

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

Adventures Club Bulletin

MAY 2013

2011 LAMBRUSCO SECCO • FATTORIA MORETTO

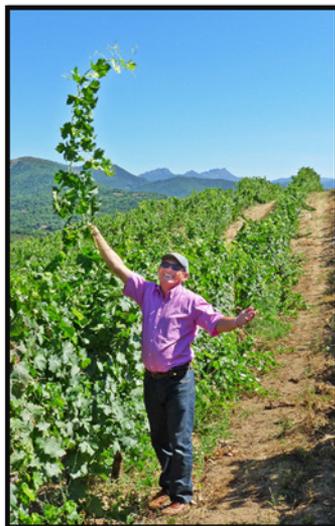
At first thought, a sparkling red may seem like a strange idea. However, such wines are surprisingly commonplace in Italy, where the straightforward process of bottling shortly after fermentation with minimal additives has led to a long tradition of bubbly reds. The most recognized of these is Emilia-Romagna's Lambrusco. Fattoria Moretto's Lambrusco vineyards are located in the rolling hills just south of Modena, in what is arguably one of Italy's richest regions from a gastronomical point of view. Chill it down and pour yourself a glass to reveal the Grasperossa variety's characteristic deep, opaque hue, topped with a beautiful layer of purple froth. If that alone isn't enough to inspire thirst, the vibrant aroma of fresh berries that seems to leap out of the glass is a definite help. Moretto's trademark is an earthy backbone created by the presence of dusty tannins to give a Lambrusco that is bone-dry and ideal for pairing with the bounty of local meats and cheeses (Prosciutto di Parma, Mortadella di Bologna, Parmigiano-Reggiano...). Try some less traditional pairings as well: the wine's balance, structure, and lively effervescence allow for countless appealing and unexpected matches.

\$18.00 PER BOTTLE

\$194.40 PER CASE

2011 VIN DE FRANCE "ROUGE FRAIS IMPÉRIAL" DOMAINE COMTE ABBATUCCI

This is both a personal and a staff favorite from a winemaker who epitomizes Corsica's sense of national pride and cultural preservation. *Rouge Frais* ("Fresh Red") is the product of Sciaccarellu grapes from vines that Jean-Charles Abbattucci leaves to grow wild—freedom for vines, unpruned and untrained. This gives the grapes shelter from the hot Mediterranean sun, allowing for a long growing season in order to achieve optimal ripeness without the byproduct of high alcohol. Combined with a short maceration period and fermentation without any oak, the outcome is delightfully light at just 11.5% alcohol! While nowhere near full-bodied, it is certainly full-flavored: the nose is typically Corsican with hints of sun-baked herbs and ripe wild cherries. The combination of light body and assertive flavor makes this one fun to pair with almost anything. It sings alongside fish with Mediterranean herbs, and it is one of the rare wines that work great with spicy ethnic dishes. Serve it slightly chilled and often.



Jean-Charles Abbattucci © Gail Skoff

\$25.00 PER BOTTLE

\$270.00 PER CASE

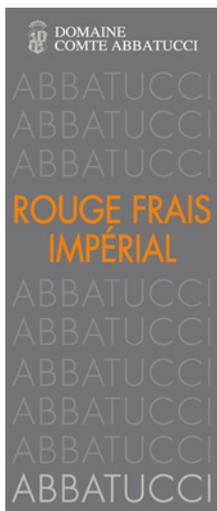
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CICCIOLI, OR PORK RILLETTES

by Christopher Lee

What's not to like about the bright, dry Moretto Lambrusco or the fresh, light Corsican Rouge Frais from Abbatucci? These two wines presented to me for May were a secret thrill. A balsamic vinegar maker and his cooper, a famous guy from Parma who had his red Ferrari parked in the middle of his barrel room, once took me to a hilltop restaurant that served only asino—donkey. Maybe that's a bit controversial at the moment, in the context of current European slaughter practices, but the food was extraordinary. Dessert was a few almond biscotti and a glass of forty-year-old nocino. Wow!

Lacking that, I suggest these wines both call for platters of tasty cured meats, as a kind of antipasto, elaborated with fresh vegetables and cheese. Northern Italy doesn't have many vegetables, but what the heck. I'd prepare slices of prosciutto (Parma or San Daniele, as you prefer); a delicious, wine-flavored Felino or Crespone salami; thinly sliced pancetta layered on warm toast rubbed with garlic; and a pot of pork ciccioli, a recipe for which I include here. I like the wines lightly chilled. Embellish the plate with a few raw vegetables: little carrots, sliced fennel, maybe a few small fresh favas for fun, and canliflower broken into flowerettes (broccoli is too strong). A few nice chicories would be great, too—there are still some around. Be sure to soak them in ice water for 10 minutes to remove some of the bitterness, or choose Belgian endive, which you can find just about anytime and doesn't require soaking. And, of course, a few shards of the best Parmigiano-Reggiano. A good butcher will have the meats you need.



- 1/2 lb. pork shoulder
- 1/4 lb. pork shoulder fat or back fat
- 1/4 lb. fat pork belly
- 2 teaspoons coarse sea salt
- 2 pinches ground white pepper



Cube meat and fat. Combine fat with 2 ounces of water over medium heat. Add pork a few pieces at a time. Sprinkle salt on top, allowing it to melt slowly without stirring. Cook for approximately 6 hours; add a few tablespoons of water if meat begins to brown. Through a sieve, drain fat and juices, reserving them. Save a few tablespoons of fat for covering the *ciccioli* later. Return meat to the pot and, while stirring constantly over low heat, incorporate fat and juices in small amounts into meat. Season with white pepper.

Transfer to a wire-top jar, smooth the surface of the meat, chill overnight, and cover with pork fat. Serve after 3 days.

Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo in Berkeley and co-founder of the Pop-Up General Store in Oakland, California. Read his blog at <http://oldfashionedbutcher.blogspot.com>.