



5 Wines That Embody Italian Style

Caught by the fashion bug, this traveler developed a passion for wine



By Regine T Rousseau | February 23, 2022



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“How about Milan?”

I can't remember which one of us came up with the idea but, just like that, our girls' trip was planned. I was packed before the ticket was booked. It was circa 2006, and I had given Traci a European vacation as a gift for graduating from culinary school. She planned on traveling solo, but I had to jump on board. This would not be the first

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or last vacation that I crashed. Since then, I have crashed about half a dozen other vacations. I am a vacation crusher.

I was born to travel. I am a travel devotee. I took my first international trip when I was less than a year old nestled in my maternal grandmother's lap, from Chicago to Haiti. I would make that journey from Haiti to Chicago and back at least half a dozen times by the time I was eight, both with and without my grandmother. I am sure this is how I caught the travel bug.

Travel swoon

The excitement I felt traveling at a young age has never left me. I still buzz with anticipation when packing, at the airport, and especially when I land. While on a journey, I dream my deepest dreams and have my most profound discoveries. I [discovered my passion for wine](#) at the age of 20 on a study abroad trip to Besançon, France. I surrendered to becoming a writer while reading at the [Nuyorican Poets Cafe](#), New York. I embraced the power of stillness on the balcony of an Airbnb hovering over the Tyrrhenian Sea in Ischia, Italy.

I was excited about Milan for two reasons, fashion and red wine. Each stop on my travel itinerary is always paired with a complete outfit – head to toe. Back then I was working with a local Chicago designer, and she hand sewed a few one-of-a-kind “GIRL, where are you from?” dresses for me to strut in the streets of Milan. The Italians were not ready.

Back then, I only drank red wines, and Italian reds were at the top of my list. Of course, they were – their iconic reds were my first introduction to the wines of Italy. I don't remember any of the producers that I tried, but I am certain that most of my food budget was spent on [Chianti](#), [Barolo](#), [Barbera](#), or whatever the restaurant served as their house red. Today, my palate has broadened my experience and education.

Onto the whites

Nowadays, I find myself exploring lovely, energetic [Italian white wines](#) with refined elegance.

Don't ask me if I prefer reds to whites. Don't ask my favorite wine nor my favorite designer. I am interested in the design over the label. Effect over color. I look at the details of the garment or the wine at

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how it drapes and moves. The color when light shines on it. Does it catch the eye? Does it mesmerize? The texture; how it glides, skips, and rests on the tongue. The frame: roundness, angles, and straight lines. The structure: how it pulls you apart and transforms. The way that I feel when clothes or wine become part of me. How do they ground, lift, impact?

I have discovered wines that affect me deeply. Now, I will share them with you and hope that you feel all of the things I feel.

5 Italian wines to try:

Ricci Curbastro Franciacorta Brut NV (~\$39)

Ricci Curbastro's NV Brut is a perfect introduction to the sparkling wines of the Franciacorta DOC region in Northern Italy in the province of Brescia. It's also a fitting wine to ring in Sunday mornings or toast at the beginning of a trip to Milan ... or anywhere. A blend of 60% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Blanc, and 10% Pinot Noir, this wine is elegant. The creamy texture offers intricate flavors of apples, pears, and pie crust, from aging on the lees for 30-plus months. This wine, like my favorite [Chloe tote bag](#), is elegant with sophisticated details.

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Barone Cornacchia D'Abruzzo Trebiano 2018 (~\$12)

From the central part of Italy, the Barone Cornacchia Trebbiano feels like a ray of sunshine on a cool spring afternoon. Color is an important part of esthetic appreciation, and this is a polished lemon color that's a shade below [J. Lo's yellow diamond](#) engagement ring, but way more affordable. The wine's bouquet is rich ripe orchard fruit. On the palate the wine offers the tempting sweetness of fresh fruit, ripe pears, and apples, along with a complementary dose of minerality.

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Aslan Maremma Toscana Vermentino 2020 (~\$22)

From Maremma in the southern part of Tuscany comes a wine full of texture, being lavish, balanced, and simply delicious. The nose is full, fresh and pretty with stone fruit, ripe pears, and oranges. The palate is lovely and clean. The wine coats over the palate and is complete with notes of pears, peaches, lemon, minerality, and sea salt.

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Vietti Roero Arneis 2020 (~\$23)

Bright and balanced with fresh fruit and acidity. A well-structured wine, with fresh flowers and lemon on the nose. The palate is complex with pears, lemon, melon, minerality, and almonds on the finish.

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Inama Soave Classico 2020 (~\$15)

Wine, like the greatest fashion, makes an impact. This wine reaches deep into your soul to stir up memories of spring days, city gardens, and sun dressed in an open field. Made from Garganega grape, the palate is clean and leads with minerality from the region's volcanic soil followed by green apples, flowers, and finishes with sea salt sprinkled over almonds.

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