

The Vine Gal » **Cindy Greenberg**

## White wine tour of Italy

Last week, the Vine Guy took readers on a north-to-south tour of Italy with red wines, which is great, but Italy also makes world class white wines.

While my husband was busy dousing himself in montepulciano and sangiovese, I was blissfully sipping my way through the northern end of the country on my own white wine tour. The grapes used to make Italian white wines are numerous. While it may seem like a challenge to keep them all straight, the broad assortment of white wines gives consumers the luxury of selecting wines that pair with a plethora of cuisines and taste preferences.

I was fortunate to get a little assistance from winemakers and winery representatives at the recent Vias Imports' portfolio tasting in New York City. Their enthusiasm and dedication to making wonderful white wines was contagious, and my tongue was soon transported to beautiful fattorias and hillside villas where long, leisurely lunches unfolded in my mind. Retail prices are approximate.

Abutting the Swiss border at the northern edge of Italy is the region of Trentino, where Torre di Luna excels in producing value-oriented wines. The cooler daytime temperatures provide an ideal climate for the **2011 Torre di Luna Sauvignon Blanc Delle Venezie IGT (\$10)**. The straw-colored wine has an intensely aromatic bouquet filled with aromas of tropical fruit and citrus blossoms. The bright acidity accents the grapefruit and lemon/lime flavors and gives the wine a refreshing boost. The medium-bodied finish is crisp and light and just cries out for a plate of seafood risotto. **QPR 7.5**

Also located in Trentino is the Istituto Agrario di San Michele all'Adige, where the vineyards are dedicated to the education, experimentation and preservation of native varietals. The winery of San Michele is an extension of the research facility and focuses on the modern production of wines from indigenous grapes, like the **2011 San Michele Pinot Grigio Trentino DOC (\$16)**. The nose has distinctive scents of peach and nectarine fruits and wet stone. The fruity-yet-dry mouthfeel supports notes of peach nectar, pear and citrus flavors. The bright finish displays a nice mineral undertone that allows this wine to stand on its own or to be enjoyed with roasted chicken. **QPR 7.5**

Immediately to the south of Trentino is the Veneto region, home to the Bisol family, where more than 21 generations have been involved with the historic winery located in the ODGC area of San Stefano di Valdobbiadene. From their 300-plus acres of vineyard comes the

stunning white sparkling **2010 Brisol Crede Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DCG (\$18)**. The blend of glera, pinot bianco and verdiso comes from a single vineyard where the sub-soil is composed of marine sandstone, known as "crede." The terrain acts as a reservoir for the vines, pulling water away and giving it back as the fruit needs it. The elegant nose offers up honeysuckle and bright apple, while the medium-sized bubbles carry flavors of apple, pear and baked bread over the entire palate. Perfect for making bellinis (the famous sparkling cocktail with pureed peaches) or paired with sushi. **QPR 8.5**

In the northwest corner of Italy is the famous wine region of Piemonte, best known as the home of the red grape nebbiolo. But this is also where the Broglia family estate of La Meirana makes the delicious **2011 Broglia La Meirana Gavi di Gavi DCG (\$17)** from 100 percent Cortese di Gavi grapes from a single vineyard. The wonderfully aromatic nose is filled with scents of wildflowers and ripe peaches. In the mouth, the wine feels richly textured as layers of ripe peaches, apricots and nectarines vie for attention on the tongue. The bold structure and substantial acidity make this wine a candidate for aging a few years, but if you must drink it today, try it with grilled branzino. **QPR 9**

**Note:** QPR is a rating system that compares the quality a wine delivers relative to the price. A QPR of 10 is considered an excellent value.



THINKSTOCK

## Chris Edwards: Country chef, city food

By Alexandra Greeley  
Special to The Washington Examiner

How many chefs can you name who have risen from the kitchens of a Red Robin eatery to those of the famed — but now closed — Restaurante El Bulli in Spain? If you cannot summon a name, here is one for you: Christopher Edwards, executive chef of the Restaurant at Patowmack Farm in Lovettsville, Va.

Located in the Loudoun countryside, the restaurant's location give patrons a glimpse of woods and farmland, plus a peek at the Potomac river far below. Working in such a setting would be a big plus for any eager chef. For Edwards, he gains yet another benefit — he can shape the day's menu around produce just picked from the restaurant's adjacent farmland.



Edwards

A Woodbridge native, Edwards launched his culinary career back when he was in preschool. "I made Winnie the Pooh peanut butter balls, a no-bake cookie," he said. "I made butter and ice cream in kindergarten, too. That sparked my interest in cooking."

He also watched his mom, someone who follows recipes to the letter, cook — and enjoyed having a batch of recipes handed down from his grandmother. "She was a very good cook," he said. "She was much more accustomed to having to cook on the fly and using what was available ... creating with what she had to take care of a larger family."

By the time Edwards reached high school, he began to seriously think about a future career. After all, as he says, he spent all his time in the kitchen working on recipes. His post-grad choice? Culinary school, enrolling at Johnson & Wales University when it was located in Charleston, S.C. After graduation, he remained in South Carolina, working at McCrady's Restaurant, for then-executive chef Michael Kramer. "He was from California, so the food he

### What is your comfort food?

One of my favorites to eat is tacos, and I must cook them myself with all the condiments and with sour cream. And barbecue.

### Do you have a favorite cookbook?

I'm always looking at El Bulli's cookbook, and I even bought it in Spanish. That's not as useful to me, but I am always looking through it. Fabio's cookbook [Fabio Trabocchi, formerly chef at Maestro, now owns Fiola in DC]. I use that a lot, and I like cookbooks with stories.

### What's in your fridge?

Dr Pepper, and it's diet, too. I have way too much cheese, because we do make quesadillas, so a Mexican blend

of cheese, and so many condiments you can't even imagine. My refrigerator door makes lots of noise when I open it up.

### Which chef do you admire most in the world?

Ferran Adria, because of all he has accomplished and to have been a part of it, even though I am not cooking the same way he does. That [El Bulli] was the ultimate; he has achieved what no one else can ever do again. He transcended being a chef.

### Where is your favorite place in the world?

I would say any place in the Caribbean. I have only been to St. Thomas, St. John and Jamaica. I love fresh foods ... seafood, tropical fruits.

cooked was not like the regional foods of the South," Edwards said. "His food was California cuisine: light, fresh, and he had a California style that stood out." In addition, Edwards said, he learned from Kramer the art and style of fine-dining cooking. "We were well recognized as one of the best restaurants in Charleston. We had a good run," he said.

When the time came for Edwards to move on, he chose to head to Spain — because he was both fluent in Spanish and intrigued by the Spanish culinary revolution launched by Ferran Adria of El Bulli fame. "I grabbed a guidebook and started researching which chefs I wanted to work for," he said. "I received four let-

ters, and El Bulli came through."

Upon his return to the United States, Edwards worked for another high-profile restaurant, at the Ritz-Carlton's now-closed Maestro with star chef, Fabio Trabocchi. All these kitchen experiences helped shape the chef Edwards has become: equally dedicated to hard work and to using fresh and from-the-farm ingredients.

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