

featured flight of the week
fresh new italian wines

\$20 per flight

2020 vermentino | *mario bagella* | sardegna, italy

~~\$48~~ \$14 per glass | ~~\$65~~ \$52 per bottle

[20% off this week only, with purchase of flight]



Mario Bagella has emerged as the undisputed champion of the Sorso region on the northern shore of Sardinia. His family has been growing grapes here for more generations than there are records for, and in his mind, these are the best vineyards in Sardinia – the ‘Primo Sorso’. The island is a rugged country and many of its vineyards are surprisingly removed from the sea, but for Mario it’s a short walk to the beach, and the vines bask in a constant gentle salty breeze that tempers the Mediterranean sun.

Vermentino is cherished in this part of the world for offering a reliable dose of thirst-quenching acidity, but for Mario and his 100-year-old vines, the bar is set much higher. The sea salt in the Sardinian air is the first aroma out of the glass, along with lemon curd and kiss melon and white pepper. The wine has incredible textural tension, with an oak-free leesy richness kept aloft by broad spectrum acidity. Orange and white cherry and Italian herb flavors follow before that salty minerality returns on the finish. Creamy pastas and crab dishes would be best, but this is a wine to encourage creativity in the kitchen.

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2023 rosé of nebbiolo | *conterno 'nervi'* | piedmont, italy

~~\$46~~ \$13 per glass | ~~\$58~~ \$46 per bottle

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The biggest news from Piemonte over the past few years has been Roberto Conterno's acquisition of Gattinara's venerable Nervi estate, adding its iconic vineyards to his Francia, Cerretta, and Arione as jewels in Piemonte's greatest crown. Interest in the region — and Nervi in particular — has only ratcheted up and while the Gattinaras garner the headlines here, longtime Nervi devotees know the estate was also renowned for its Rosato — a fragrant blend of Nebbiolo and a local grape called Uva Rara. But Roberto felt that an even more expressive rosé could be made by eliminating the Uva Rara.

Fermented in stainless steel and aged on the lees in tank for four months, the 2023 Rosato builds on a beautiful combination of bright red fruits and florals with an underlying tension and volcanic minerality. Uber-fresh — with a bit of snappy prickle on the tongue in this youthful stage — it unveils white jasmine, green tea, and juicy dark cherry, and is at once a round, rich, and tactile wine without ever relinquishing focus and drive, extending into a polished and lengthy finish.

This is about as serious as rosé gets without ever losing an ounce of delectability and delight. It will do great service alongside a lot of different cuisines and also drink great all by its lonesome. Just like all Roberto's other wines, the demand is bound to outstrip supply by a wide margin....

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2021 frappato | *gebbia* | sicilia, italy

~~\$46~~ \$13 per glass | ~~\$58~~ \$46 per bottle

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Frappato grapes ripen to a shade of purplish-blue so intense they almost glow. That deep color comes through in the wine too, a vivid shade that mirrors the wine's powerful fruit aromas and flavor. While most Frappato grows under the heavy Sicilian sun, the wines made from it are generally light, buoyant, and friendly. Gebbia, based in the Sicilian town of Alcamo, is dedicated to indigenous varieties, and winemaker Vito Lauria works to bring out the best, purest expression of all his wines.

The family estate is farmed organically, and the winemaking is unadorned, with a gentle press, a cool fermentation to preserve freshness, and eight months age in concrete. Thus, Frappato's essential nature shines out of this glass. Aromas of inky black plum, blueberry, fig, violet, and peppercorn. The palate is rich yet appealingly soft and vibrant, bursting with fruit leather notes, orange oil, and tamarind. Tannins make a late appearance on the finish, coloring in around lingering notes of dried fruits. This wine lends itself to fall cuisine in the same way Beaujolais does, powerfully flavored without being overbearing, and a versatile match for turkey or quiche.