



**Tasting Notes**  
**February 2017 Pick-up**

- **NV Merotto Grani Rosa di Nero Spumante, Veneto** - Who doesn't love a pretty pink dry sparkling wine? This one is unusual in that it's made from Pinot Noir grapes rather than the glera grape traditionally used in the Veneto region's famous Prosecco. Small, persistent bubbles dance on your tongue as you enjoy flavors of fresh red berries with a hint of savoriness. Pairs nicely with buttery seafood dishes. The bottle is unusual and elegant too!  
Reg retail: \$16 Smart price: \$14
- **2015 Di Lenardo TOH! Friulano, Friuli** - "Toh" is a colloquial Italian exclamation meaning something like "Aha!" or "Look at this!" I definitely think you should take a look at this delicious and unusual white wine. This 100% Friulano exhibits the characteristic aromas and flavors of citrus and bitter almond with some minerality. It is a gorgeous, almost greenish-yellow color and offers a round, rich, unctuous mouth-feel.  
Reg retail: \$13 Smart price: \$11
- **2015 Badia a Coltibuono Chianti "Cetamura", Toscana** - Cetamura is the name of an ancient hilltop located in the heart of the Chianti region of Tuscany. This medium-bodied, silky Chianti features bright red fruit, notes of cinnamon, clove and chocolate, and a fresh, well-balanced acidity. This wine is an excellent value that is easy to pair with food.  
Reg retail: \$13 Smart price: \$11
- **2014 Aia Vecchia Toscana Lagone, Toscana** - A "Super Tuscan" is a category of red wines produced in the Chianti region of Tuscany, but which do not fall under the DOC regulations for the region. Often, as is the case with this wine, they are based on the typical Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. The Lagone is a fruit-forward blend featuring currants and dark cherry along with chocolate, spice and leather.  
Reg retail: \$18 Smart price: \$16
- **2013 Firriato Nero d'Avola "Chiamonte", Sicilia** - Have you heard of Nero d'Avola? It is probably the most important red wine grape grown in Sicily. It produces wines which are often compared to Shiraz. This vintage displays an intense ruby-red color, gorgeous aromas of plums and berries, and hints of black pepper and licorice. A velvety wine with great structure.  
Reg retail: \$17 Smart price: \$14
- **2013 Terredora di Paolo Aglianico, Campania** - Aglianico is another grape you may not have tried before. It was brought to Southern Italy from Greece in ancient times. Aglianico typically is known for rich, concentrated fruit flavors and higher than average tannins, especially when young. The Terredora exhibits hints of spice and leather, and finishes with good tannins and a surprising burst of strawberry. Reg retail: \$18 Smart price: \$16

## **Suggested Food Pairings**

#1 - Get inspired by all the romance this week and pair your Merotto Grani Rosa di Nero with a decadent seafood dish. The crispness and bubbles in the wine will contrast beautifully with the rich, buttery dish. There is a recipe for sea scallops by the always-wonderful Daniel Boulud that looks particularly delicious to me! Search online for “sea scallops with peas carrots bacon” and it should be the first result.

#2 - Classic pairings are classic for a good reason! The classic pairing for white wines from Friuli is the region’s Prosciutto San Daniele. This particular Prosciutto may be difficult to find here – it’s not imported as much as its relative, Prosciutto di Parma. No need to get too fussy – any lovely, salty cured ham will pair very nicely with a glass of the Toh! Friulano. Make yourself up a little antipasti platter and enjoy!

#3 & #6 - Both the Chianti and the Aglianico are wonderful choices for all your red-sauce Italian dishes. Grab a pizza, or cook up some pasta with marinara sauce, open up one of these, and enjoy!

#4 - The full, rich flavors of Super Tuscans pair perfectly with beef. Think of the Lagone exactly the same way you would think of a nice red blend from Bordeaux. At this time of year, braises feel like the perfect choice to me. Try some rich, tender slow-braised short ribs or maybe even a classic boeuf bourguignon stew.

#5 - I always like to do a cheese pairing with at least one of the wines in your pickup. This quarter, the Firriato Nero d’Avola is a great choice. Look for hard, nutty cheeses like good parmesan or aged Gouda. If you’re not into cheese (weird!) I’d try the Nero d’Avola with roasted lamb or a pasta dish with eggplant.