

# AMERICAN WAY

TRENDS FOR THE MODERN TRAVELER

3 BOTTLES



Mother's Day: Send one of these sparkling wines, you are sure to know what you know-what

3 BOTTLES

CA' DEL BOSCO FRANCIACORTA  
ANNAMARIA CLEMENTI (\$71)



Franciacorta as a sparkling wine was created only in the 1960s, but these wines now enjoy full DOCG status, Italy's highest category of quality. The name Franciacorta doesn't exactly set off bells the way a mention of champagne does, but local producers in the region are hoping that in due time Franciacorta will also become a synonym for great sparkling wine in the vocabularies of bubble-loving sophisticates everywhere. This part of Lombardy has a climate that's influenced by its proximity to Lake Iseo, which keeps summer evenings cool and encourages even ripening of the Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, and Pinot Noir that go into these sparklers. Ca' del Bosco makes several different *cuvées* of sparkling wine, but the Annamaria Clementi is the flagship of the line. Like the others, it's made in what the French call the *méthode champenoise*, now known — less Francocentrically — as the traditional method. The wine shows complex floral and fruit flavors with a touch of vanilla and oak.

## FIZZICAL ATTRACTION

The flavor of Italy comes to life in these vivacious wines straight from the land known as the "Eternal Seductress."

Mother's Day is at hand. Champagne brunch with Mom is practically *de rigueur*. But after the champagne overload of the millennium — and remember, we have to do it again this year, when the millennium *really* changes — I thought it might be nice to offer Mom something a little different.

How about some Italian sparklers? The Italians make bubbly, too, but we should clear up a few myths. It's not true, for example, that Leonardo da Vinci invented sparkling wine when he added a teaspoon of baking powder to a bottle of Soave in an early experiment on rocket propulsion. It's also entirely false that Marco Polo brought the idea for bubbly back from China, along with feng shui and takeout boxes.

In fact, the Italians have no better or worse claim than the French to the discovery

of sparkling wine. Despite the common claim that the French monk Dom Pérignon "invented" champagne, the truth is that bubbly probably invented itself at several points in history, when finished wine underwent a natural secondary fermentation in the bottle, trapping tiny bubbles inside. At some point, someone began to observe the process and discovered that these bottles (the ones that didn't explode, anyway) were great with caviar and made any celebration seem a little more festive.

These three Italian bottles are appropriate for anyone's mom. And don't worry about exploding bottles on Mother's Day — we have stronger glass these days. ►

BY ANTHONY DIAS BLUE

Blue is the wine and spirits editor for *Bon Appétit*.