

# CELLAR

A PASSION FOR FINE WINES AND SPIRITS

SPRING 2013

**IN PRAISE  
OF PROSECCO**

**THE GRAPE LIFE**

**MARCO CALLIARI**

**QUEBEC'S  
MOST ITALIAN  
SINGER**

**MARCO DI VAIO**  
IMPACT STAR

**QUEBEC TERROIR**  
HIGH-END  
MAPLE SYRUP

MARCO CALLIARI



**A TASTER'S  
TOUR OF ITALY**

**NEW ARRIVALS: 40 WINES IN STORES MARCH 7 AND 21**



GRANDI MARCHI

# PREMIUM-BRAND ITALY

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FOODS, WINES AND CULINARY CUSTOMS TYPICAL TO EACH OF THE 12 REGIONS REPRESENTED BY MEMBER PRODUCERS OF GRANDI MARCHI, THE ORGANIZATION DEVOTED TO PROMOTING ITALY'S LEADING WINE BRANDS.

REPORTER: JOSÉE LARIVÉE ■ WINE SECTIONS: PATRICK DÉSY, GUY SABOURIN





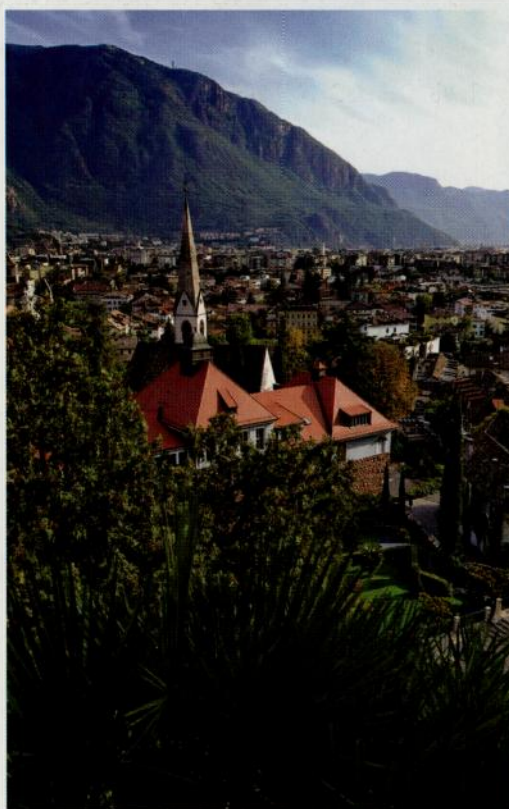
## ITALIAN-QUÉBÉCOIS FUSION

The Montreal-born Calliari is grateful for this rich heritage. His contribution to the wine-food-friends trio was music. “When the house was full, my mother would say: Marco, put on some music.” He would put on anything from *Torna A Surriento* by Pavarotti to *Surrender* by Elvis Presley. But his path to becoming a professional musician wasn’t easy. “I’m a Bill 101 kid,” he observes. “I have Italian roots but in many ways I’m more Québécois than many Québécois. My father often said to me, ‘Marco! *Parlami in italiano!*’ It’s a real dilemma for immigrant parents, wanting their kids to fit in but also wanting to preserve their culture. In my case, I spoke the language my friends spoke. And of course, my father wanted me to get a good education. Music wasn’t a serious thing. Now, after my shows, everyone’s invited to my parents’ place.

“Wine for us is a great unifier. We make it, we talk about it and we drink it. Fred Péroquin, one of my accordion players, makes wine with my family. I envy him because in the process he gets to spend quality time with my father. But you have to be available, constant, present – making wine is a religion – and I’m always on tour. Music is my religion.”

We’ve been talking for a long time. The Chardonnay was superb with our meal of salad, followed by the cheese tray with the Saskatchewan honey. But now, rather than pouring more of the Chardonnay,

Calliari eyes the other bottle I brought, a red from Umani Ronchi, a Cúmaro 2008. I remark that it’s a shame we’ve finished eating. The three-legged cat meows. Calliari puts on *Al Faro Est*, his most recent album, and uncorks the wine. It’s the perfect pairing. ■



The town of Bolzano in northeastern Italy’s Trentino-Alto Adige region near the Austrian border. Marco Calliari’s father is from this picturesque area, as is the Alois Lageder Chardonnay 2011 that Calliari and our reporter shared.

## MUSICAL INFLUENCES

He may be a former heavy-metal star, but Marco Calliari confesses to having initially been inspired by classical music and opera. “That was all my parents listened to at home.” At 20, exploring Italy, he discovered choral singing, a tradition in the north, and was so captivated that upon his return to Montreal he rushed to a record store to buy *Le più belle canzoni italiane*. The Neapolitan influence can be heard in his second album, *Mia Dolce Vita*. His next album, on the other hand, will have a Québécois accent: *Mi ricordo* (I remember), out this spring, will feature his versions – in Italian – of hit songs by the likes of Robert Charlebois, Claude Léveillée, Dédé Fortin and Diane Dufresne. “I’d like to unite the two cultures in one album,” he says. Naturally you’ll want to sip a glass of wine as you listen to it...



## A DIVERSIFIED PORTFOLIO

Grandi Marchi (literally, Premium Brands) was founded in 1994 to promote Italy's finest wine brands. Currently 19 producers are members: **Antinori** (Tuscany), **Argiolas** (Sardinia), **Biondi Santi** (Tuscany), **Ca'del Bosco** (Lombardy), **Pio Cesare** (Piedmont), **Michele Chiarlo** (Piedmont), **Donnafugata** (Sicily), **Ambrogio E Giovanni Folonari** (Tuscany), **Gaja** (Piedmont), **Jermann** (Friuli-Venezia Giulia), **Alois Lageder** (Trentino-Alto Adige), **Lungarotti** (Umbria), **Carpenè Malvolti** (Veneto), **Masi** (Veneto), **Mastroberardino** (Campania), **Rivera** (Apulia), **Umani Ronchi** (Marches), **Sassicaia** (Tuscany) and **Tasca d'Almerita** (Sicily).

Italian wines have long accounted for about 25 percent of wine sales in Quebec – but most of us stick with the tried and true, such as Tuscany's famed Chiantis.

Yet the great hallmark of Italian wines lies in their very diversity, coming as they do in a palette of aromas and flavours found almost nowhere else. Unlike grapes that are native to France, for example, indigenous Italian grapes do not adapt well to other terroirs.

As for Italian cuisine, it's justly renowned for its ultra-fresh ingredients and irresistible flavours.

And as it happens, the Grandi Marchi Istituto del Vino Italiano di Qualità is hosting a major tasting in Quebec this spring.

So for all these delicious reasons, we're taking you on a gourmet tour of Italy in this issue.

As it would take an entire volume to do real justice to Italy's bountiful flavours, we're focusing on the 12 regions represented by the Istituto's membership. We cover their classic dishes and wines, providing anecdotes and recipe ideas along the way. At a time when culinary identities are to some extent blurring, Italy's seem stronger than ever. Certain Italian products, dishes and wines remain indelibly associated with their places of origin.

The 12 regions are scattered around the country but you'll find they have in common authentic and delightful food and wines.

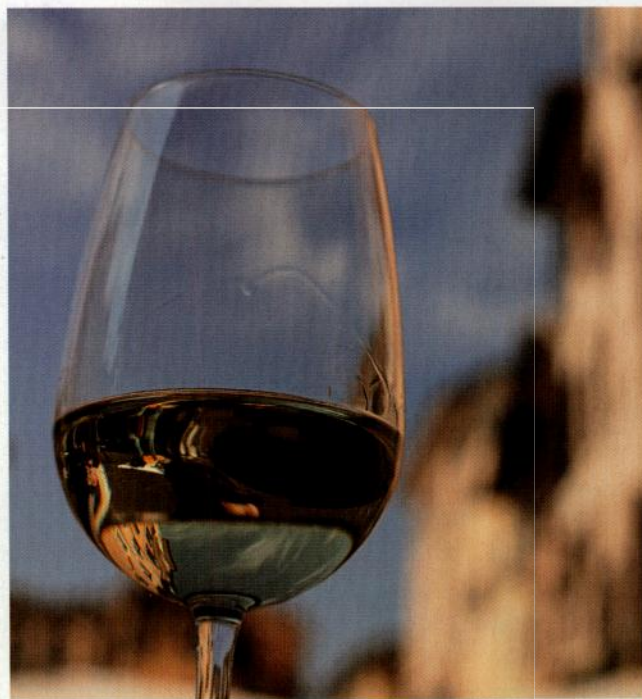
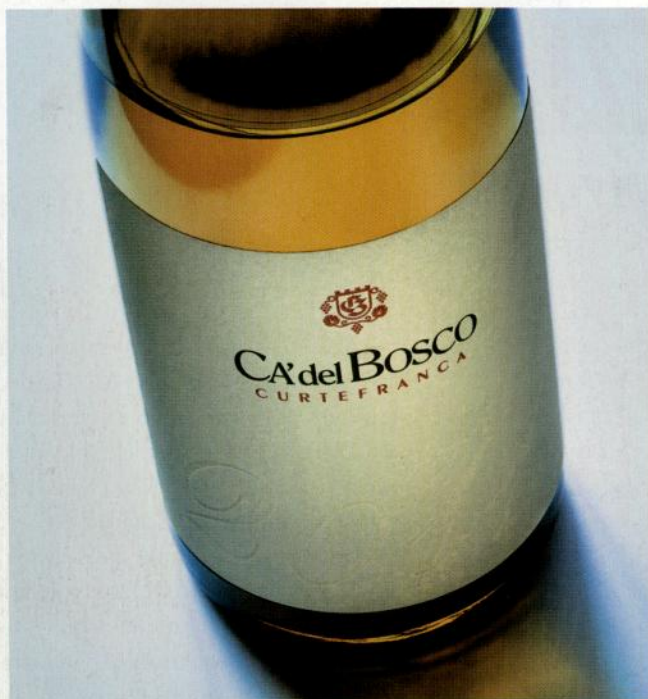
*Buon appetito!*





## THE WINE

SEE NEW ARRIVALS, PAGE 82.



### CURTEFRANCA 2011, CA'DEL BOSCO

"Ca'del Bosco is one of the leading Italian producers of the modern era," declares Nicolas Belfrage, a British Master of Wine and world authority on Italian wines. Ca'del Bosco is located in Italy's most populous region, Lombardy, whose capital is Milan, famed for fashion, Ferraris and, when it comes to wine, drinking it rather than producing it. Until, that is, Annamaria Clementi founded Ca'del Bosco in the mid-1960s.

Now run by Clementi's son Maurizio Zanella, Ca'del Bosco is particularly admired for its sparkling wines made by the so-called traditional method. "Cuvée Annamaria Clementi has among

the most elegant bubbles on the planet," says Belfrage of one of Ca'del Bosco's brut sparklers. "It can easily eclipse the best champagnes."

Despite Lombardy's dense population, some areas of the region are highly favourable for growing vines. The alpine climate is tempered by lakes – Garda, Iseo, Como and Maggiore – in the north and the Apennines in the south. The Terre di Franciacorta appellation applies to red table wines made from Cabernet Sauvignon, Barbera and Nebbiolo, and whites made from Pinot Bianco and Chardonnay. "Vinification of Ca'del Bosco Chardonnays, including its Curtefranca 2011, is in the Burgundy

style and is among the best winemaking processes in Italy," says Belfrage, who's had a passion for Italy for nearly 40 years. "Their methods are as meticulous as those used for the finest Burgundies."

#### COMPLEX CHARDONNAY

The Curtefranca Chardonnay is a complex wine, so Belfrage recommends pairing it with fish or white meat accompanied by a creamy but simple sauce. This would give the wine space to express itself. The best vintages can keep for three to seven years. When they're at a peak, Belfrage suggests, serve them with panettone, the bread-like cake from Milan, for a daring pairing. – P.D.



# FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

## THE COMFORT ZONE

**M**ontreal chef and TV cook Stefano Faita says that one of his grandmothers was from southern Italy, where the staples are olive oil, sun-dried tomatoes and sardines, and his other grandmother was from northern Italy, where butter, pancetta and an unctuous tomato cream are widely used. “Guess which grandmother was the most affectionate?” he asks with a laugh, drawing a direct connection between love and comfort food. Friuli-Venezia Giulia is in northeastern

Italy. Its cuisine (and that of the nearby region of Trentino-Alto Adige) reflects its Austro-Hungarian and Balkan heritage. Ingredients such as nutmeg, saffron and cinnamon perfume some dishes with a Middle Eastern air. Pasta is popular in northern Italy, but risotto, beans and polenta are common, more so than in the south.

Parma ham, from the city of the same name in the Emilia-Romagna region, is the most famous Italian prosciutto, but Friuli-Venezia Giulia also makes an excellent prosciutto, San Daniele,

familiar the world over. In Canada in the 1970s, Ontario firm Santa Maria Foods registered the San Daniele brand name as its own. The San Daniele sold in supermarkets in Quebec is a Santa Maria product produced in Canada from Canadian hogs; for the real deal, the *regionale* imported from Italy, you have to go to specialty boutiques.

Back in Italy, the town of San Daniele del Friuli has an annual festival called *Aria di Festa* during which the public can visit *prosciuttifici* – where the hams are cured – and of course sample the prosciutto. It’s said that the unique flavour of San Daniele ham comes from the pigs themselves, who are reared in a demarcated zone where the conditions – salt air, sufficient humidity, mountain air from the Alps – are ideal for the animals.

Farther inland, meat and stronger flavours predominate. Goose, for example, is often served instead of pork. Local specialties include *salame d’oca* (goose salami), Istrian lamb (reared free-range on lands shared by Italy, Croatia and Slovenia), wild boar with polenta, venison fricassee, tagliatelle with hare sauce – in short, very different flavours from those found in Sardinia or Sicily.

### STREET SCENE

In Udine, the historic former capital of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the street food includes *jota*, a Slovenian meal-in-a-bowl of barley, beans and sauerkraut. Inexpensive and reliable, this hearty soup is somewhat reminiscent of cassoulet, and variations on it are found throughout the region. Street stalls also sell *brovada*, pickled turnips macerated in cheap wine or pressed grapes, a by-product of winemaking in wooden barrels. The pickled turnips are simply sautéed in lard before eating.

Very good goulashes are served up in the area. Game from the plains and mountains are accompanied by *frica*, a peasant dish made with cheese rinds or the local cheese Montasio mixed with vegetables like potatoes or onions.



On Assignment (continued)

ALSO SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 24.

# GRANDI MARCHI

## Franciacorta's Still Version

Curtefranca appellation wines are the still-wine equivalents of Franciacorta sparkling wines, and produced in the same zone. This 2011 from the respected Ca'del Bosco is a blend of Chardonnay (80%) and Pinot Blanc (20%) and has had no contact with wood, resulting in a nicely textured mouthfeel with notes of Asian pear, fresh peach and honey. Ready to drink now with an Asian-accented salad.




ITALY   
 Curtefranca 2011,  
 Ca'del Bosco  
 \$27.65, 11155577, 750 mL, 12.5% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 750

## Alluring Alto Adige

Alois Lageder enjoys an excellent reputation, not just for the great quality of its wines but also for its involvement in sustainable development, biodynamic agriculture and the like. The nose on this Sauvignon Blanc is fine and elegant, with aromatic notes of citrus and white pepper. Several months of aging on lees have produced a pleasing texture, the perfect counterpoint to lime *ceviche* or spring rolls.




ITALY   
 Sauvignon Blanc 2011,  
 Alto Adige DOC, Alois Lageder  
 \$22.15, 11896551, 750 mL, 13% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 1200

## Festive Fizz

Carpenè Malvolti has figured prominently in the history of the Venetian region, where sparkling wines are front and centre. Drawn from the Cartizze cru and composed entirely of Glera (better known as Prosecco), this festive sparkler has charming aromas of pear, papaya and apple alongside nuances of sweet spices. A richly textured treat that's perfect for kicking off a get-together with some friends.




ITALY   
 Cartizze, Valdobbiadene Superiore  
 di Cartizze DOCG,  
 Carpenè Malvolti Spumante  
 \$29.25, 11896341, 750 mL, 11% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 750

## Northern Charmer

Arneis, a white grape native to northern Italy's Piedmont region, is nicknamed Little Rascal because it's difficult to grow – but in this Pio Cesare wine, it's easy to enjoy. The charming nose releases aromas of mousse cake and praline, while the pleasant, accessible palate has a delicate finish of orange peel. Sip as an aperitif or with simple shellfish dishes.



ITALY   
 Arneis 2011, Langhe DOC, Pio Cesare  
 \$22.85, 11890213, 750 mL, 13% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 1800



ALSO SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 24.

### Wholly Sardinian

Argiolas's mission is to produce wines made entirely from grapes with a long history in Sardinia. Iselis, for instance, is a blend of Monica, Carignan and Bovale Sardo (known as Bobal in Spain). The nose evokes dill, bell pepper and spices, while the intriguing flavour palette makes you want to lay in a supply.



ITALY  2015  
**Iselis 2010, Isola dei Nuraghi IGT, Argiolas**  
 \$24.85, 11896560, 750 mL, 14.5% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 900

### Masi Treat

Founded in the late 18th century, Masi is currently overseen by Sandro Boscaini, who has made the Masi name famous in recent decades. The proximity of Lake Garda provides favourable growing conditions for the Corvina (70%), Rondinella (15%), Oseleta (10%) and Molinara (5%) in Riserva di Costasera, a superior cuvée that underwent 120 days of *passerillage* (partial drying of the grapes to concentrate the flavours) followed by 38 months of aging.

DC ★★★



ITALY  2015-2025  
**Riserva di Costasera 2007, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico DOC, Masi Agricola**  
 \$65.00, 11873165, 750 mL, 15.5% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 750

### Palatable Primitivo

In the local dialect in Apulia, *triusco* is the term for a full-bodied red wine, and this Primitivo by Rivera lives up to the designation. Sourced from Manduria and Gioia del Colle, the region's two appellations devoted to Primitivo, it features balsamic, spice and ripe fruit notes on the nose. The rustic but flavourful palate is nicely balanced and has a chocolatey finish. Solid value for the money, Triusco will go well with spice-crusted grilled meat.

GR  






ITALY  
**Triusco Primitivo 2009, Puglia IGT, Azienda Vinicola Rivera**  
 \$22.20, 11889546, 750 mL, 14% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 1200



### Rustic Power

Cantine Lungarotti, founded by Giorgio Lungarotti, is a benchmark in Umbria. This reserve cuvée, a blend of Sangiovese (70%) and Canaiolo (30%), has such pronounced wood notes it makes you think of dark rum. A potent affair, and rustic in the best sense of that term, the palate is tannic and communicates animal, spice and roasted flavours. Definitely a wine worth revisiting in a few years!

GR    JR 16.5+ | WA 92

ITALY  2017-2020  
**Vigna Monticchio 2006, Torgiano Rosso Riserva DOCG, Lungarotti**  
 \$39.75, 10295789, 750 mL, 14% ABV  
 NUMBER OF BOTTLES: 750

