

PINOT NOIR SUPERLIST • NEW WINE + FOOD DESTINATIONS • SAKE...AND CHEESE?

Wine & Spirits

21st
ANNUAL
RESTAURANT
POLL

EXCLUSIVE REPORT



50 MOST
POPULAR
WINES

WHEN AMERICA DINES OUT

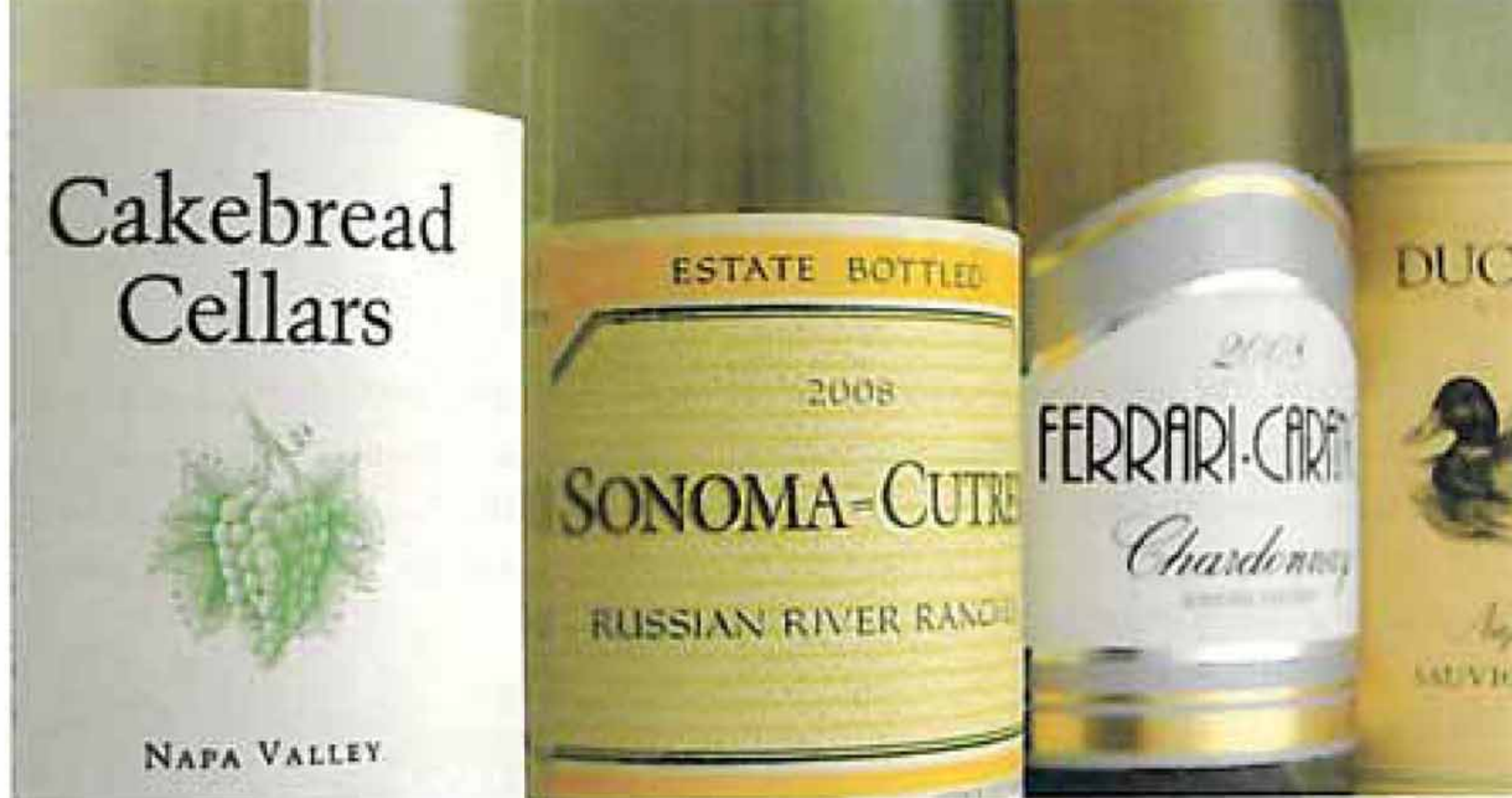


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the restaurant top 50



Here are the best-selling wines

in America's top restaurants, the wines you're likely to see on tables when dining out. Whether it's Sonoma-Cutrer for chardonnay or Muga for Rioja, these 50 brands are the ones diners return to time and again, drawn by their reputations for quality and consistency.

The list is always a terrific template of the current economy, and this one is no exception: While Cakebread and Sonoma-Cutrer continue to hold the top two places, as they did last year, there's been massive reshuffling in the rest of the list, with high-end wines such as Silver Oak taking a tumble to 16 (down from fourth place), and splurges such as Veuve Clicquot Champagne falling 12 places to 19.

In their stead, more affordable wines have made inroads on the list. The strength of malbec sales placed an Argentine brand, Carena, on the list at 21, as well as a Cava, Segura Viudas, appearing at 25. La Crema, long known for well-priced chardonnay and pinot noir, jumped 16 places, to sixth place, while K-J, which holds the lowest average bottle

price on the list, inched up, too, to seventh place (up from tenth).

Meanwhile, France's fall from diner's graces (there are only three French brands this year, none in the top ten) turns out to be Italy's blessing: This year sees the addition of two Langhe producers, Vietti (14) and Giacosa (49), to the Top 50, bringing the total to five. And Oregon gained a stronger foothold as well, with King Estate making the top ten.

To compile the Restaurant Top 50, we asked restaurateurs to list the ten wines that sold best during the last three months of 2009. The brands that make up the Top 50 are those that received the most mentions. To compare results across the past ten years of the poll, we calculate the number of mentions per 100 respondents. To break ties in the rankings, we consider each brand's total points (see p. 65). The average price for each brand is calculated from the wine list prices given by the restaurateurs. It includes all the bottlings that sommeliers listed within that brand.

Rank	Winery	Mentions per 100 responses											Average Price	
		'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99	'09	'08
1	Cakebread Cellars Rutherford, Napa Vly., CA	13.9	12.5	13.3	15.4	17.3	13.9	17.6	17.2	16.3	13.2	12.9	\$88.86	\$88.85
2	Sonoma-Cutrer Vineyards Windsor, Sonoma Cty., CA	13.4	14.3	14.3	14.4	15.0	19.3	17.3	16.5	19.7	24.5	22.0	\$46.89	\$49.90
3	Ferrari-Carano Winery Healdsburg, Sonoma Cty., CA	7.7	7.7	10.0	6.4	5.9	6.4	6.7	11.1	14.6	14.0	16.0	\$56.31	\$58.90
4	Duckhorn Vineyards St. Helena, Napa Vly., CA	7.2	4.4	4.3	10.1	8.5	7.5	10.6	7.8	8.5	8.3	6.7	\$72.87	\$93.33
5	Rombauer Vineyards St. Helena, Napa Vly., CA	7.2	6.3	7.5	7.0	6.9	5.4	3.3	3.8	5.6	3.0	3.9	\$66.33	\$60.06
6	La Crema Windsor, Sonoma Cty., CA	6.2	3.7	5.7	4.4	2.3	2.7	4.5	3	3.1	-	-	\$45.15	\$47.20
7	Kendall-Jackson Vineyards Santa Rosa, Sonoma Cty., CA	6.2	6.3	5.7	7.7	12.1	11.2	12.7	17.5	16.9	20.9	18.1	\$35.46	\$38.71
8	Stag's Leap Wine Cellars Napa, Napa Vly., CA	5.3	5.9	5.4	5.0	7.8	6.4	5.8	8.1	11.3	12.4	6.2	\$118.18	\$100.81
9	Santa Margherita Bolzano, Alto Adige, Italy	4.8	5.5	6.8	7.7	7.8	10.2	10.0	9.9	11.0	9.9	8.0	\$51.10	\$52.47
10	Jordan Vineyard & Winery Healdsburg, Sonoma Cty., CA	4.8	9.6	11.5	16.1	10.8	10.5	12.1	14.4	19.2	16.0	13.2	\$89.50	\$95.81
11	Chateau Ste. Michelle Woodinville, WA	4.8	6.6	4.3	5.4	5.2	7.8	7.9	9.1	8.2	10.5	7.5	\$32.11	\$39.06
12	Maison Joseph Drouhin Beaune, Côte d'Or, France	4.8	2.6	4.3	3.4	4.9	2.4	2.4	5.6	6.8	3.6	3.4	\$55.20	\$44.57
13	Beaulieu Vineyard Rutherford, Napa Vly., CA	3.8	-	2.9	2.7	2.6	5.8	4.8	3.8	7.9	5.2	4.1	\$39.00	-
14	Vietti Castiglione Falletto, Barolo, Italy	4.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$69.11	-
15	Justin Paso Robles, CA	4.3	2.6	2.2	-	2.9	2.4	-	-	2.0	-	2.8	\$84.22	\$64.43
16	Silver Oak Wine Cellars Oakville, Napa Vly., CA	4.3	8.1	10.0	11.4	11.1	10.8	7.0	9.1	10.4	11.3	9.6	\$125.00	\$143.68

italian wines

"We're selling more Italian wine than ever," says Giancarlo Paterlini of *Acquerello* in San Francisco, and the Poll results show he isn't alone. The popularity of Italian wine is holding strong after a dramatic increase in '08, this year driven by the arrival of Sicilian and southern Italian brands on the list.

As restaurant-goers head toward less familiar wines with lower prices, when they arrive in southern Italy, they land in the hands of long-time believers, like Shelley Lindgren:

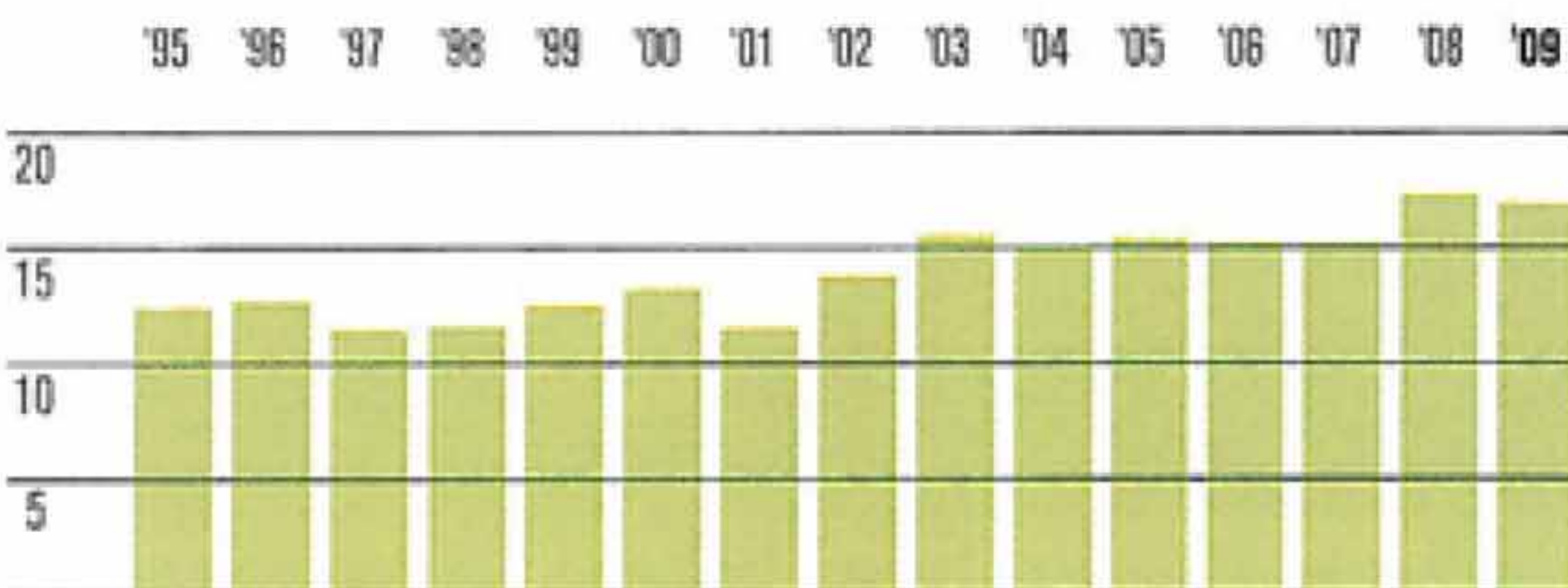
"Our sales in Sicilian wine are crazy. You can do so many things with these wines—the region is all about deep earthy greens and seafood."

—Shelley Lindgren, A16, San Francisco

The trend reaches as far as *The Ferrington House Restaurant* just outside of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where Maximilian Kast lists a Cerasuolo di Vittoria from Cos and an Occhipinti Frappato on his list of best sellers. "That has to do with me being excited about those two wines—for the cuisine at our restaurant and as memorable wines for guests. Plus, at \$50, the Occhipinti is a great value."

In the north, pinot grigio's popularity lost some ground, while Piedmont strengthened. As with many of the Poll results this year, this runs counter to some sommelier perceptions. But not all: At *Acquerello*, Paterlini has focused his list on Piedmont as California sales have faded. "I've tried to organize it like a Burgundy list," he says, "from village wines to what I think of as premier and grand cru wines." Jeff Porter of *Osteria Mozza* in Los Angeles reports that nebbiolo from Lessona, Roero and the Langhe are gaining attention on his list. He also comments that as a transplant from San Francisco, his expectations of the LA market were completely blown away by his guests. "I think I've sold five times more lagrein than I ever have in my life."

italian wines as a % of top-selling wines



share of italian wine points & average price

by Appellation	% Share of Points			Avg. Price		
	'07	'08	'09	'07	'08	'09
Chianti Classico	10.5%	12.9%	5.7%	\$49.71	\$53.42	\$51.94
Brunello di Montalcino	4.8	2.6	1.1	116.34	121.77	144.75
Pinot Grigio						
Alto Adige	8.7	9.1	6.3	43.39	46.78	45.53
Friuli	4.5	3.2	2.3	43.83	37.60	38.42
Barolo & Barbaresco	4.4	2.8	7.2	96.33	109.35	120.77
Overall Average Price				\$60.58	\$56.63	\$60.72

(Data reflects the fourth quarter of the year indicated.)



most popular italian wines

Rank	Pts.	Winery	Bottling	Price \$
1	72	Santa Margherita Bolzano, Alto Adige	Alto Adige Pinot Grigio	\$51
2	52	Vietti Castiglione Falletto, Barolo	Roero Arneis Barbera d'Alba Tre Vigne	\$65 \$67
3	34	Tuscan Estates of Ruffino Pontassieve, Tuscany	Chianti Chianti Classico Riserva Ducale Gold	\$31 \$100
4	31	MezzaCorona San Michele d'Adige, Trentino	Dolomiti Pinot Grigio Trentino Chardonnay	\$22 \$16
5	29	Bruno Giacosa Nieve, Langhe	Roero Arneis Barbaresco	\$57 \$100
6	28	Bastianich Lanzacco, Friuli	Friuli Tocai Friulano Colli Orientali di Friuli Vespa Bianco	\$33 \$71
7	27	Terlano Trentino-Alto Adige	Alto Adige Pinot Grigio Alto Adige Riserva Montigl Pinot Noir	\$38 \$70
8	26	Vajra Barolo, Piedmont	Moscato d'Asti Barolo	\$35 \$80
9	25	Felsina Castelnuovo Berardenga, Chianti	Chianti Classico Chianti Classico Riserva Vigna Rancia	\$40 \$85
10	25	La Mozza Maremma, Tuscany	Maremma Aragone Morellino di Scansano	\$80 \$35
11	25	Alois Lageder Magré, Alto Adige	delle Venezie Riff Pinot Grigio Alto Adige Pinot Noir	\$37 \$50
12	24	Marchesi Antinori Firenze, Tuscany	Tuscany Tignanello Chianti Classico Peppoli	\$160 \$56
13	20	Marco Felluga Gradisca d'Isonzo, Gorizia	Friuli Molamatta Friuli Pinot Grigio	\$59 \$34
14	19	Le Salette Veneto	Valpolicella Classico Ripasso	\$48
15	18	Fattoria La Valentina Spoltore, Abruzzo	Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Spelt Montepulciano d'Abruzzo	\$44 \$24
16	17	Sartori Veneto	Veneto Pinot Grigio Valpolicella Amarone	\$32 \$60
17	17	Giacomo Conterno Langhe, Piedmont	Barbera d'Alba Barolo Cascina Francia	\$71 \$250
18	16	Cos Vittoria, Sicily	Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico	\$70
19	14	De Conciliis Salerno, Campania	Campania Donnaluna Fiano Campania Brut Selim	\$45 \$45
20	13	Avignonesi Montepulciano, Siena	Vino Nobile di Montepulciano	\$52
21	12	Bottega Vinaia Trentino-Alto Adige	Trentino Pinot Grigio Alto Adige Pinot Noir	\$43 \$38
22	12	Isole e Olena Firenze, Tuscany	Tuscany Cepparello Chianti Classico	\$120 \$40