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Notes From The Cellar "NFTC" Newsletter
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Mama Mia, Vino Italiano deals not to be missed!

Hello wine fans, the cooler weather seems to have everyone in the wine business upbeat, as the reality of the upcoming holiday season is settling in, and folks start thinking about accumulating wine for the winter. Since all along the procurement channels we have seen a big retrenchment this year, beware: The quantities of quality new arrivals has gone down noticeably. I have the advantage of being nimble and many times we manage to latch on to a good deal quickly before it disappears. If you have taken advantage of some of our offers, pat yourself on the back, most have sold out quickly, and as I often said these situations won't last forever.

Right now the areas where the action is fast and furious are; new arrivals of the top wines from the top vintages -that is, if release prices are reasonable in which case the wine disappears quickly. If it gets restocked, price are often ratcheted up. The other area which is of of interest, is when a distributor or importer took a big position in a top notch wine and decide to pull the plug & deeply discount the remaining inventory. We are fortunate to have both situations represented here today. A great opportunity to stock up. Read carefully and dig in deep if you can -you will be happy you did.

Many offers have come my way over the past few days -I have done some serious cherry picking and we have something here in every budget. Last week wine maker and owner **Giovanni Pasquero Elia** passed through town. Giovanni together with his brother, operates **Paitin** winery in Piedmont. The brothers have implemented many changes to their family wines. I have followed them carefully over the past 5 years or so, their wines seem to be getting better with every vintage. This is also indicated in increasing scores for their various offerings in the professional reviews. I set down with the man and we tasted through the entire line up. The following 2 wines were my favorites, and than we got offered some incredible pricing.

\$\$\$ Today's Wine Deal \$\$\$

PAITIN Dolcetto D'Alba Sori paitin 2007

\$17-/bottle, or \$16-/bottle- with our cash discount

I love a good Dolcetto -in Piedmont when the locals sit down to munch on a Pizza or a good pasta dish Dolcetto is often the wine of choice. This is a deceptively easy going wine with a great rich mouth feel and, if made well, full of Juicy berry flavors and the right balance to not only match the food, but elevate it to the next level. With meticulous selections and a touch of wood aging there has been a new breed of Dolcettos which can age extremely well (a bottle of 2000 Marcarini Bosche de Berri I had this week actually showed better the next day!) The problem is that these wines often cost north of \$30 and require cellar time. Most wine makers who have that kind of quality fruit opt for that style, and it is very rare to find a inexpensive easy early drinking example of this wine at a reasonable price. The Paitin 2007 at \$20 fills the nitch perfectly. It is an easy choice and tremendous value -the wine has an easy going medium body. First you get a nose loaded with beautiful floral notes, and with your first sip you get a nice mouthful of small red berry fruit -with a little more time in the glass; notes of chocolate emerge and the finish is surprisingly captivating for a wine of this price. Undoubtedly a little extra bottle time has helped this reach a beautiful point in it's evolution and this should be drinking at it's peak for the next few years, if not longer.



The 08 is out and we got a very special deal on the superb 2007's - not much left -move fast & go deep as once you taste this you will probably wish you had purchased more.

Cellar selections

The following 3 wines all fit this designation-don't let the modest prices of the first 2 fool you -while they are already drinking nice these are wines that will continue to age and develop beautifully for many years and will make a fine addition to your collection.

PAITIN BARBARESCO Sori Piatin 2004

\$33.50-/bottle, or \$32-/bottle- with our cash discount

Note -this is the single vinyard bottle originally priced in the mid 40's.

Back in April we had an amazing deal on the 2004 Rinaldi Barolos -we sold cases of the stuff in hours and some of you got shut out. Well here is another insane deal.



This Barbaresco, when released about a year and a half or so ago, was special. Between what is now acknowledged as one of the best vintages, and constant improvements in the estate, the Elia brothers came out with what I consider to be their best Sori Piatin ever. Italy's most famous wine publication Gambero Rosso awarded it it's coveted. 3 Biccheieri (3 glasses-the highest rating). Galoni writing in Parker's wine advocate

said: "intense and powerful in its expression of dark fruit, spices, earthiness and tar. Made in a pure, bold style, it is one of the more closed, shut down 2004 Barbarescos and will require at least a few years in bottle before revealing its truest potential. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2019."

The above review was in October 2007 and at the time he gave the wine a 92 point rating. It's been about a year since I last tasted this wine. When I sampled it again last week I was getting more impressed with every sip-this wine has blossomed beautifully. Dark red fruit, laced with white flowers and notes of tobacco. The wine that Anotonio described as bold and shut down is now extremely elegant with a complex structure. Perhaps the most impressive part is that the wine never gets heavy or sluggish and the finish is extremely long something that seeks very well to even better days ahead. You can easily bump up the ratings on this beauty. The best part ; the distributor was sitting on the last of his shipment from the winery stored in perfect condition, with new vintages arriving it was time to move inventory-hence the great price. An opportunity.

CAMIGLIANO Brunello Di Montalcino 2004

\$50-/bottle, or \$48-/bottle- with our cash discount

Paola Falabretti the marketing director of one the oldest and most established wineries in this famous region was touring the US, and earlier this week I had a chance to sample the wines with her over a leisurely lunch (one of the reasons to be in this crazy business). While this winery's history goes back to the middle ages, the current ownership by the Ghezzi family dates back to 1957. Since the 1980's many improvements have been made to the winery and the facilities.

Of all the wines we tasted, it was the flagship Brunello that stole the show. I have written several times in NFTC about the massive hype the 2004 vintage received and how disappointing some of the wines from Montalcino have been to me when actually tasted. Many were also priced absurdly high. As such, to date, I have only recommended a few that I thought were good buys.

Well in this case we have a refreshing surprise in both quality and price. This wine was lovely from the get go. Classic dark cherry and violets, and even a touch of orange zest were all there, in a complete and very well balanced package. The wine kept adding power and complexity to the flavors -the longer it was exposed to air. The wine never felt over extracted or manipulated.

Here is what James Suckling from the Wine Spectator had to say;

Score: 92 Release Price: \$59 Region: Tuscany: *"Aromas of blackberry, with a dried floral undertone. Full-bodied, with balanced and silky tannins and beautiful fruit and spices in the aftertaste. Best after 2010. "*

Please keep in mind that this is a pre- arrival price, based on a direct shipment by the national importer from the winery in Italy -the wine is expected in about 3 weeks. A standout in quality for a fraction of the price of many under achievers from the 2004 vintage, this one is highly recommended.



SIRO PACENTI Brunello di Montalcino 2004

\$88.50-/bottle, or \$85-/bottle- with our cash discount



Well since we are on a 2004 Italian theme, we may as well throw in **something really monumental into the mix.**

Year in and year out Pacenti makes one of the most collectible wines in Brunello. The wine typically gets released at \$100 + and quickly disappears -to give you an idea; the current going rate for its last great vintage (2001 rated 95 points) is \$165 yes -in this economy. Yet there is a reluctance from retailers and restaurants to commit inventory funds to an expensive wine in this market environment.

This is a wine that is seldom offered in the regular wine distribution channels. With the finest review ever for this wine (see below) I decided to see if we could get our paws around a few bottles. As luck would have it, a few cases are expected to arrive next here next week.

While I have not had a chance to taste this for myself, considering the history and track record, I would consider this a slam dunk. Value is a relative term which exists in every price level and Antonio's review gives you a pretty good idea that we are dealing with one of the highlights of the vintage.

Wine Advocate # 183 Jun 2009, Antonio Galloni 97 points Drink: 2014 - 2029: *"The 2004 Brunello di Montalcino is a huge, dense wine that explodes from the glass with tar, smoke, earthiness black cherries and minerals. The wine possesses dazzling concentration and tons of richness, as waves of fruit coat the palate in stunning style. This big, dramatic Brunello needs time in bottle, but it is nothing short of magnificent today. The balance, and the integration of the French oak in particular, is brilliant. For those who are curious to try a bottle now, the wine should be opened a few hours in advance as the tannins are imposing at this stage. This is a rare Brunello of superb pedigree and complexity. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2029. "*

Giancarlo Pacenti farms 20 hectares of Sangiovese vineyards, the vast majority of which are Brunello-designated. Pacenti is one of the few producers who believes in bottling a single Brunello made from plots across various zones within Montalcino, which he believes leads to wines of greater complexity and balance. In 2004, Pacenti's Brunello is composed roughly of 60% fruit from the southern part of Montalcino, while 40% of the fruit comes from vineyards planted in the northern part of the region, closer to the winery itself. Pacenti employs a Bordeaux-like model where only the best lots are bottled into the Brunello, which he considers his 'Grand Vin,' while the secondary lots are bottled as Rosso di Montalcino. That said, 2004 also brings with it a twist, as it is the first time Pacenti has produced a separate bottling from a small old-vine plot near the estate. These are wines of the very highest level, and I can't recommend them highly enough."

Did you know :

There seems to be a lot of chatter in wine circles these days along the subject of "has the bubble burst"?what is the future of the high end wine market ? Etc.. If you are curious about the subject you may find the following article to be of great interest : [Wine article](#)

**Thanks for all your support and referrals.
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Paul David, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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