

The Lusch List

UNIQUE WINE RECOMMENDATIONS & EXPERIENCES



CASANOVA DI NERI IRROSSO

I visited Florence, the capital of Italy's Tuscany region, 20 years ago and the experience is still tattooed on my brain like it was yesterday. I walked the cobblestone streets over the Ponte Vecchio, climbed to the top of the Duomo, and cried when I saw Michelangelo's "David" sculpture at The Galleria dell'Accademia. While it was the only city in Italy that I visited, wow...was it spectacular! I didn't know squat about wine then but knew enough that ordering the "house wine" was still going to be of some quality and delicious. I do hope that I can return one day with my husband and eat and drink our way through the region...that would be truly spectacular!

The Wine: Casanova di Neri IrROSSO, 2016, Tuscany, Italy

Where I Purchased: [Le Caveau](#)

Cost: \$25

Grapes are grown in almost every part of Italy. With more than 20 wine regions

and over 1 million vineyards under cultivation, it is no surprise that Italy produces the most wine in the world and has for over 4,000 years. There is a reason it is referred to as “The Land of Wine.” Quality standards are taken very seriously and are what make Italian wines so unique and special. Over two thirds of the country’s wines are either DOP or IGP status. What does that mean?

Quick lesson:

- IGP (“Protected Geographical Information”) – this certificate ensures that at least part of the produce and production process were from, or took place in, the specified origin/region

- DOP (“Protected Designation of Origin”) – this certificate promises that all produce and means of production are carried out in a strictly defined area

And just because I love the fun and random facts:

- You could taste a new Italian wine each week and it take you 20 years to taste your way through Italy.

- Each year, 1 in 50 Italians is involved with the grape harvest.

Somewhat a theory but one of the reasons that wine typically comes in a 750ml glass bottle is because it was the average lung capacity of a glassblower.

Therefore, the bottle could be created in one blow. That is cool!

Now Tuscany is where the magic happens. Some of the best wines in all of Italy come from Tuscany and the wines are based firmly on the Sangiovese grape and produces such iconic wines as Chianti, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, and Brunello di Montalcino. Super Tuscans represent a unique “renegade” wine that’s blended with Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot, as well as other Bordeaux varietals.

Winery Bio: _

Casanova di Neri is a wine producer located in Montalcino, Tuscany. It is famous for its Brunello di Montalcino wines, which I featured on The Grape’s wine list for many years. Giovanni Neri had that dream 50 years ago to establish a new winery in one of the most hallowed venues in the Italian wine world, the commune of Montalcino. In 1971, Giovanni Neri was able to purchase a plot east of the town—the Cerretalto vineyard—that was less desirable because the area was considered too cool for proper ripening. Understanding the limitations of the location, Neri took a new approach in the viticultural practices, accepting a lower yield in order to achieve top-quality grapes. In 1978 Casanova di Neri produced its first Brunello. The Casanova di Neri winery is mostly underground; this allows the processes to be kept naturally cool without the use of air conditioning or temperature control

The most recent creation from Casanova di Neri is their “IrRosso di Casanova di Neri.” It translates to “our red wine” and refers to a good value, easy-drinking

red to share with friends and family. The wine is primarily made up of Sangiovese (90%) from younger Brunello vineyards and blended with a small amount of Bordeaux varieties, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot, from vineyards in the southern part of Montalcino. _

Tasting Notes:

Sangiovese blend with Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot

Style: elegant, complex

Nose: cherry, blackberry, violet, hint of balsamic

Palate: cherry, raspberry, sweet spices, balanced acidity

Finish: bright and clean, velvety tannins

Pairing:

Italian wines tend to be acidic, light-to-medium bodied, dry, but with lots of flavor. Because of these characteristics, Italian wines are, in general, better drunk with food. This is when “red with red and white with white” could not be more on point. Start with pasta or pizza. Add your meat and veggies. Enjoy! Seriously, this works with beef, lamb, veal, pork, game, mushrooms, garlic...on and on and on. We had a pizza sampler from [Zoli's & Thunderbird Pies](#) on The Laussade's patio (friends and [MeatFight](#) CEO) and it paired perfectly with every pie!

Where to buy:

This caught my eye at the last minute when I was shopping at [Le Caveau](#). I featured this producer's Brunello di Montalcino on the wine list at The Grape so I assumed it was a safe purchase. It did not disappoint and I will definitely buy it again!

Until next time!

Courtney

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