

# THE 90+ SOCIETY



BY COLLIN WILLIAMS

## PUTTING AN “EYE” ON ITALIAN:

**W**e have found that within every wine category customers need an entry point. It seems that people need a wine that they feel comfortable purchasing time after time before they branch out into different nuances and sub-categories within that particular region. For instance, people will usually ask for a “Rioja from Spain” twice as much as any other wine from Spain. Ideally, from Australian we see Shiraz, Argentina – Malbec, and for Italy the king is still Pinot Grigio and Chianti.

However, as wine consumers continue to grow more passionate and interested in learning about the wine world they begin to branch out and ask us questions like “I’m used to drinking Pinot Grigio, but want to try something different. What do you recommend?”

Now, I’m not going to begin by telling you I’m an Italian wine expert. Nor am I going to tell you that my favorite wines are Italian. However, what I can relay to you in this edition of The 90+ Society is that Italian wines continue to be one of the leading categories of wines year after year and I’m not just referring to Pinot Grigio.

I will often look at the sales numbers for all of our wine categories in order to see trends or opportunities where we can improve. Italy never ceases to impress me with its sales volume and popularity despite its non-traditional grape varietals and inconspicuous wine regions. Even a wine buyer can feel flustered when it comes to the many distinct details about the wine culture of Italy. However, it is at these times that (like me) I highly encourage you to consult your friendly neighborhood Spec’s wine guru for the answer.

Within our company, most of us turn to our regional Italian expert Joseph Kimble for advice and the next big wine from Italy. A virtual encyclopedia of Italian wine knowledge, Joseph has a tendency to begin talking about a wine only to transverse into a story about a man named Paolo and their many adventures in Tuscany. If after trying some of the following wines you would like to learn more about Italian wines, please reach out to “Big Joe” for what he would recommend to expand upon your Italian wine adventure at [josephkimble@specsonline.com](mailto:josephkimble@specsonline.com)



Please email me at [collinwilliams@specsonline.com](mailto:collinwilliams@specsonline.com) with feedback.

### Querciabella Chianti Classico 2007 - \$27.30

90pts – Wine Spectator

Sweet berry and raspberry aromas follow through to a full body, with soft, silky tannins and a clean, caressing finish. Harmonious, with pretty fruit. Drink now. 17,000 cases made. –JS

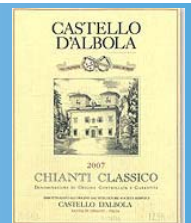


### Castello d’Albola Chianti Classico 2007 - \$15.59

90pts – Wine Spectator

Top 100: 2010, Rank: 47

This is what Chianti should taste like, with plenty of dark cherry and floral aromas and flavors that say Sangiovese. Fresh and fruity. Drink now. 50,000 cases made. –JS



### Marchesi de Frescobaldi Nipozzano Chianti Riserva 2006 - \$22.15

91pts – Wine Spectator

Shows sweet blueberry notes, with mineral and lilac. Full-bodied, with fine tannins and vanilla and bright fruit flavors. Clean and racy. Best after 2010. 130,000 cases made. –JS

