



# *The Wine Society of Heritage Oaks*

*A group dedicated to studying, understanding and tasting (of course!) wines from all over the world.*

*Let's explore all that **ITALY** has to offer -  
A land full of vineyards and amazing food!*

At this tasting we will be exploring 5 wines from Italy  
(1 white, 1 rose and 3 reds)  
along with food pairings also from Italy. Please join us!



**Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30**

PLEASE NOTE! Due to insurance concerns, this event will be held at:

**801 Boquilla Trail**

**Cost: \$16.00**

\*This event is not sponsored by the HOA but anyone in Heritage Oaks is welcome to attend.

Please bring your **cash\*** to: **708 Palo Duro Canyon Trail** to reserve your seat.

Deadline is **May 16<sup>th</sup>** (sorry for the short notice). Reservations limited to 32.

# Tonight's Wine

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## *A taste of Italy*

Pinot Grigio

Primitivo Rose

Montepulciano

Barolo

Brunello



# The Five S's of Wine Tasting

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1. **See** – color, clarity, viscosity (legs)
2. **Swirl** – aerate to add oxygen, release aromas
3. **Sniff** – aroma, nose into glass and slow sniff, primary (from grapes-fruit, floral, herbs), secondary (from winemaking-bread, yeast, butter, cream, cheese), tertiary ( from aging-leather, tobacco, dried fruit, forest floor)

# The Five S's of Wine Tasting

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4. **Sip** – taste, primary (fruit, floral, spice), secondary (oak and fermentation-related flavors), tertiary from aging (mushroom, tobacco, nuttiness)
  - Sweetness – is it dry, off dry, or sweet?
  - Acidity – does your mouth water?
  - Tannin – does it feel drying on your gums like strong tea?
  - Body – light, medium, or full weight in your mouth
  - Finish – how long does the flavor last (short – disappears quickly, medium – 10 seconds, long – flavors linger and evolve)
5. **Savor** – the finish, length, balance of fruit, acidity, tannin, and texture. Do you want another sip?

# Primitivo Rosé

- Pazzia Primitivo Rosé
- Salento area in Italy, heel of the boot
- 2025, 12.5% ABV, \$15
- Elegant, notes of cherry are rich and vibrant, raspberry, light-bodied, offering excellent balance on the palate.
- 94 rating by Luca Maroni
- Pairing: Focaccia bread with prosciutto and black olives



# Primitivo Rosé – Background & History

- **The Grape:** Primitivo is genetically identical to California's Zinfandel and Croatia's Crljenak Kastelanski. The name comes from Latin "primativus" (early) because it ripens earlier than most red grapes — traditionally harvested in August.
- **Salento & Puglia:** The Salento peninsula forms the heel of Italy's boot. Puglia is Italy's largest wine-producing region by volume, often called "the wine cellar of Italy." Its hot, dry Mediterranean climate and limestone-rich soils are ideal for Primitivo.
- **28 Centuries of Rosé:** Unlike most of Europe where rosé was a byproduct, Salento has made pink wine on purpose for nearly 3,000 years. Greek colonists taught locals the "a lacrima" (tear) method — letting free-run juice drip gently from black grapes to create a coral-colored wine.
- **Fun Fact:** Some Primitivo vines in Salento produce a second harvest about a month after the first, yielding wines with distinctly different characteristics from the same vine.



# Pinot Grigio



- Conte Fini Pinot Grigio
- Alto Adige, northern Italy
- 2024, 13% ABV, \$25
- Beautifully balanced, crisp, offers bright citrus, fruit flavors with underlying mineral notes, full bodied, and a lengthy finish.
- Pairing: Tortellini with pesto sauce

# Pinot Grigio – Background & History

- **The Grape:** Pinot Grigio originated in Burgundy, France as Pinot Gris and crossed the Alps into Italy in the 19th century. Its name refers to the grape's distinctive bluish-grey to coppery-pink skin color.
- **Alto Adige:** Nestled at Italy's northern tip below Austria, this tiny region sits in a Y-shaped glacial valley in the Dolomites. Vineyards cling to slopes at up to 1,000 meters elevation, and the area has three official languages: Italian, German, and Ladin.
- **Why It's Special Here:** Unlike the mass-produced, neutral Pinot Grigio found elsewhere, Alto Adige's alpine version benefits from intense daytime sun and dramatically cool nights. This gives the wine remarkable concentration, minerality from volcanic and glacial soils, and a vibrancy that rivals Austria's best whites.
- **Fun Fact:** Local wineries are called "Schloss" (German for castle). The town of Tramin in Alto Adige gave its name to the famous Gewürztraminer grape — literally "the spice of Tramin."

# Montepulciano



- Barba i Vasari Old Vines Montepulciano d'Abruzzo
- Abruzzo area in Italy, east of Rome
- 2023, 13.5% ABV, \$22
- Very intense ruby color, complex fragrant bouquet of cherry, plums, blackberry, spice, and aromas of cocoa, toasted walnuts, licorice. Medium to full body, fresh and balanced on the palate, chalky tannins and a creamy finish.
- 91 rated by James Suckling
- Pairing: Meat Lovers Pizza



# Montepulciano – Background & History

- **The Grape:** Italy's second most planted red grape after Sangiovese. Despite the name, it has no connection to the Tuscan town — that town's famous *Vino Nobile* is actually Sangiovese. One of the wine world's most common mix-ups.
- **Abruzzo:** Situated between the Apennine mountains and the Adriatic Sea, Abruzzo's dramatic contrasts — hot days cooled by mountain altitude and maritime breezes — create ideal conditions. The region earned DOC status in 1968, part of Italy's first wave of wine protections.
- **Old Vines Matter:** Tonight's wine is from “old vines” (*vigne vecchie*), which yield fewer but more concentrated grapes. The thick-skinned, late-ripening grape produces wines with deep ruby color and rich dark fruit.
- **Fun Fact:** Abruzzo also produces a stunning rosé called *Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo*, which earned its own DOC in 2010. In local culture, winemaking isn't just a craft — it's a way of life.

# Barolo



- Rocca Felice Barolo Riserva
- Piedmont area of Italy, northwest corner of Italy
- 2018, 14% ABV, \$55
- 100% Nebbiolo grapes, Estate bottled by Lansavecchia Family
- Aged 8 years, aromas of dry roses, cherry, spice, smoke, and licorice flavors mark this full-bodied red.
- Pairing: Chuck Roast cooked in wine



# Barolo – Background & History

- **The King of Wines:** Known as “the wine of kings, the king of wines.” In the 1800s, Marchesa Giulia Falletti’s wine so impressed King Carlo Alberto di Savoia that he purchased entire estates to produce it.
- **Piedmont & Nebbiolo:** Piedmont’s Langhe hills are a UNESCO World Heritage site. Nebbiolo gets its name from “nebbia” (fog) that blankets vineyards during October harvest. Its thin skin produces surprisingly light-colored wines with extraordinary depth.
- **A Sweet Surprise:** Before the mid-1800s, Barolo was actually a sweet wine! Cold Piedmont winters would halt fermentation, leaving residual sugar. French oenologist Louis Oudart helped pioneer the fully dry fermentation that created the modern Barolo we know today.
- **Fun Fact:** The 1990s “Barolo Wars” pitted traditionalists (large old Slavonian oak casks) against modernists (small French barriques). Today most producers have found a middle ground.

# Brunello



- Vittorio Toscarelli Brunello Di Montalcino
- Tuscany area of Italy, northwest of Rome
- 2010, 14% ABV, \$60
- 100% Sangiovese Grosso
- Aged 16 years, “The nose is all mushroomy forest floor at first,... In fact, plummy fruit and dried flowers come through with a little air. The medium-bodied palate surprises with plenty of vibrant, fine tannins and acidity...”
- 92 rating by James Suckling
- Pairing: Gnocchi with bolognese sauce



# Brunello – Background & History

- **The Name:** “Brunello” means “little brown one” — the local name for what turned out to be Sangiovese. In 1879, Siena confirmed they were the same grape, but in Montalcino the name stuck for the wine.
- **A Soldier’s Legacy:** Created in 1888 by Ferruccio Biondi-Santi, a Garibaldi veteran who isolated a special Sangiovese clone and aged it over a decade in wood barrels. By WWII, his family was still the only producer.
- **Italy’s First DOCG:** In 1980, Brunello became one of Italy’s first four DOCG wines. It requires 4 years aging (5 for Riserva), 100% Sangiovese Grosso. Today nearly 200 producers, up from just one in the 1940s.
- **Fun Fact:** Before Brunello’s rise, Montalcino was actually famous for a sweet white wine called Moscadello. And tonight’s 2010 vintage has been aging for 16 years — Brunello’s legendary aging potential means it may still be improving.