

Branding and promote that Italian wines are naturally made for food pairing

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In your opinion, which Italian wines may have more success in British Columbia?

I think wines that are from more well-known and more well-established regions continue to be popular in BC. For sparkling, wines such as Prosecco DOC, Prosecco Conegliano-Valdobbiadene Superiore DOCG naturally satisfy bubble lovers. They are fruity, lively and not overly expensive. Chianti, Chianti Classico Chianti Reserva are synonymous to Italian red wines. Again, these Sangiovese based wines have improved so much over the years and the natural acidity of the grape is made for food pairing.

Do you have seen evolve the image of Italian wine in British Columbia?

I think consumers who are in touch with wines agree that the many bland, oily and tasteless Pinot Grigios are gradually being replaced by some cleaner, crispier PG with more minerality and fruit. Likewise, the straw bottles of acidic and light Chianti have long gone. Come are the more fruit driven and structural Chiantis. For more serious wine drinkers and collectors, I think the image of some quality DOCs, DOCGs

from Tuscany, Super Tuscans, Barolos, Babarescos and some top Amarone della Valpolicella are catching attentions.

How is the relationship between BC consumers and wines evolved?

Consumers are more knowledgeable nowadays but always looking for bargain and the right Price / Quality ratio. Consumers are exposed and given more choices due to BC importing more wines over the years. For Italian red wine lovers, I have also seen some consumers asking for alternatives as to Sangiovese based red. I think grapes such as Anglianco, Cannonau di Sardegna (Granache), Montepulciano, Negroamaro, Nero d'Avola, Primitivo...are slowly drawing the attention of the curious souls.

What are the tips would you give to Italian companies that want to promote their wines in British Columbia?

Branding and promote that Italian wines are naturally made for food pairing. Branding is important as we know many wines are sold not because of their quality but because their image.

What is your favorite Italian wine?

This is a very hard and open ended question to answer! For a guy, it's like asking me who is the most beautiful girl on earth! I don't have one! If I have to pick one right now and if price is not an issue then it would be the Ornellaia Masseto. We had a bottle of the 1999 vintage opened during Chinese New Year and I was blown by the complexity of this wine from the nose to finish. The bouquet was a nose of concentrated sweet dark fruits (think black plum, black cherry, blackberry) intermixed with other nuances (think graphite, cedar, high grade tobacco, vanilla, mocha). The mouth feel was dense but not at all coarse with layers of taste. The structure was firm with good acidity and soft tannin in the right balance. The finish was long and

persistent! I rated it 98+ points or near perfect!

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