

**Tasting Notes**  
**Feb 2019 Pick-up**  
**Wines of Northern Italy**



Welcome to your February 2019 Smart Wine Club pickup. The theme this quarter is “Wines of Northern Italy”. I’ve tried to specifically include a number of grape varieties which I’ve rarely (or never!) seen or tried.

I will fully admit that I know very little about Italian wines. When I drink them, I often love them, but somehow I’ve never been able to keep all the information about unique Italian varieties in my mind the way I do with the French wines. If you’re the same way, I hope you’ll enjoy trying something fun and different and learning something new!

When I was putting together this group, I was looking for bold white wines and softer red wines. For me, these are great picks for this time of year. We’re ready for spring and lighter wines, but it’s still a little too cold outside to go full-rosé, if you know what I mean. So, these wines are right in the middle – wines that are getting a little fresher and lighter, but not completely summery quite yet.

Wines from Northern Italy are a great choice for this, as the whites tend to be bold and aromatic, yet are still...white. Likewise, many of the reds from this region are more medium-bodied than the more well-known big, bold reds I associate with more southern parts of Italy.

Look forward to an invitation in late spring for another tasting event. I hope to see you all there, and please bring friends and introduce them to your club!

Don’t forget, you can always return your wine club red bags to the store when you come in to pickup. We are happy to re-use them and reduce waste!

- **2017 Ronco Blanchis Collio Friulano, Friuli** – This wine is made from 100% Friulano grapes, the native grape of the Friuli region. It’s aged in stainless steel only and is a light golden yellow color. On the nose you’ll enjoy floral aromas of jasmine, rose and peach. The taste is complex and aromatic, with a strong personality and a long finish.  
Reg retail: \$19 Smart price: \$17

Pairing: The classic pairing in the region is with a nutty prosciutto. Also try it with roast chicken, spicy foods, and seafood. It is a very versatile wine.

- **2016 Nardello Soave Classico “Meradies”, Veneto** – The Nardello family can trace their grape-growing in the Soave region to the mid-1500’s. The Garganega grape that creates Soave grows very well on the hilly volcanic soil where they have been growing grapes for all those years. The wine has beautiful fruit-forward aromas and impressive structure. Reg retail: \$13 Smart price: \$11

Pairing: Wonderful with a rich pork roast or sautéed duck breast.

- **2017 Colterenzio Pinot Bianco “Cora”, Trentino/Alto Adige** – The vineyards that grow these grapes are at an unusually high altitude in the Alto Adige, creating a very distinctive Pinot Bianco. The area had a cool microclimate and unusually chalky soil. The nose is full of fresh apples and pears, with a crisp, well-rounded palate. This vintage was rated 92 points by famed wine critic James Suckling. Reg retail: \$17 Smart price: \$15

Pairing: This wine is so fresh and crisp – try it with something nice and light, like a grilled chicken or fish with a dollop of herb butter.

- **2017 Elena Walch Schiava, Trentino/Alto Adige** – This red is lighter in color but with very complex aromas. It has medium acidity and lower tannins, making it great for a variety of dishes. Hints of cherry and almond, with a pleasant amount of fruitiness. The winemaker suggests trying it very lightly chilled. Reg retail: \$18 Smart price: \$16

Pairing: Perfect for antipasti or pasta dishes with tomato or olive-oil based sauces.

- **2017 Colterenzio Lagrein “Classic”, Trentino/Alto Adige** – Lagrein is a little-known and character-packed variety native to the Alto Adige. The wine is dark garnet in color with aromas of blackberry, chocolate and violet. You’ll enjoy spicy notes and velvety tannins. This is our second bottle from Colterenzio, one of the newest wine producers in the region. They are a wine cooperative of over 300 member-winegrower families working together and focusing on sustainability and permaculture in winemaking. Colterenzio is making a name for itself as a producer of modern, expressive, quality wines from the region. Reg retail: \$19 Smart price: \$17

Pairing: Making a final comforting braise or stew before spring comes? Consider this bottle, which will pair nicely with pork, lamb, or even chicken thighs braised in a rich, flavorful sauce.

- **2016 Case Paolin Cabernet, Veneto** – An undeniably Italian, lighter version of typically French varietals, a blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Cabernet Franc. The wine is intensely ruby red in color and full of raspberry flavors with hints of grassiness and spice. The flavors are full and soft. This wine is extremely food-friendly. Reg retail: \$16 Smart price: \$14

Pairing: I’d try this one with a medium-aged cheese such as a gruyere or aged gouda. Would be great with any kind of roasted or grilled mushroom dish as well.