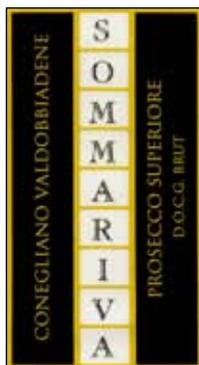


ADVENTURES CLUB

by Anthony Lynch • DECEMBER 2013

PROSECCO SUPERIORE BRUT • SOMMARIVA



Prosecco is an obvious choice when looking for a wine for a celebration, or simply to enliven the senses. Cinzia Sommariva's Prosecco, hailing from the heart of the Prosecco zone near the town of Conegliano, is especially alluring, thanks to its elegant perfume of white flowers and hints of citrus—not to mention the attractive price tag. And while Prosecco may be very easy to drink, by no means is it easy to make. Cinzia and her parents farm thirty-five hectares of Glera, the Prosecco grape, in these gentle hills that lead into the towering Dolomites to the north. At Sommariva, the objective is quality, even if it means putting in extra effort, such as working sustainably in the vineyards and choosing to harvest by hand.

While there is no doubt that Cinzia's Prosecco tastes great as an *aperitivo* or with a light *antipasto*, try drinking it over the course of an entire meal—like a true *veneziano*—to experience its remarkable versatility!

\$14.95 PER BOTTLE **\$161.46** PER CASE

2012 FLEURIE “LES MORIERS” • DOMAINE CHIGNARD

It is often said that each of the ten *crus* of Beaujolais has its own distinctive traits that distinguish it from the others. Fleurie, for instance, is said to be the most plush, velvety, and floral, whereas Moulin-à-Vent is known for its sturdiness and aging potential. What happens, then, when a fifth-generation vigneron produces Fleurie from a steep parcel of old vines located adjacent to Moulin-à-Vent? Cédric Chignard is following in his father's footsteps, proudly working the treacherous slopes of one of Fleurie's finest sites, Les Moriers. This prime *terroir* produces a wine of substantial structure that maintains its effortless drinkability, thanks to its seductive aroma and elegant nature. While the vivid fruit is characteristic of the finest *cru* Beaujolais, Chignard's Les Moriers exhibits the finesse one might expect to find in great red Burgundy.



\$25.00 PER BOTTLE **\$270.00** PER CASE

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POLENTA CUMUDÀ

by Christopher Lee

We'd come to Turin to cook a Slow Food dinner at the sixteenth-century Castello di Verduno, now a lovely agriturismo; the family has been making wine on the property for three hundred years. Our produce was organized by Elena Rovera, an intense, driven woman who runs Cascina Cornale, a cooperative that sells local, handmade organic products in Magliano Alfieri, a tiny hamlet outside Alba. Elena doesn't run with the Slow Food crowd—they're too loose of principle for her. She brought coarsely ground corn-flour polenta from an ancient variety called mais pignulet; organic vegetables with dirt clinging to them; big, lumpy white truffles; and delicious raw milk cheeses. She explained that ground corn is called farina di mais; after cooking, it's called polenta. The next day, she took us to see Luigi Dalmasso, a farmer and historian of local agriculture whose family has been farming their land in Piasco since the fifteenth century. He raises apples and pears; chestnuts; chestnut honey; a charming, small-framed breed of cattle called mucche piccoli; and mais pignulet (you pronounce the t at the end). He ties his corn together in bundles of three ears each—it's all hand work—and, using a long-handled forked cane, hangs it to dry in the second-story rafters of his ancient, airy brick barn. Luigi's father, Dario, grinds the corn by hand in a small, green, motorized grinder and packs it himself bag by bag. In the afternoon, Luigi's mother prepared us the most incredible—and biggest—platter of polenta I've ever seen: polenta cumudà, made with sizzled, lightly browned butter and loads of Fontina cheese. A friend who mentioned he was planning a meal of typical Venetian foods, including polenta, reminded me of our visit. Polenta is served often in the Veneto but is eaten all across northern Italy. Our experience was pure piemontese.

4 cups water
Sea salt
1 cup coarsely ground polenta
½ cup unsalted butter
1 cup grated Parmigiano cheese
2 thin slices Fontina Val d'Aosta

Bring water to boil. Add salt to taste, then a little more. Slowly stir in polenta without disturbing boil. Whisk vigorously so no lumps develop. Cook 1 hour over very low heat or in double boiler, stirring often; add more water if needed to keep polenta smooth. Stir in Parmigiano. Sizzle butter in a pan to golden; stir half into polenta. Pour a small amount of browned butter into a shallow crockery dish. Pour half of polenta into the bottom of the dish. Drizzle some of the browned butter over the polenta in the dish. Lay the Fontina on top. Cover with the second half of the polenta. Drizzle the remaining butter over the whole. Bake in a hot oven for 5 minutes to brown lightly.

Serves 4

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>.