



**November – December 2007**

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## VENI, VIDI, VICI (ET VINI)! THE ITALIANS ARE COMING!

*Si, amico mio*, the Italians are coming! But have no fear, for they come in peace, bearing wonderful wines... Two winemakers are invading our offices this week: **Vittore Alessandria** of the Piedmont-based **Fratelli Alessandria** will be pouring his exquisite Barolos and the unique Verduno Pelaverga. These killer-wines are the latest edition to our portfolio of private imports. **Gianluca Bisol** of **Bisol** is also visiting our humble city, and he'll be cracking open his frothy "Crede" a single-vineyard Prosecco di Valdobbiadene, slated for the shelves of the SAQ this winter.

Speaking of state-run monopolies, our first Italian wine at the SAQ hits the shelves later this month, a delicious sangiovese-di-romagna, courtesy of **Azienda Agricola San Valentino**. More on that below.

We are also excited about the arrival later this month of the whites of **Borgo San Daniele**, a winery located in the hills of Friuli. Winemaker **Mauro Mauri** sends us his elegant Pinot Grigio and Tocai Friulano. So, dear readers, extend a warm welcome to our Italian friends and their vino...

### FRIULI BORGO SAN DANIELE

Meeting Mauro Mauri at his winery in Cormóns, Friuli was one of the highlights of our trip to Italy last year. His hospitality, enthusiasm and passion for winemaking was truly inspiring. With vineyards on the border of the DOC zones of Collio and Isonzo, Mauro takes pride in the exceptional terroir he works with: vines planted on a gnarly, marl soil, thriving on gentles slopes under temperamental skies shredded by winds from the east. Friuli is synonymous with Pinot Grigio and Tocai Friulano (*the* native grape of Friuli, not to be mistaken with the Hungarian Tokaj or Alsatian Tokay), and Borgo San Daniele is considered by its peers as a leader in the new generation of wine-making in this region with these varietals.



*Do not* confuse their wines with the morass of insipid whites that have flooded the market over the last few years due to a bizarre, new-found infatuation for Pinot Grigio (the contemporary equivalent of the boring, ubiquitous chardonnay wave that hit us in the 90s). No, *signori*, these are wine that epitomize elegance and grace. Wines that adhere to the philosophy of Slow Food, borne of a steady, dedicated hand. This boutique winery works with small yields from densely-planted vineyards with grass cover, alive with the buzzing of bees of friendly insects. They aim to make wines that are complex, with depth, structure and finesse.



Easier said than done. To do this, healthy, ripe grapes are hand harvested. Maceration on the skins is followed by malolactic fermentation, long periods on the lees, and ageing in various vats and barrels is concluded with the bottling of unfiltered wine. The final product is always pure pleasure...



<i>PINOT GRIGIO 2005</i> .....	<b>\$33.75/bottle</b>
<i>TOCAI FRIULANO 2005</i> .....	<b>\$33.75/bottle</b>

CASES OF 6

**PRIVATE IMPORT**

# PIEMONTE

## FRATELLI ALESSANDRIA

Piemonte produces some of the noblest wines in the world, and Fratelli Alessandria is a perfect example of this heritage. The vineyards were founded at the beginning of the 18th century and are a proud family-run operation. The estate stretches over twelve hectares, including the best crus in Verduno and Monforte. Most of these yield Nebbiolo grapes, but the family also concentrates on all local grape varieties such as Dolcetto, Barbera and the rare Pelaverga, which is to be found only near the town of Verduno.

Today, the owner Gian Battista together with his wife Flavia, brother Alessandro and his son Vittore proudly carry on their ancestor's tradition and passion for wine production. An ardent follower of the Slow Food movement in Italy, the young Vittore strives to craft wines that reflect time and place, with an eye for wines that are truly enjoyable on the table with soul food. The family is also passionate about art, and create gorgeous labels that add an air of down-to-earth sophistication to their bottles, a reflection of their philosophy that wine is not just a beverage, but a way of life...

### VERDUNO 06

Some of you may have already tried this wine, but if you haven't, don't miss out.

Made with the rare grape Pelaverga in the obscure appellation of Verduno, this delicious dry red wine is a great example of how Fratelli Alessandria strives to express the unique terroir of their beloved Piemonte. Manually harvested from a vineyard where the vines dig deep into the limestone soil, the grapes are fermented and aged in stainless-steel tanks to produce a fresh, easy-going wine. Floral notes along with raspberries and spice on the nose with a crisp acidity make this wine a true gem. Made in small quantities, try your best to get your hands on this gem that will surely impress your friends who are visiting from Italy or Brooklyn. You could serve it with pizza to make the experience "authentic" for them. Better yet, try to get a snobby sommelier to guess what the wine is in a blind tasting.



**\$24.55 /BOTTLE**

**CASES OF 6**

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## BAROLO 02

A tough year in northern Italy, with rains that diluted many a good grape. However, Fratelli Alessandria refused to compromise the quality of their wines. So, like any good and conscientious winemaker would do in order to keep the integrity of their offerings, the family decided to de-class many of their crus in order to use the best grapes available to make this "generic" Barolo. The result is an outstanding, ready-to-drink wine at a very reasonable price. Showing all the aromatic complexity of a typical Alessandria Barolo, the wine has



smooth tannins and impeccable structure, making it perfect for a classy dinner on a Sunday night. This begs for hare braised in red wine with a hint of cinnamon and cloves...

\$49.75 /BOTTLE

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## BAROLO GRAMOLERE 01

A classic. Big structure and plenty of character are the features of this Barolo from Monforte. The 2001 Barolo opens with a pretty nose of crushed flowers, truffles, spices and toasted oak. It is soft and generous on the palate, with notes of dark cherry fruit, licorice and tar, offering excellent length. Try it with venison chops served with a red-fruit chutney. *Mama mia....*

62.00 /BOTTLE

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## ON THE SAQ SHELVES...

### AZIENDA AGRICOLA SAN VALENTINO SCABI 05

This one is a real winner. In fact, it won for three years in a row the prestigious Gambero Rosso (Italy's most respected wine guide) award for **best quality-price**. Made with 100% Sangiovese, this wine heralds from the apparent birth-place of this noble variety. Ruby-red, with aromas of red berries and sweet vanilla, the wine is fresh, full-bodied and a real treat with lasagna Bolognese (or its trashy sibling, spaghetti and meatballs). And if for any reason you can't find it at your local SAQ, demand it be stocked, or else!

\$18.60 /BOTTLE

SAQ — 10780477