

italian wines

"My heart is in Italy," says Jay Perrin of *Campanile* in Los Angeles.

"There's so much good wine there right now."

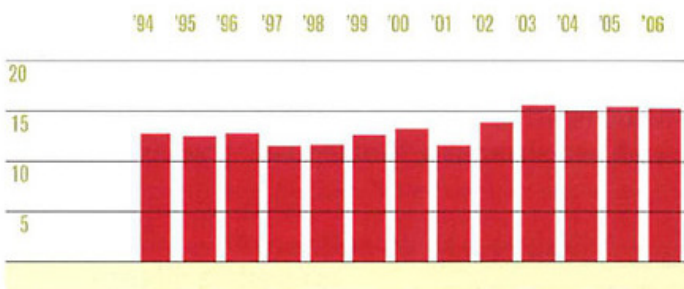
And it seems that more and more Italian wines are finding their way into the American market. As Perrin jokes presidentially, "there's been nuclear proliferation." Whether or not it's a case of market saturation, Italy rose to 15.2 percent of the most popular wines this year, having now surpassed France three out of the last four years.

Wines from central and northern Italy dominate this year's list. Nelson Daquip at Seattle's *Canlis* reports that Barolo does well because the wines are "ethereal, with such a tremendous amount of structure. The flavors are a true expression of where they're from, and they seem to capture the region's soul. We also sell a lot of Brunello di Montalcino," he continues, "especially now that we're serving hearty rich winter food. People are looking for something that will stick to their ribs." At *Quince* in San Francisco, Christie Duffault sees diners moving in the opposite direction. "Northern Italian whites really do well," she says. "The modern styles, crisp, clean, dry wines from Piedmont, Friuli, Alto Adige, go great with our food."

Indeed, part of the reason for Italy's strong showing is that Italian wines, whether from the north or south, are seen as food friendly by sommeliers and diners alike, with an emphasis on the friendly part. "I think there's a certain personality and energy to Italian wine, a sense of hospitality and warmth that helps people to identify with it," says Justin Hall at *Rose Pistola* in San Francisco.



italian wines as a % of top-selling wines



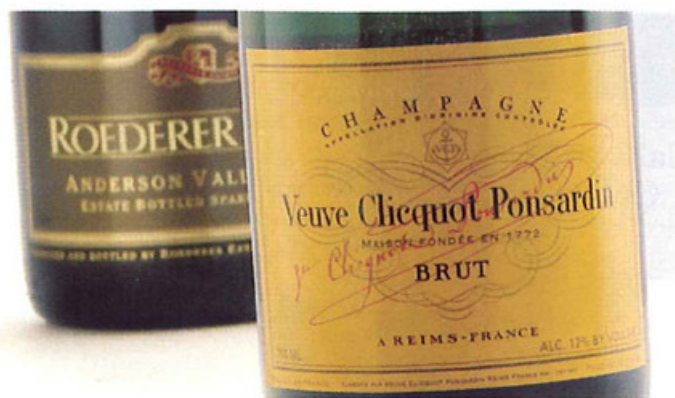
share of italian wine points & average price

by Appellation	% Share of Points			Avg. Price		
	'04	'05	'06	'04	'05	'06
Chianti Classico	11.5%	11.5%	12.5%	\$53.31	\$46.04	\$56.71
Brunello	3.6	5.6	3.4	122.44	111.19	107.66
Pinot Grigio						
Alto Adige	9.7	8.5	10.3	38.80	40.08	41.31
Friuli	7.2	7.2	4.8	37.00	35.60	41.90
Barolo & Barbaresco	6.5	3.4	5.4	105.40	100.06	97.58
Overall Average Price				\$51.80	\$55.76	\$54.97

(Data reflects the fourth quarter of the year indicated.)

MOST POPULAR ITALIAN WINES

Rank	Pts.	Winery	Bottling	Price \$
1	147	Santa Margherita Bolzano, Alto Adige	Alto Adige Pinot Grigio	\$46
2	123	Tuscan Estates of Ruffino Pontassieve, Tuscany	Chianti Classico Riserva Ducale Riserva Ducale Gold	\$53 \$87
3	107	Marchesi Antinori Firenze, Tuscany	Tuscany Tignanello Chianti Classico Pèppoli	\$135 \$48
4	58	Castello Banfi Montalcino, Siena	Brunello di Montalcino Pinot Grigio San Angelo	\$113 \$34
5	54	Aleis Lageder Magre, Alto Adige	Alto Adige Pinot Grigio Alto Adige Pinot Blanc	\$30 \$30
6	42	Ecco Domani Veneto	delle Venezie Pinot Grigio delle Venezie Merlot	\$37 \$32
7	39	Livio Felluga Brazzano di Cormons, Gorizia	Collio Pinot Grigio	\$58
8	35	Frescobaldi Firenze, Toscana	Chianti Rufina Riserva Nipozzano Pomino Rosso	\$41 \$50
9	31	Bollini Trento, Trentino	Trentino Pinot Grigio	\$34
10	31	Monsanto Barberino Val d'Elsa, Firenze	Chianti Classico Riserva Riserva Il Poggio	\$52 \$175
11	26	Avignonesi Montepulciano, Tuscany	Vino Nobile di Montepulciano	\$43
12	25	Ca' Montini Trentino	Trentino Pinot Grigio	\$34
13	25	Tommasi Pedemonte di Valpolicella, Verona	Amarone della Valpolicella Alto Adige Pinot Grigio Le Rosse	\$111 \$34
14	23	La Spinetta Castagnole Lanze, Piedmont	Barbera d'Asti Cà di Pian	\$50
15	23	Pio Cesare Alba, Piedmont	Barolo	\$81
16	23	Zenato Peschiera del Garda, Verona	Veneto Pinot Grigio Valpolicella Ripasso	\$24 \$48
17	22	Badia a Coltibuono Coltibuono, Siena	Chianti Cetamura Chianti Classico	\$23 \$39
18	22	Masi Gargagnano di Valpolicella, Verona	Amarone della Valpolicella Valpolicella Ripasso	\$80 \$38
19	21	Carpineto Greve in Chianti, Firenze	Tuscany Farnito Chianti Classico Riserva	\$70 \$50
20	21	Giuseppe Quintarelli Negar di Valpolicella, Verona	Valpolicella Primo Fiore Rosso Verona Ca' del Merlo	\$68 \$140
21	21	Jermann Farra di Isonzo, Friuli	Friuli Pinot Grigio Collio Chardonnay	\$48 \$59
22	20	Fattoria La Valentina Pescara, Abruzzo	Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Spelt Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Binomio	\$41 \$70
23	20	Felsina Castelnuovo Berardenga, Siena	Chianti Classico Riserva Vigna Rancia	\$50 \$58
24	19	Maso Canali Trentino	Trentino Pinot Grigio	\$34
25	19	Ornellaia Bolgheri, Tuscany	Tuscany Le Volte Le Serre Nuove	\$49 \$80
26	19	Rocca delle Macie Castellina in Chianti, Siena	Chianti Classico Riserva Morellino di Scansano	\$53 \$32
27	17	Danzante Veneto	Veneto Pinot Grigio	\$27
28	17	Mezzacorona San Michele d'Adige, Trentino	Trentino Chardonnay Trentino Pinot Grigio	\$20 \$20
29	16	Planeta Sambuca di Sicilia, Sicily	Sicily La Sagra Red Merlot	\$28 \$78
30	15	Lungarotti Torgiano, Perugia, Umbria	Umbria Chardonnay Umbria Pinot Grigio	\$36 \$32
31	14	Casanova di Neri Montalcino, Siena	Brunello di Montalcino Brunello di Montalcino Cerretalto	\$140 \$87
32	14	Melini Poggibonsi, Siena	Chianti Classico La Selvanella	\$38.50
33	14	Produttori del Barbaresco Barbaresco, Cuneo	Barbaresco Barbaresco Torre	\$68 \$52



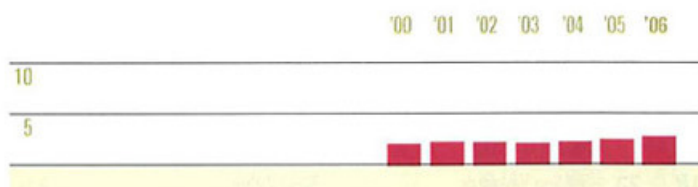
sparkling wines

Bubbles are up: At 2.9 percent of the most popular wines, sparklers earned their highest percentage since the millennium. Champagne leads the charge, landing five of the top six slots, with Veuve Clicquot earning top honors for its tenth straight year. Bubbles remain most popular as an aperitif, but people are also drinking them throughout their meal: "We get some diners who treat them like any other wine," says Kathy Bergin of *Three Doors Down* in Portland. Or anytime for a celebration, as Michael Manoocheri of LA's *Hotel Bel Air* observes: "I'm amazed at how many bottles we sell between the lunch and dinner service," he says. "I sometimes wonder, does anybody work in this city?"

MOST POPULAR SPARKLING WINES

Rank	Pts.	Winery	Bottling	Price \$
1	82	Veuve Clicquot Reims, Champagne	Champagne Yellow Label Brut	\$86
2	28	Billecart Salmon Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, Champagne	Champagne Brut Réserve Champagne Brut	\$76 \$52
3	22	Roederer Estate Philo, Anderson Valley, CA	Anderson Valley Brut	\$44
4	21	Bollinger Ay, Champagne	Champagne Special Cuvée	\$118
5	21	Laurent Perrier Tours-sur-Marne, Champagne	Champagne Brut Rosé	\$128
6	19	Perrier-Jouët Epernay, Champagne	Champagne Grand Brut	\$81

sparkling wines as a % of top-selling wines



share of sparkling wine points & average price

by Appellation	% Share of Points			Avg. Price		
	'04	'05	'06	'04	'05	'06
America	13.8%	25.3%	25.2%	\$46.50	\$43.00	\$41.77
France	68.6	66.7	57.5	86.80	88.05	91.97
Italy	14.2	7.5	14.8	32.89	34.00	45.75
Overall Average Price				\$70.23	\$72.18	\$69.45

(Data reflects the fourth quarter of the year indicated.)

pinot gris & grigio

In the realm of crisp white wines, pinot grigio runs neck and neck with sauvignon blanc, hovering around six percent of the most popular wines in the poll. Its average price is almost \$6 lower: \$37.18.

Several sommeliers described pinot grigio as "the ladies' wine." Paul Kozolis at *Joe's Stone Crab* in Miami, Florida, notes that women tend to order it with stone crabs or ice cold shellfish, more than chardonnay or sauvignon blanc.

"It strikes a middle ground," he says. "Sauvignon blanc can have that grassiness and perkiness to it, and they're looking for something that's not oaky or buttery like chardonnay but does have an austere bite."

Of our top five, three are pinot grigios from Italy's northeast—Alto Adige and Friuli—known for fresh white wines that go well with a variety of foods. Santa Margherita topped our poll again for the 12th year running. The number two spot was taken by King Estate, the highest rank for an Oregon pinot gris in the history of our poll.

MOST POPULAR PINOT GRIS & GRIGIO

Rank	Pts.	Winery	Bottling	Price \$
1	147	Santa Margherita Bolzano, Alto Adige, Italy	Alto Adige	\$46
2	44	King Estate Eugene, OR	Oregon	\$38
3	44	Alois Lageder Magrè, Alto Adige, Italy	Alto Adige Alto Adige Riff	\$30 \$28
4	39	Livio Felluga Brazzano di Cormons, Gorizia, Italy	Collio	\$58
5	32	Ruffino Pontassieve, Tuscany, Italy	Tuscany Lumina Friuli	\$26 \$22
6	31	Bollini Trentino, Italy	Trentino	\$34
7	25	Ca' Montini Trentino, Italy	Trentino	\$34
8	25	Elk Cove Gaston, Oregon	Willamette Valley	\$38
9	23	Ecco Domani Veneto, Italy	Veneto	\$37
10	23	Estancia Soledad, California	California	\$36
11	21	F.E. Trimbach Ribeaupville, Alsace, France	Alsace Pinot Gris Réserve	\$43
12	21	Kuentz-Bas Husseren-les-Châteaux, Alsace	Alsace Pinot Gris Tradition	\$45
13	19	Maso Canali Trentino, Italy	Trentino	\$34
14	18	Jermann Farra d'Isconzo, Friuli, Italy	Friuli	\$48
15	17	Danzante Veneto, Italy	Veneto	\$27

pinot gris and grigio as a % of top-selling wines

