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Italian
Winery of the Month



Nebbiolo, the Noble Grape of the Valtellina



CelebrationsWineClub.com

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maggio 2011

Mamete Prevostini

The Valtellina zone is located in the Alpine region of Lombardia, where vines cling to steep terraced slopes at 400 to 1000 meters above sea level. Not far from the Swiss border and about 100 kilometers from Milano, viticulture has flourished here in the Valatelina for hundreds of years although the Prevostini family has been making wine for just 70. The inspiration for doing so was the family restaurant, Crotasc, located in the Sondrio province, where Mamete Prevostini began to make wine using local grapes so that he could serve it to his customers. Now one of the finest restaurants in the area, Crotasc is updated with a gleaming stainless steel kitchen and serves sophisticated dishes, like game pate, pickled forest mushrooms, boar ravioli, and venison filet. The current winemaker, named Mamete after his grandfather, took the reins of the business in 1988 following a series of exhausting trials in

both grape cultivation and wine making. A decade later, the wines of Mamete Prevostini became some of the finest in the Valtellina. Their Sforzato Albareda has received wine guide Gambero Rosso's highest *Tre Bicchieri* award for numerous vintages.

According to Gambero Rosso, "Mamete Prevostini has a knack of interpreting the trends that are constantly sweeping through the wine world. It enables him to see the way forward, for example by eliminating some excesses in the cellar such as the muscular wines so much in vogue a few years ago." In fact, Prevostini wines are elegant and refined, with jewel-like color, perfumed aromatics, and delicately delicious flavor and balance, most of them made from the noble Nebbiolo grape, called *Chiavennasca* in Valtellina. Nebbiolo reaches its highest expression in the Barolo and Barbaresco zones of Piemonte, but here in the Valtellina, Mamete Prevostini wines rival those.

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WINES OF THE MONTH



ARTISAN SERIES

Mamete Prevostini

2009 Chiavennasca Rosato

For those of you who receive two white wines each month, we consider Rose to be interchangeable with whites since Rose is made in the same way as white wine. The difference is only that with white wines, the skins are removed immediately from the juice before fermentation, whereas for Rose, the skins remain with the juice for a few hours, just long enough to give the wine its characteristic pink color before it is fermented. Rose is an extremely versatile wine and can pair with almost any dish. This Prevostini Rose is made from the Nebbiolo grape, called *Chiavennasca* in the Valtellina. Its aromas and flavors suggest blackberry and raspberry and finish with wild rose. Serve chilled as you would a white wine, and pair with appetizers and poultry, fish, and white meat entrees as well as pasta and risotto.

Mamete Prevostini

2009 Botonero

This 100% Nebbiolo wine has not only jewel-like color but also preciously elegant flavor. The fruit was harvested from select vineyards within the Alpi Retiche zone in the Sondrio province, concentrating especially on an area between Sondrio and Toglio. Aged only in stainless steel, the flavors and aromas of this beautiful wine are without oak barrel influence and project the fragrance of violets and clean, crisp flavors. If this wine were crafted in Piemonte, where Nebbiolo dominates, it would easily be twice the price. Serve at cool room temperature.

WINEMAKER SERIES

Mamete Prevostini

2007 Sassella Valtellina Superiore

The grapes for this delicious 100% Nebbiolo wine were cultivated in the most important subsection of the Valtellina Superiore zone in Sassella, located west of Sondrio. The Prevostini 2007 Sassella has the same almost translucent, gem-like color that is common to Prevostini wines and a bouquet that is typical of the Nebbiolo grape, exuding blueberries and blackberries. Aged for 12 months in oak barrels and another eight months in bottle before release from the winery, the Sassella radiates defined yet elegant flavors and finishes with licorice and almond, altogether remarkably balanced and at the same time soft. Serve at cool room temperature.

Mamete Prevostini

2007 Grumello Valtellina Superiore

The specific zone for Grumello is located east of Sondrio on the most intense and rich soils of the Valtellina Superiore zone. This 100% Nebbiolo wine takes its name from the Grumello Castle and XIII Century fortress, which dominates the entire region. With translucent, jewel-like color, the bouquet exudes blueberries and blackberries and manifests bold flavor and tannin texture with licorice and almond on the finish. The Grumello was aged for 12 months in oak barrels and an additional eight months in bottle before release from the winery. Serve at cool room temperature.



WINES OF THE MONTH

COLLECTOR SERIES

Mamete Prevostini

2006 Albareda Sforzato di Valtellina

Harvested from both the Sassella and Grumello zones in the Valtellina Superiore appellation, the fruit for this wine is 100% Nebbiolo. The grapes are placed in wooden boxes and allowed to dehydrate in a dry and ventilated storage room until the end of January, at which time they are pressed and fermented in stainless steel tanks. The process is somewhat similar to that of Amarone from the Veneto, but there the grapes are dehydrated for a longer period and fermented in the spring. In both cases, the result is a richer, more concentrated wine. The Prevostini 2006 Albareda has a dark garnet color and a marked array of aromas with polished spicy edges and hints of dried fruit and flowers. The flavors are warm, full, and lusty but soft and rounded at the same time with lingering sensations of jam and raisins. This wine was honored with wine guide Gambero Rosso's highest *Tre Bicchieri* (Three Glasses) award. Serve at cool room temperature.



Mamete Prevostini

2006 Corte di Cama Sforzato di Valtellina

The Nebbiolo fruit for the Prevostini Corte di Cama was harvested in the Valtellina Superiore appellation within the Sondrio, Berbenno, and Montagna zones. Like the Albareda above, the grapes for the Corte di Cama were placed in wooden boxes and allowed to dehydrate in a dry and ventilated storage room until the end of January, at which time they were pressed and fermented in stainless steel tanks. The dehydration process, not uncommon among Italian super premium dinner and dessert wines, produces richer and more concentrated flavors. Aged for 15 months in oak barrels and ten months in bottle before release from the winery, the Corte di Cama has dark, garnet-red color with wild fruit and jam scents of marvelous subtlety. Warm flavors and a balanced texture linger on the palate. Serve at cool room temperature.



PICK & CHOOSE

JUST RED? JUST WHITE?
JUST CALIFORNIAN?
JUST ITALIAN?
HOW ABOUT A
COMBINATION?

CALIFORNIA WINES

Artisan Series:

\$34.50/month, a red and a white

Winemaker Series:

\$62.50/month, 2 reserve reds

Artisan red-Winemaker red:

\$48.50/month

ITALIAN WINES

Artisan Series:

\$34/month, a red and a white

Winemaker Series:

\$62/month, 2 reserve reds

Collector Series:

\$112/month, 2 collectable reds

Artisan red-Winemaker red:

\$48/month

Winemaker red-Collector red:

\$87/month

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CA Artisan white-IT Artisan white:

\$34/month

CA Winemaker-IT Winemaker:

\$62.50/month

Alternate CA & IT Artisan Series:

\$34.50/month

Alternate CA & IT Winemaker Series:

\$62.50/month

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REGION OF THE MONTH



LOMBARDIA

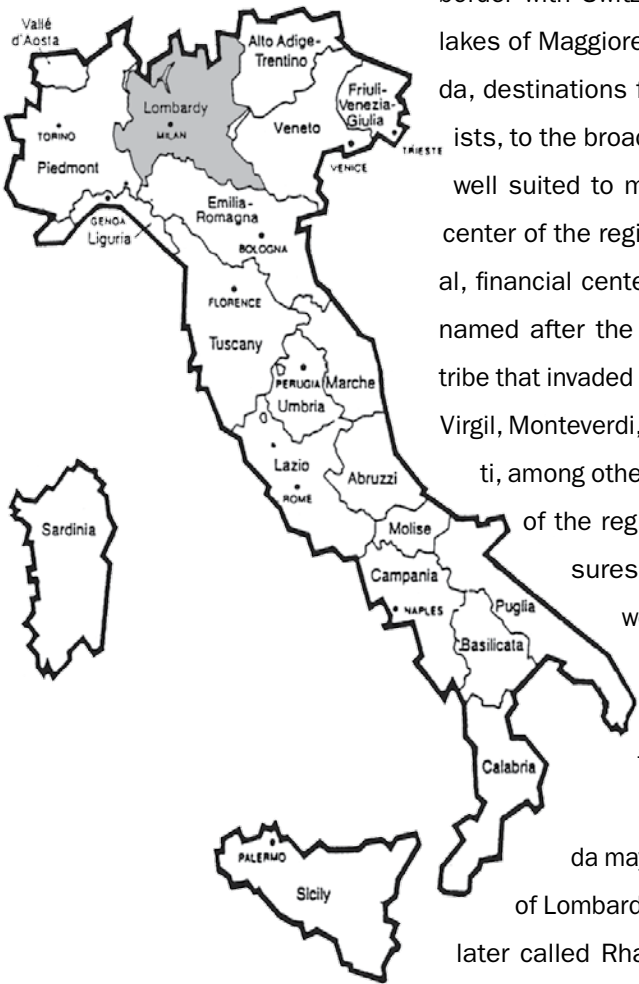
Lombardia stretches from the Alps on the border with Switzerland down to the great lakes of Maggiore, Lugano, Como, and Garda, destinations for large numbers of tourists, to the broad flat plain of the River Po, well suited to modern agriculture. At the center of the region is Milano, the industrial, financial center of Italy. The region was named after the Longobards, a barbarian tribe that invaded Italy in the 6th Century AD. Virgil, Monteverdi, Stradivarius, and Donizetti, among others contributed to the fame

of the region which offers the pleasures of its glorious lakes as well as its beautiful, bustling cities with their exquisite palaces, churches, and art treasures.

The lake dwellers at Garda may have made the first wines of Lombardia, wines that the Romans later called Rhaetic, although some evidence exists that the Valtellina in the Rhaetian Alps could also have made them. The Li-

guriens were other early vintners who might have built the terraces in the Valtellina, while the Etruscans strung their vines over trees along the River Po.

The mountains, lakes, large population, prosperous industry, and industrial agriculture diminish available land for vineyards. Nevertheless, the region has some highly favorable vineyard sites, especially three major areas of production. Oltrepo Pavese in the southwest produces the reds Barbera and Bonarda, also known as Croatina. Higher vineyards are Italy's leading source of Pinot Nero. The area also produces fruity Riesling and sparkling Moscato. Valtellina in the Alpine north produces Nebbiolo, most of which disappears into Switzerland. Brescia, Bergamo, and Montova in the east, including Franciacorta, produce the red Merlot, Cabernet, and Gropello, as well as Pinot Bianco, Chardonnay, Trebbiano di Lugana, and Lambrusco. Franciacorta is famous for its spumante and makes some of Italy's finest champenoise.



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