

ADVENTURES









January
2020

2018 CUSTOZA "GREOTO" CORTE GARDONI

If **historic records** showed that your family had owned vineyards in your home region going back to the year 1600, you would likely feel a unique sense of stewardship of your local grape varieties. The Piccoli family does, farming almost exclusively grapes that are indigenous to the Veneto region. Half an hour south of where the 2017 Oscar winner *Call Me By Your Name* was filmed along Lake Garda, Corte Gardoni specializes in varieties such as Corvina, Rondinella, and Molinara, all planted in a fertile moraine soil that was formed by the same glaciers that carved out the lake. Their Custoza Greoto is composed of Garganega, Trebbiano, Trebbianello, Cortese, and Manzoni Bianco, and while none of these are as well known as Sauvignon Blanc or Chardonnay, this *bianco* makes the case that you should enjoy Venetian blends at least as regularly as you do bottlings made from those more popular grapes. For its price, this wine is remarkably complete, evoking orchard fruit that gives it flesh; citrus juice and zest, which conveys acid and texture; and spring water, which represents Greoto's purity and refreshment. A perfect *aperitivo*, it is also complex enough to pair well with grilled fish, lighter meats, roasted vegetables, or simple pastas. —TOM WOLF



\$14.00 per bottle **\$151.20** per case

					
2018 Custoza "Greoto" Corte Gardoni	50% Garganega, 25% Trebbiano, 10% Trebbianello, 10% Cortese, 5% Manzoni Bianco	5- to 40-year- old vines Moraine	Serve <i>cold</i> 46–52° F Do not decant	Orchard fruit, citrus, spring water Fleshy, zesty, pure	Drink now
2016 Cerasuolo di Vittoria Portelli	70% Calabrese, 30% Frappato	Vines planted in 1997 Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Blackberries, strawberries, earth Refined, versatile, classic	Drink now through 2025

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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2016 CERASUOLO DI VITTORIA PORTELLI

he Nerello Mascalese-based wines of Mount Etna have probably been Sicily's hottest vinous exports in recent years, but by no means are they the only exquisite bottlings the island has to offer. Calabrese, also known as Nero d'Avola, grows throughout Sicily and is the foundational grape for many outstanding *rossi*. The best examples arguably come from Cerasuolo (CHAIR-uh-SWOLE-oh) di Vittoria, the island's only DOCG, and are blends of Frappato and the earlier-ripening, less-finicky Calabrese. Salvatore Portelli and his son Alessandro fashion their Cerasuolo from 70% Calabrese and 30% Frappato. If you have tasted Calabrese-based reds from other parts of Sicily, you will notice that this one is more refined and less brawny. That difference is partly due to Frappato's lighter, juicy, and fruit-forward nature, which serves to counterbalance Calabrese's power. But it is also true that Calabrese grown in Vittoria's soils of clay, limestone, and sand tends to possess more elegance than it does when produced in other Sicilian *terroirs*. This *rosso* has enough vibrance and freshness to drink well on its own, but just enough tannin and acid to be versatile at table, particularly alongside your favorite Italian classics.

—TOM WOLF

\$26.00 per bottle **\$280.80** per case



PORTELLI



LEFT

*Alessandro
Portelli and
his father,
Salvatore*

COVER

*Gianni Piccoli
(front) and
his sons Mattia
(right) and
Stefano (left).*

© Gail Skoff

RISOTTO WITH WINTER SQUASH AND SAGE

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

Seek out carnaroli rice, the creamiest of all risotto rice, for this dish. Winter squash varieties are many, and you can include almost any sweet, red-orange type from among butternut, red kuri, acorn, or honey nut. For a simple chicken stock, simmer a pound and a half of wings, backs, and necks for 1½ hours in 2 quarts water with a small piece of bay leaf and nothing else. Skim the stock as it comes to the simmer and strain when done. This risotto is a wonderful accompaniment to either the Custoza or the Cerasuolo di Vittoria.

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| 2½–3 pounds winter squash | 2 Italian amaretti cookies, |
| 2 tablespoons + 1 ounce extra-virgin olive oil | pulverized with rolling pin |
| 2 teaspoons sea salt | 4–5 sage leaves |
| 3–3½ cups homemade chicken stock | 4 scrapings of nutmeg |
| 2 ounces unsalted butter | 2½ ounces Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, |
| 1 medium yellow onion, peeled, | finely grated |
| finely chopped | <i>Optional:</i> 2 slices thinly sliced prosciutto |
| 500 grams (about 1 pound) carnaroli rice | cut into 1-inch matchsticks |
| 3 ounces dry white wine | ¼ teaspoon black pepper, freshly milled |

Split squash in half and scrape seeds and veins from cavity. Place squash cut side up in a ceramic casserole, drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil, and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt. Add ½ cup water to casserole, cover with aluminum foil, and bake 1½–1¾ hours at 350° F until soft. Remove foil. Add liquid from casserole to chicken stock. When cool enough to handle, scrape squash from skin and discard skin. Tear squash into rough 2–3-inch pieces and set aside. Hold stock on lowest heat.

Sauté onion over low heat in 1 ounce butter and 1 ounce olive oil for 2 minutes, stirring, until onion is soft. Add rice and sauté, stirring, until rice starts to become translucent. Deglaze pan with white wine and cook until dry. Ladle hot stock—about 3 large ladles full—onto rice to cover by ¼ inch. Add rest of salt and simmer robustly, scraping bottom of pan with wooden spoon while stirring gently to encourage rice to release its starch. Stir often but not constantly, until liquid drops below surface of rice. Add more stock in scant cups to again cover by ¼ inch. Continue process until rice is tender and nearly cooked through but retains a distinct firmness.

Stir in squash, amaretti crumbs, sage leaves, and a final few ounces of stock. Rice should be emulsified and creamy. Remove from heat and taste for salt. Off heat, stir in remaining 1 ounce butter, nutmeg, and a big pinch grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (and prosciutto, if using). Allow to rest for 2 minutes. Spoon onto warm plates, grind fresh black pepper on top, and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Serves 6

