

ADVANCED MIXOLOGY  DRINK WELL

Arneis

A Trendy Grape for All Seasons

By Philip S. Kampe

In the last decade, the presence of wine at the bar scene has grown by leaps and bounds. Each year a new wave of young wine consumers joins the ranks of the ever expanding wine market. With so many new wine drinkers, bartenders have become the wine director of their establishments. The bartender is the 'go to' person for recommendations. Bartenders need to know what the next wine trend will be. One year, Prosecco was the trend, next came Moscato, then Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand and now Rosé. What is next?

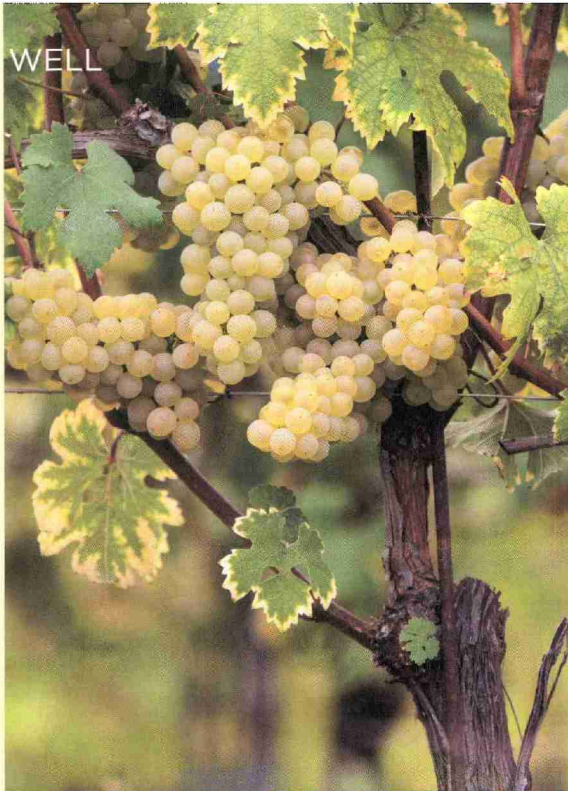
Enter, Aldo Zaninotto, wine director of Chicago's popular Osteria Langhe restaurant. If it were up to Aldo, the new wine trend would be Arneis, a little known white grape that is grown in northern Italy's Piedmont province.

Aldo says, "Arneis is known as the 'little rascal' in Piedmontese dialect, because the grape is so hard to cultivate. It is one of the most important white varietals among the DOCG whites in Langhe. With its profile of minerality, floral notes and orchard fruits, Arneis is a perfect white wine for all seasons. Arneis is very food friendly. I carry numerous styles of Arneis on my wine list at Osteria Langhe, including Vietti (by the glass), Bruno Giacosa, Careglio, Recit, Giacomo Fenocchio, Cecu, Marchesi di Barolo, Damliano and Ceretto. The customer response for Arneis has only been extremely positive, making new fans everyday. Arneis sales are near the top of my white wine list. If someone tells me they drink Pinot Grigio, chances are they like drier wines, like Arneis. I don't carry Pinot Grigio anymore, as Arneis is the perfect fit on any wine list. It has satisfied my customers' curiosity about trendy wines. If you or your wine program is searching for a new grape, Arneis is the answer."

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50 CHILLED MAGAZINE



Aldo Zaninotto
Photo by Stephen Green

