

Wine & Spirits

22nd
ANNUAL
RESTAURANT
POLL
EXCLUSIVE REPORT

TOP
50
WINES
IN AMERICA'S
RESTAURANTS



Copyright 2011 *Wine & Spirits Magazine*; this article may not be sold, altered in any way, or circulated without this statement.

Wine & Spirits presents the best of more than 9,500 wines tasted annually, along with James Beard Award-winning coverage of top wine and food destinations, perspectives and news.

Subscribe today for access to our online database of reviews at wineandspiritsmagazine.com or call 888-695-4660.

italian wines

Last year, sommeliers noted more requests for wines from the southern reaches of Italy. This year's Poll results show the deal has been sealed. "We've quite a bit of wine from Sicily, both white and red," notes Brad Ritter of *Carmine's on Penn* in Denver. "Not by intention: those are just good values that consumers are liking." Tenuta delle Terre Nere made it into the top ten of the Most Popular Italian Wines, putting Etna officially on the map. Other pro-

"I never thought our guests would want to drink all this crazy Italian stuff."

**—Bobby Stuckey
Frasca Food and Wine,
Boulder, CO**



ducers have had a hand in setting the trend, of course. "Look at someone like *Ciro Biondi*," says Shelley Lindgren of *A16* in San Francisco. "He replanted a run-down family vineyard and is now making exceptional wines."

Sommeliers are also reporting increased interest in Piedmont's wines. "People are drinking a lot more nebbiolo than they used to," says Bobby Stuckey, MS, at *Frasca Food and Wine* in Boulder, Colorado. "There's been a kind of slow build to understanding these

wines. They're learning that they have a different tannic structure from cabernet and a different acid structure from pinot noir."

In San Francisco, *Acquerello's* Gianpaolo Paterlini agrees. "We can make anyone happy with a nebbiolo-based wine. Giuseppe Mascarello's Barolo Monprivato is floral, light, fresh and elegant—the kind of wine people would compare to Burgundy—while others can be bigger and heavier." Perhaps the strongest statement comes from Angelo Falcone at *Il Capriccio* in Waltham, Massachusetts: "We used to have fifty US wines on the list; now we have four. And we have one hundred and six Barolos."

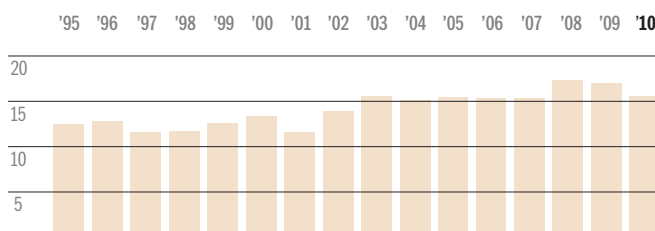
This is the fifth year in a row that Italy has earned the largest import share of respondents' top-ten lists—just over fifteen percent. America's thirst for big, bold wines may account for part of their popularity. As Melissa Monosoff, MS, of *Savona* in Gulph Mills, Pennsylvania, says, "People are stuck on super-Tuscans. I can't buy enough in the \$70 to \$90 range." But others report their guests are open to the breadth of what Italy has to offer. "They're more interested in the indigenous wines from the region than they were four or five years ago," says Stuckey. "Americans are starting to say 'Hey, I understand big, rich chardonnay from Piemonte, but let's try a verdicchio or a lagrein.'" If diversity is the key to success, Italy has it down.

share of italian wine points & average price

by Appellation	% Share of Points			Avg. Price		
	'08	'09	'10	'08	'09	'10
Chianti Classico	12.9%	5.7%	9.0%	\$53.42	\$51.94	\$54.32
Brunello di Montalcino	2.6	1.1	3.9	121.77	144.75	107.14
Pinot Grigio						
Alto Adige	9.1	6.3	6.1	46.78	45.53	46.06
Friuli	3.2	2.3	3.0	37.60	38.42	38.50
Barolo & Barbaresco	2.8	7.2	5.5	109.35	120.77	114.14
Overall Average Price				\$56.63	\$60.72	\$58.11

(Data reflects the fourth quarter of the year indicated.)

italian wine as a % of top-selling wines



most popular italian wines

Rank	Pts.	Winery	Bottling	Price \$
1	71	Santa Margherita Bolzano, Alto Adige	Alto Adige Pinot Grigio	\$48
2	47	Marchesi Antinori Firenze, Tuscany	Villa Antinori Toscana Toscana Tignanello	\$56 \$112
3	32	Tuscan Estates of Ruffino Pontassieve, Tuscany	Chianti Chianti Classico Riserva Ducale Gold	\$36 \$76
4	25	Argiano S. Angelo in Colle, Montalcino	Toscana Non Confunditur	\$53
5	24	Ecco Domani Trento	Pinot Grigio delle Venezie	\$31
6	23	Jermann Farra d'Isonzo/Ruttars, Gorizia	Friuli Pinot Grigio Friuli Vintage Tunina	\$53 \$133
7	18	Luce della Vite Firenze, Tuscany	Toscana Lucente	\$53
8	18	Tenuta delle Terre Nere Sicily	Etna Rosso Etna Rosso Feudo di Mezzo	\$50 \$61
9	15	Castello di Monsanto Firenze, Tuscany	Chianti Classico Riserva	\$53
10	13	Ceretto Alba, Langhe	Langhe Arneis Dolcetto d'Alba	\$34 \$50
11	13	Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona Montalcino	Rosso di Montalcino Rosso di Toscana	\$57 \$54
12	13	Zenato San Benedetto di Lugana, Veneto	Valpolicella Ripasso Pinot Grigio delle Venezie	\$55 \$30
13	12	Marchesi di Barolo Barolo, Piedmont	Barbera d'Alba Ruvei Dolcetto d'Alba	\$42 \$35
14	11	Le Salette Fumane, Veneto	Valpolicella Classico Ripasso	\$37