



A major aspect of the enjoyment of wine is acquiring knowledge about grape varietals, where they come from and how they blend to make the flavors that pair so well with all types of food, especially our menu here at Forli.

Our wine portfolio is comprised solely of California and Italian wines. We have crafted this glossary add to your knowledge of most of the varietals we offer here. It is by no means a complete compendium of all International Grape varietals, only those varietals we offer here at Forli.

Enjoy!

Barron Clancy
Wine Consultant

Wine Glossary

Arneis

From Southern Piedmont, this is a light bodied dry white wine that has perfumed characteristics. Once nearly extinct it has made a comeback.

Amarone

From Italy's Veneto Region a strong, dry, long- lived red, made from a blend of partially dried red grapes.

Asti Spumante

From the Piedmont Region of Italy, A semidry sparkling wine produced from the Moscato di Canelli grape in the village of Asti.

Barbera

Most successful in Italy's Piedmont region. High acidity, deep ruby color and full body, with low tannins & berrylike flavors.

Barbaresco

A red wine from the Piedmont Region of Italy, made from Nebbiolo grapes it is lighter than Barolo .

Bardolino

A light red wine from the Veneto Region of Italy. Blended from several grapes the wine garnet in color, dry and slightly bitter, sometimes lightly sparkling.

Barolo

Highly regarded Italian red, made from Nebbiolo grapes. It is dark, full-bodied and high in tannin and alcohol. Ages well.

Blanc de Noirs

White or blush wine or Champagne made from dark grapes.

Blush

American term for rosé. Any wine that is pink in color.

Brunello

This strain of Sangiovese is the only grape permitted for Brunello di Montalcino, the rare, costly Tuscan red. Luscious black and red fruits with chewy tannins.

Cabernet Sauvignon

Currant, Plum, Black Cherry & Spice, with notes of Olive, Vanilla Mint, Tobacco, Toasty Cedar, Anise, Pepper & Herbs. Full-bodied wines with great depth that improve with aging. Cabernet spends from 15 to 30 months aging in American & French Oak barrels which tend to soften the tannins, adding the toasty cedar & vanilla flavors.

Chardonnay

Apple, Pear, Vanilla, Fig, Peach, Pineapple, Melon, Citrus, Lemon, Grapefruit, Honey, Spice, Butterscotch, Butter & Hazelnut. Chardonnay takes well to Oak aging & barrel fermentation and is easy to manipulate with techniques such as sur lie aging & malolactic fermentation.

Chianti

From a blend of grapes this fruity, light ruby-to-garnet-colored red may be called Chianti Riserva when aged three or more years.

Chianti Classico

From a designated portion of the Chianti wine district. To be labeled Chianti Classico, both vineyard and winery must be within the specified region.

Claret

British term for red Bordeaux wines.

Cortese

White wine grape grown in Piedmont and Lombardy. Best known for the wine, Gavi. The grape produces a light-bodied, crisp, well-balanced wine.

Dolcetto

From northwest Piedmont it produces soft, round, fruity wines fragrant with licorice and almonds.

Frascati

An Italian fruity, golden white wine, may be dry to sweet.

Gattinara

A Piedmont red made from Nebbiolo blended with other grapes. Powerful and long-lived.

Grappa

An Italian spirit distilled from pomace. Dry and high in alcohol, it is an after dinner drink.

Lambrusco

A fizzy, usually red, dry to sweet wine from northern Italy, made from the grape of the same name.

Malbec

Once important in Bordeaux and the Loire in various blends, this not-very-hardy grape has been steadily replaced by Merlot and the two Cabernets. However, Argentina is markedly successful with this varietal. In the United States Malbec is a blending grape only, and an insignificant one at that, but a few wineries use it, the most obvious reason being that it's considered part of the Bordeaux-blend

Marsala

Made from Grillo, Catarratto, or Inzolia grapes, this Sicilian wine may be dry or sweet and is commonly used in cooking

Meritage

Registered in 1989 with the U.S. Department of Trademarks and Patents by a group of vintners, who sought to establish standards of identifying red & white wines made of traditional Bordeaux grape blends. They needed a name for these wines since 75% of a single variety is not used, therefore the label could not state a particular variety of grape. Meritage was chosen because it was a combination of two words, merit and heritage. To be called a meritage, the wine must: Blend two or more Bordeaux grape varieties: Red wines/ Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenere, Gros Verdot, Malbec, Merlot, Petite Verdot & St. Macaire. White wines/ Sauvignon Blanc, Muscadelle and Sémillon. Have less than 90% of any single variety. Be the winery's best wine of its type. Be produced and bottled by a United States winery from grapes carrying a U.S. appellation. Be limited to a maximum of 25,000 cases produced per vintage.

Merlot

Herbs, Green Olive, Cherry & Chocolate. Softer & medium in weight with fewer tannins than Cabernet and ready to drink sooner. Takes well to Oak aging. It is frequently used as a blending wine with Cabernet to soften

Montepulciano

A medium to full-bodied wine, with good color and structure. Known for its quality and value.

Moscato - Muscat

Also known as Muscat Blanc and Muscat Canelli. With pronounced spice and floral notes it can also be used for blending. A versatile grape that can turn into anything from Asti Spumante and Muscat de Canelli to a dry wine like Muscat d'Alsace.

Nebbiolo

The great grape of Northern Italy, which excels there in Barolo and Barbaresco, strong, ageable wines. Mainly unsuccessful elsewhere, Nebbiolo also now has a small foothold in California. So far the wines are light and uncomplicated, bearing no resemblance to the Italian types.

Petit Verdot

From the Bordeaux Region of France it is used for blending with Cabernet Sauvignon.

Petite Sirah

Plum & blackberry flavors mark this deep, ruby colored wine. Usually full-bodied with chewy tannins. Used in France & California as a blending wine. Not related to the Syrah of France.

Pinot Blanc

Similar flavor and texture to Chardonnay it is used in Champagne, Burgundy, Alsace, Germany, Italy and California and can make excellent wines. It can be intense, and complex, with ripe pear, spice, citrus and honey notes.

Pinot Grigio/Pinot Gris

At its best this varietal produces wines that are soft, perfumed with more color than most other white wines. Grown mainly in northeast Italy, but as Pinot Gris it is grown in Alsace & known as Tokay.

Rosé

Sometimes called blush. Any light pink wine, dry to sweet, made by removing the skins of red grapes early in the fermentation process or by mixing red and white

Sangiovese

Known for its supple texture, medium to full-bodied spice flavors, raspberry cherry & anise. Sangiovese is used in many fine Italian wines including Chianti.

Sauvignon Blanc

Grassy & herbaceous flavors and aromas mark this light and medium-bodied wine, sometimes with hints of gooseberry & black currant. In California it is often labeled Fume Blanc. New Zealand produces some of the finest Sauvignon Blancs in a markedly fruity style.

Sémillon

The foundation of Sauternes, and many of the dry whites of Graves and Pessac-Léognan. It can make a wonderful late-harvest wine, with complex fig, pear, tobacco and honey notes. As a blending wine it adds body, flavor and texture to Sauvignon Blanc. It may be blended with Chardonnay, but does not add much to the flavor.

Soave

A straw-colored dry white wine Italy's Veneto Region.

Symphony

Symphony is a U. C. Davis clone. In 1948, the Muscat of Alexandria and Grenache Gris grapes were combined to create this delicate Muscat flavor. It's very distinctive Tokay See Pinot Gris.

Trebbiano

Trebbiano in Italy and Ugni Blancin France. Found in almost any basic white Italian wine, and is actually a sanctioned ingredient of the blend used for Chianti. In France, it is often called St.Émilion, and used for Cognac and Armagnac brandy.

Ugni Blanc

See Trebbiano

Valpolicella

A light, semidry red from Italy's Veneto Region, typically drunk young.

Verdicchio

Italian white that produces a pale, light-bodied, crisp wine.

Viognier

Viognier, is one of the most difficult grapes to grow. It makes a floral and spicy white wine, medium to full-bodied and very fruity, with apricot and peach aromas.

Zinfandel

With predominant raspberry flavors and a spicy aroma, Zinfandels can be bold and intense as well as light and fruity. It takes well to blending bringing out flavors of cherry, wild berry & plum with notes of leather, earth & tar. It is the most widely grown grape in California. Much of it is turned into White Zinfandel, a blush wine that is slightly sweet.