



Wine BAG & STRING
MERCHANTS
PURVEYORS OF FINE WINE *and* SPIRITS

January 2016

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Happy New Year! Salute to Italian wine, and cento di questi giorni to you. I love Italian wines, and I've always wanted Bag & String to reflect that, to share my passion for great Italian wines with everybody. I think I may have overestimated everyone else's love for the storied and old-school wines of this country. I totally get that Italian wines offer an extra level of difficulty, with an archaic naming system, quality and region designations that cover an encyclopedic amount of information. And the wines themselves can be tumultuous with some that peak a dozen years after bottling not uncommon, and even then they can be austere. So what do I see in them? The history, of course. No country in the world has held so close to its roots, to tradition, to what made its wines undeniably great -- not Spain, not Germany, not even France. I also love the wines themselves, and find them a delicious counterpoint to the modern California style that has been so en vogue for the past few decades. This club is, I think, a great bridge between the ultra-traditional wines of Old World Italy, and the new vanguard of winemaking sweeping through Europe. I say again: Salute e bere to Italian wines. I hope you enjoy our selections as much as we do, my friends.

As we enter a new year, I would like to take a moment to thank you for your continuing support. I realize how lucky I am to have a job that I love. When I first opened the store four and a half years ago, it was with the belief that there was room for a store that focused on customer service, education and wines primarily from producers not very well known. I could not have done it without you -- both as customers and promoters. I hope every visit is a great experience!



WINE TASTING

Every
Thursday *and* Friday
4 – 7 p.m.

119 Chautauqua Avenue
Lakewood, NY

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Italian Club Wine Notes

WINERY NAME: Tenuta Sant' Antonio

VARIETAL: Chardonnay & Garganega

VINTAGE: 2014

REGION: Veneto

This wine is pale straw yellow with greenish glints. The nose brings white acacia and jasmine flowers, with a bouquet of fruits including grapefruit, orange, pineapple, apple, pear, mango and a light touch of banana.

On the palate, it is fresh and agreeable with a sustained acidity. Well-balanced softness and tang make it both inviting and intriguing.

Four brothers' love for wine began in their father's vineyards in San Zeno di Colognola ai Colli in the Valpolicella district, which produces the most famous wines in the Verona area: Amarone, Valpolicella and Soave. Ahead of their time, they worked as technical consultants for years, creating innovative "turnkey" solutions throughout Italy. The experience they gained led them to a momentous decision: In 1989 they bought 30 hectares of land around Mezzane that, when added to their father's property, brought the Tenuta Sant'Antonio vineyards to its current total of 50 hectares.

FOOD PAIRING

Risi e Bisi

- 7 cups vegetable stock
- 3 tbsp. butter, divided
- 2 cups thinly sliced peeled butternut squash (1- to 2-inch-long slices)
- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/3 cup minced onion
- 1/4 cup diced pancetta
- 2 cups arborio rice
- 4 cups shelled fresh or thawed frozen peas
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Bring stock to a simmer in a small saucepan. Cover and keep warm. Melt 2 tbsp. butter with 1 tbsp. oil in a large heavy pot over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until soft (do not brown), about 5 minutes. Add pancetta and cook until light brown, about 3 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring until coated, about 1 minute. Add 1 cup stock. Stir constantly with a wooden spoon until stock is almost absorbed, about 1 minute. Continue adding stock by the cupful in 5 more additions, stirring constantly and allowing stock to be absorbed between additions, until rice is almost tender. Add peas and remaining cup of stock and cook, stirring constantly, until the rice is creamy and tender but still firm to the bite, about 22 minutes total. Stir in 1/4 cup hot water if the rice seems dry.

Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the remaining 1 tbsp. butter, 1 tbsp. oil, Parmesan, and parsley. Season rice and peas with salt and pepper. Transfer to serving bowls or plates, and serve.

Recipe by Rosita Missoni

Italian Club Wine Notes

WINERY NAME: La Massa

VARIETAL: Sangiovese, Merlot, Cabernet

Sauvignon & Alicante

VINTAGE: 2013

REGION: Tuscany

A dark, sumptuous beauty, the 2013 La Massa opens with superb depth and textural richness. Inky blue/purplish fruit, smoke, white pepper and violets are all super-expressive. Pliant, concentrated and deep, the 2013 is shaping up to be a real beauty. I especially like the delineation and focus here. This a gorgeous La Massa. -- *93 points. Antonio Galloni*

Giampaolo Mota, the eldest son of a Neapolitan family became the “black sheep” because he decided not go into the family’s leather tanning business. His grandfather Giorgio was the only family member to support him in his venture into the wine business, and thus, the top wine at La Massa carries his name. Giampaolo studied in France with the renowned oenologist Emile Peynaud, working in St. Emilion and Pomerol, where he developed a fundamental understanding of the chemistry of the wine. He feels that this study, especially of the reductive/oxygenative cycle of red wine helps him make structured, solid, long-lived wines that are also very fruit driven.

FOOD PAIRING

Porchetta

- 1 7- to 8-pound bone-in, skin-on pork shoulder roast, or a 6- to 7-pound boneless roast, fat trimmed to 1/4 inch thick
- 1/4 cup chopped fennel fronds
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves
- 5 garlic cloves, grated or mashed to a paste
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1½ tablespoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon fennel seed
- 3/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

Score skin and fat all over pork, taking care not to cut down to the meat.

In a food processor or with a mortar and pestle, combine fennel fronds, rosemary, sage, garlic, lemon zest, salt, fennel seed, red pepper flakes and black pepper. Pour in oil. Pulse or mash until it forms a paste. Rub all over pork. If using a boneless roast, tie with kitchen string at 2-inch intervals. Transfer to a large bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least 6 hours, preferably overnight.

Remove pork from refrigerator 1 to 2 hours before you want to cook it. Heat oven to 450 degrees.

Transfer pork to a rimmed baking sheet and roast 35 minutes. Reduce temperature to 325 degrees and cook an additional 2 hours and 45 minutes to 4 hours, until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the meat reads 180 degrees, which will give you sliceable, tender meat. (A bone-in roast will take longer than a boneless one.)

Transfer pork to a cutting board and let rest 15 to 30 minutes before serving. Make sure everyone gets some of the cracklings.

Italian Club Wine Notes

WINERY NAME: La Valentina

VARIETAL: Montepulciano

VINTAGE: 2012

REGION: Abruzzo

Fascinating aromas of dried fruits, orange peel, earth, pomace and meat. Full body with soft and tangy fruit, plus a long, flavorful finish. It's decadent and citrusy on the finish besides the opulent and delicious red fruits. – *92 points, James Suckling*

La Valentina owns and rents a total of 74 acres of vineyards at about 650 to 1,000 feet altitude in the rolling Abruzzo hills, just inland from the port of Pescara on the Adriatic coast.

The area benefits from a special microclimate, taking advantage of cool breezes from the mountains and the maritime winds from the Adriatic.

The vineyards are impeccable, on clay and gravel soil; they are managed like a well-kept market garden. Yields are low, and harvesting by hand carries on until late October, achieving optimum ripeness.

The results are remarkable, with intense, rich red wines that have oceans of fruit, bright rich black fruit flavors, and enough spice, elegance and depth to make them ideal partners to many Italian dishes, especially pastas and risottos.

FOOD PAIRING

Spaghetti alla Chitarra with Lamb and Sweet Pepper Ragù

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 pound ground lamb
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1 1/2 cups lamb or chicken stock
- 1 15-ounce can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand
- 2 large red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 1 pound thick spaghetti
- Grated Pecorino Romano, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oil in a 6-quart saucepan over medium-high. Cook lamb, stirring and breaking up meat into small pieces, until browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add bay leaves, garlic, salt, and pepper; cook until garlic is golden, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in wine; cook until reduced by half, 2 to 3 minutes. Add stock, tomatoes, salt and pepper; bring to a simmer.

Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is slightly thickened, 35 to 40 minutes. Stir in peppers, and cook until peppers are tender but not falling apart, 4 to 6 minutes.

Discard bay leaves.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until al dente, 10 to 12 minutes. Drain pasta and transfer to pan with sauce. Add salt and pepper and, using tongs, toss pasta in sauce. Serve pasta in bowls; garnish with Pecorino.

Italian Club Wine Notes

WINERY NAME: Mancini

VARIETAL: Verdicchio

VINTAGE: 2014

REGION: Marche

One-hundred percent stainless-steel, 65-degree cold-fermented Verdicchio from a single 4.5-acre, 38-year-old vineyard in the Maiolati Spontini zone of the Castelli di Jesi. Here the vines are older and yields are reduced. The juice also sees extended lees contact in the tank. The resulting wine is medium-deep green with lush lime aromatics and a mouth with great depth of ripeness, lime fruit and excellent minerality.

The Mancini estate was begun in the early 1960s by Benito Mancini with vineyards in the hills of Maiolati Spontini and Castellsellino, in the heart of the Castelli di Jesi zone. Today, Benito is assisted by his children, Massimo, Emanuela and Sergio. The modern winery is near the historic family home, and includes temperature-controlled stainless-steel vinification equipment. Vinification and bottling are done with a cold ambient temperature to ensure that the aromatics are captured, which is very important for the white wines. All wines are estate bottled, from estate grapes.

FOOD PAIRING

Cioppino

- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 small (or 1/2 large) fennel bulb, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 28-ounce can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand, juices reserved
- 1 1/2 cups dry white wine
- 1 8-ounce bottle clam juice
- 1 pound skinless fillets haddock or cod, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 pound mussels, scrubbed, debearded
- 1 pound large uncooked shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 pound cleaned squid, thawed if frozen, bodies cut into 1/2-inch rings, tentacles left whole

DIRECTIONS:

Toast fennel seeds in a small skillet over medium heat until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Finely grind in a spice mill. Heat oil in a large heavy pot over medium-high heat. Add onion, fennel, garlic, bay, oregano and red pepper. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion and fennel are soft, about 12 minutes. Stir in ground fennel seeds, tomatoes with juices, wine, clam juice, and 1 cup water. Cover, bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring often, about 15 minutes. Stir in fish, mussels and shrimp, and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook for 2 minutes. Add squid, cover and cook until mussels open and seafood is cooked through, about 5 minutes (discard mussels that do not open). Serve with bread.

Italian Club Wine Notes

WINERY NAME: Tratturi

VARIETAL: Primitivo di Salento

VINTAGE: 2013

REGION: Puglia

Tratturi's 2013 Primitivo di Salento is a tank-fermented and aged, dark ruby-colored wine revealing notes of briary, berry fruit, damp earth, roasted herbs, a touch of licorice and subtle barbecue smoke. Well-made with excellent fruit, this beauty can be enjoyed over the next one to two years.

Named after the old shepherding trails in the Puglian Mountains, Tratturi is made in the subzone of Salento in Italy's heel. The 2013 vintage is 100% Primitivo (a relative of American Zinfandel), sourced from vineyards around the town of Salento, which is vinified under temperature-controlled conditions and aged in stainless steel. It has fruit that is lush, rich and of unique character.

FOOD PAIRING

Crostini e Nduja

- 1 baguette sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 2 pounds nduja
- Olive Oil
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange baguette slices on two large rimmed baking sheets; brush both sides of the bread with oil, and season with salt and pepper.

Bake until golden, 15 to 20 minutes, rotating sheets halfway through (if undersides are not browning, turn crostini over once during baking). Let cool on baking sheets. Spread warmed Nduja over crostini, and serve with arugula salad

Italian Club Wine Notes

WINERY NAME: Di Majo Norante

VARIETAL: Sangiovese

VINTAGE: 2013

REGION: Molise

Di Majo Norante does a great job with its 2013 Sangiovese (an IGT Terre degli Osci wine). This expression shows a great sense of balance and harmony with red fruit energy that emerges from the glass. Cherry, dried blackberry and currants are part of the aromatic equation. So are softer aromas of spice, leather and tobacco. That crisp Sangiovese acidity comes through nicely and the wine ends with firm tannins and an elegantly streamlined mouthfeel. – *90 points, Wine Advocate*

The Di Majo Norante winery is north of the Gargano in Molise, on the estate of the Marquis Norante of Santa Cristina. This estate has been dedicated to the cultivation of vines since the 1800s. Alessio Di Majo has hired the renowned oenologist, Riccardo Cotarella, as a consultant in order to ensure consistent, high-quality production for all their wines. The Di Majo family is dedicated to producing quality wine at an outstanding value and practicing environmentally sound agriculture.

FOOD PAIRING

Pizza Margherita

- 1 12-inch round of pizza dough, stretched
- 3 tablespoons tomato sauce
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 ¾ ounces fresh mozzarella
- 4 to 5 basil leaves, roughly torn

DIRECTIONS:

Place a pizza stone or tiles on the middle rack of your oven and turn heat to its highest setting. Let it heat for at least an hour.

Put the sauce in the center of the stretched dough and use the back of a spoon to spread it evenly across the surface, stopping approximately 1/2 inch from the edge.

Drizzle a little olive oil over the pie. Break the cheese into large pieces and place these gently on the sauce. Scatter basil leaves over the top.

Using a pizza peel, pick up the pie and slide it onto the heated stone or tiles in the oven. Bake until the crust is golden brown and the cheese is bubbling, approximately 4 to 8 minutes.

Wine Order Form

Wine Selection	Retail Price	Wine Club Price	Special Price	Bottle Quantity
<u>INTERNATIONAL CLUB</u>				
Mancini Verdicchio Castelli di Jesi Classico 2014	\$13.99	\$10.00	\$9.00	
Tratturi Primitivo di Salento	\$14.99	\$12.00	\$10.00	
Di Majo Norante Sangiovese	\$14.99	\$12.00	\$10.00	
<u>COLLECTORS CLUB</u>				
Sant'Antonio Scaia Bianco 2014	\$16.99	\$14.00	\$12.00	
La Massa Toscana Rosso 2013	\$25.99	\$20.00	\$19.00	
Fattoria La Valentina Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2012	\$16.99	\$14.00	\$13.00	