piedmont's Truffle", as it abundantly grows in these areas. It can also be found in some areas of central Italy and in South France. The time of harvesting goes from September to December. The aspect is irregular, with protuberances and depressions, the surface is smooth and slightly velvety. It shows a pale ochre or deep cream color as well as greenish. The flesh is white, sometime white-gray, with white streaking. The aroma is strong and typical (aromas of garlic and cheese), which is strongly different from all other types of truffle, making it unmistakable. It lives in symbiosis with oak, lime, poplar and willow trees. In order to live, white truffle requires a soft and humid soil, rich in calcium, with a good aeration. It is among the most expensive truffles and it is preferably consumed raw.

Whitish Truffle, whose scientific name is *Tuber Borchii Vitt*, has a pretty similar aspect to white truffle and with which can be easily confused thanks to its color and irregular shape, however as it ripens the color gets deeper as well as the inside part. The main difference from the real white truffle can be recognized to the nose: whitish truffle has a stronger garlic aroma. Once picked it has a light and pleasing aroma, however with time, it degenerates in garlic and nauseating aromas. It prefers limestone soils, it is usually found in conifers woods. The harvesting time is from January to March. It is a pretty valued truffle in Tuscany, Marches and Romagna, it is common in Europe and Australia as well.

Esteemed Black Truffle, whose scientific name is *Tuber Melanosporum Vitt*, known in Italy as "Norcia's Truffle" or "Spoleto's Truffle", in France as *Truffe de Perigord*. The aspect has a pretty homogeneous shape, round with small protuberances similar to warts. The color is deep brown-black with rust nuances



White truffle

when rub. The internal part, that is the flesh, shows a pale color. To the nose has an intense, aromatic and fruity aroma. It grows in hilly areas in symbiosis with hazelnut and oak trees. The harvesting time is from December (after Christmas) to March, the best quality is harvested in February. In order to recognize the places in which it can be found, a good method is to observe the soil. The places in which truffle generally grows are lacking of vegetation, because of the action of the mycelium: by paying more attention it will be noticed grass tends to be absent just under the tree. Another clue to find truffles is to watch a particular fly, the *Anisotoma Cinnamomea*, which prefers leaving its eggs in places near truffles. It grows in France and precisely in Provence and in Italy, in particular in central Apennines, as well as in Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto. It can be consumed both raw and cooked.

Winter Black Truffle, whose scientific name is *Tuber Brumale Vitt*, shows a black-brown color, a slightly warty surface, the flesh has a gray color and gets deeper by showing whitish streaking. It can be confused with the esteemed black truffle, both for its color and for the same environment, including the fact it prefers living in symbiosis with the same plants. To the nose has a nutmeg smell. It can be defined as the lesser brother of esteemed black, as its commercial value is about the half. It ripens in wintertime and it is common all over Europe.

Summer Truffle, whose scientific name is *Tuber Aestivum Vitt*, is very similar to black truffle, the external surface has evident deep colored warts, sometimes black and with a vaguely pyramidal shape. To the nose has an intense and aromatic smell, however less pronounced than other blacks. The difference with black truffle can be recognized by watching the internal part which tends to a deep yellow color. As for the environment, it grows on many soil types, both clay and sandy, it is found in woods. The harvesting time is from May to December. It is used for the production of sauces and cold cuts. It is common in Europe and North Africa.

Smooth Black Truffle, whose scientific name is *Tuber Macrosporium Vitt*, has a smooth aspect with some warts, a gray reddish color and the pulp has the same color. To the nose recalls white truffle, it prefers living in symbiosis with poplars, oaks,

hazelnuts and limes. The smooth black truffle is not very common and it is not commercialized, as it is very hard to find, however it is particularly appreciated locally. It is found in Europe and North America.

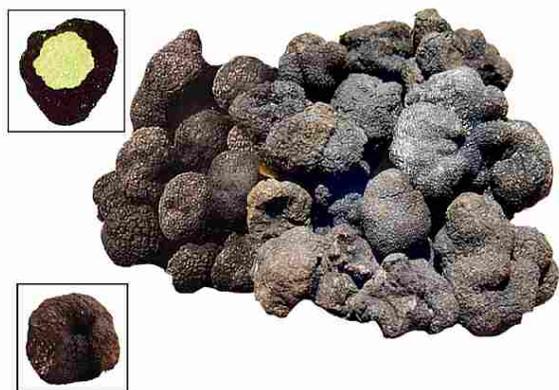
Truffle of Bagnoli, whose scientific name is *Tuber Mesentericum*, shows a deep brown color, the external side is warty, the internal flesh is whitish with white streaking, similar to summer truffle, in which the most evident difference is represented by the aroma. Truffle of Bagnoli has an intense smell of phenol and it is very common in central-south Italy. It is not harvested for commercial purposes, as not all consumers like it. It grows in symbiosis with beech, birch, oak and hazelnut trees. The harvest is from November to January. It is common in Europe.

Terfezia or **Tuvara de Arenas**, it is a species growing in symbiosis with herbaceous plants, in sandy soils of the Mediterranean area. It has no smell, but it is however useful as it was used by ancient Romans in place of potatoes, at those times still unknown.

Besides the above mentioned edible truffles, there are others which are not edible. Their edibility is not determined by possible noxious effects, they are hard truffles with unpleasing tastes and therefore considered unsuited for human nutrition, however they are very appreciated by animals. Among these truffle varieties are mentioned: *Tuber Rufum*, with a strong and nauseating smell and with a reddish color, it grows almost all year long in woods; *Tuber Ferrugineum* with a rust color and with a nauseating smell, it grows in woods; *Tuber Foetidum* with an extremely disgusting smell; *Tuber Excavatum* whose flesh consistency is hard, not very intense to the nose, of scarce value, frequently sold to unexperienced consumers and mixed to summer truffle.

Nutritional Qualities of Truffle

The main components of truffle are proteins, fats, carbohydrates, water, mineral salts and ashes. Just like for edible mushrooms, the presence of 80-90% of water and of non digestible molecules by the human body, make truffle non interesting



Black Truffles

from a nutritional point of view. One hundred grams of truffle corresponds to about 30 Kcal. In the past years it has been produced the aroma of truffle by means of chemical synthesis. Despite this substance is noxious, it has the same aromas of truffle, so similar to the real one that a less experienced nose can hardly tell the difference. Moreover this substance has more stable characteristics than the natural one. The availability of this substance allows certain swindlers to buy African truffles - lacking of almost any smell - to which is being injected the artificial aroma by using a syringe, and therefore selling them at high prices.

Aquavitae

Review of Grappa, Distillates and Brandy

Distillates are rated according to DiWineTaste's evaluation method. Please see score legend in the "Wines of the Month" section.



Brandy Stravecchio Monferrato 10 Anni Magnoberta (Italy)

Raw matter: Malvasia, Grignolino and Barbera wines from Monferrato

Price: € 12.50 - 70cl

Score: ◇◇◇★

This brandy shows an intense amber yellow color, limpid and crystalline. The nose reveals intense, clean and pleasing aromas of vanilla, chocolate, caramel, cinchona, hazelnut, praline, tobacco and plum with almost imperceptible alcohol pungency. The mouth is intense with good correspondence to the nose, perceptible alcohol pungency which tends to dissolve rapidly, evident sweet hint, good roundness. The finish is persistent with flavors of licorice, hazelnut and plum. This brandy is aged for at least 10 years in cask and it is produced with the discontinuous distillation system. Alcohol 40%.



Grappa di Brachetto Magnoberta (Italy)

Raw matter: Pomace of Brachetto

Price: € 17.00 - 70cl

Score: ◇◇◇◇★

This Grappa is colorless, limpid and crystalline. The nose reveals intense, clean and pleasing aromas of grape, rose, strawberry, cherry, raspberry, pear, plum and hazelnut with almost imperceptible alcohol pungency. The mouth is intense with perceptible alcohol pungency which tends to dissolve rapidly, good correspondence to the nose, pleasing smoothness and good sweet hint, agreeable. The finish is persistent with flavors of strawberry, raspberry and pear. A well made grappa produced with discontinuous distillation at very low steam pressure. Alcohol 42%.



Grappa di Nebbiolo da Barolo Casa Luparia (Italy)

Raw matter: Pomace of Barolo's Nebbiolo

Price: € 17.50 - 50cl

Score: ◇◇◇◇◇

This grappa is colorless, limpid and crystalline. The nose denotes intense, clean and pleasing aromas of violet, plum, licorice, hazelnut, black cherry and rose with almost imperceptible alcohol pungency. The mouth is intense with perceptible alcohol pungency which tends to dissolve rapidly, good correspondence to the nose, agreeable and balanced sweet hint. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry, plum and licorice. A well made grappa produced with discontinuous distillation at very low steam pressure. Alcohol 42%.



Grappa Stravecchia Casa Luparia (Italy)

Raw matter: Pomace of Barbera, Grignolino and Freisa

Price: € 17.50 - 50cl

Score: ◇◇◇◇◇

This grappa shows a brilliant golden yellow color, limpid and crystalline. The nose reveals intense, clean and pleasing aromas of licorice, vanilla, tobacco, honey, hazelnut, banana, plum, chocolate and black cherry with almost imperceptible alcohol pungency. The mouth is intense with good correspondence to the nose, perceptible alcohol pungency which tends to dissolve rapidly, pleasing smoothness, balanced sweet hint. The finish is persistent with flavors of licorice, hazelnut, honey and plum. A well made grappa produced with discontinuous distillation at very low steam pressure. It ages for more than 12 years in cask. Alcohol 42%.

Wine Parade

The best 15 wines according to DiWineTaste's readers. To express your best three wines send us an E-mail at WineParade@DiWineTaste.com or fill in the form available at our WEB site.

Rank		Wine, Producer
1	↔	Chablis Grand Cru Les Clos 2002, Domaine Billaud-Simon (France)
2	↗	Palazzo della Torre 2000, Allegrini (Italy)
3	↗	Harmonium 2001, Firriato (Italy)
4	↗	Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Riparosso 2001, Illuminati (Italy)
5	↘	Riesling Cuvée Frédéric Emile 1999, Maison Trimbach (France)
6	↘	Jerez Fino Tio Pepe, Gonzalez Byass (Spain)
7	↗	Edizione Cinque Autoctoni 2001, Farnese (Italy)
8	↗	Aglianico del Vulture La Firma 2002, Cantine del Notaio (Italy)
9	↗	Amarone della Valpolicella Classico 1998, Santa Sofia (Italy)
10	↘	Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Villa Gemma 1999, Masciarelli (Italy)
11	↗	Riesling Spätlese Nierstein Brudersberg 2003, Weingut Freiherr Heyl Herrnsheim (Germany)
12	↘	Pinot Noir Napa 2002, Clos du Val (USA)
13	☆	Trento Talento Brut Riserva Methius 1998, Dorigati (Italy)
14	☆	Colli Orientali del Friuli Rosazzo Bianco Terre Alte 2002, Livio Felluga (Italy)
15	↘	Moscato d'Asti 2003, Vignaioli di S. Stefano (Italy)

Legend: ↗ up ↘ down ↔ stable ☆ new entry