

A CLOSER LOOK AT CHIANTI

scarpetta

Extracting Goodness

FROM FOOD TO PEOPLE

That's Amari

BITTERSWEET ENDINGS

In the Pan

RECIPES AND COOKING TIPS

Around Town

AFTER-SERVICE STAFF HANGOUTS



Capizzano





EXTRACTING GOODNESS

The Art of Scarpetta

Scott Conant readily admits that he never imagined his life would turn out this way. It's not that he didn't have ambition, because he did—aspirations that far exceeded the boundaries of the small Connecticut town in which he was raised.

Goals to not only create his own path in this life but also get there in the name of goodness. Goodness that would eventually bring him success and fulfillment, just like a great dish brings a smile to a diner's face as that last piece of sauce-soaked bread makes its way around the plate and into the mouth, leaving one happy and satiated.

Scott is not *unsatisfied* with the way things are turning out. He's thrilled with the success of Scarpetta, humbled even, but he knows there's more to come. "Life is this amazing commodity," he explains, "It's handed to you on a plate, and then it's up to you to make something of it." And like his recipes, success is a simple equation of taking a passion and making the most of it.

In Scott's case, he uses food as a means to his endgame: extracting the goodness out of every ingredient and presenting it for the diner's enjoyment. "There is no manipulation involved," he warns. "The idea is to take something, like a tomato or a piece of quail, and totally focus on what will make it great. And for it to evolve to another level, from a flavor perspective, it's not a cerebral effort but a soulful one." It fully circles back to his theory about how everyone has the opportunity to succeed if they use the right tools. "It's the same with food," he explains. "How do I create 13 different flavors with one zucchini? It depends on when I take it off the fire

in the cooking process. It's a progression from a completely raw state, to adding a little bit of salt and olive oil and so on, to the final step when it is completely burnt. That's how I think about everything: as an evolution to the next level."

Scott first recognized his need to evolve the definition of Italian cooking as an 18-year-old—a "young punk kid," he says—who had moved to New York City in 1990 and was working at San Domenico. There, he experienced true Italian cuisine for the first time—not the kind he grew up on, but authentic recipes. Although he couldn't yet express it, he envisioned an opportunity to take Italian cooking to a new level, infusing classic peasant cuisine and "Alta Cucina" principles with new American methods. He set about gaining a level of maturity and confidence in his cooking by carving out an education built on his own successes and failures. He has never worked with a great chef because he didn't want the influence, the bias; he wanted the experience of owning his craft so that it would be pure. Not that Scott didn't learn from good people along the way; he did, and many of them remain by his side in the kitchen today.

Now the focus turns back to widespread goals, where, with food as the means, Scott sets about turning the other cogs in motion. He likens his restaurant to a wheel, the three major

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"Food allows me to communicate what I do with the rest of the world. I try to focus on that. Often it's not about what I do, but what I don't do. It's about lasering in and concentrating on what makes a place unique."

spokes that hold it together being the menu, the atmosphere, and the service. He takes an approach similar to that of extracting the best out of food and applies it to the look of his restaurant. *"Take wood, for example,"* he offers. *"How many different types of wood are there, how many different stains can be applied to the wood, and ultimately how do I create the best sense of comfort for the customer by using the right wood to extract warmth in the restaurant space?"* He focuses on the positive, hoping to evoke the enjoyment of a well-cooked meal in a comfortable space, comfortable enough for a guest to sop up the last bit of sauce with bread—the act of *scarpetta*—and feel right at home. *"The biggest compliment I can get is to watch a guest who previously entered the restaurant having a bad day leave with a smile on his face at the end of his meal."* Scott is not trying to suspend reality; he's only trying to make it better by bringing out the best in everyone. And that, most importantly, extends directly into the kitchen.

"You can extract the good in people by giving them the opportunity to succeed, not fail," Scott says. He has had the good fortune to surround himself with staff who are more like a good group of friends, a house of brothers. The atmosphere in the kitchen isn't lax—it's hard and hard-working—but it's as convivial as the atmosphere in the main dining room, largely due to a willingness to do the job right. It's a family because, in Scott's mind, the ultimate goal is about pleasing the customer; not a chef's own

ego. The team effort keeps everything running. *"It's about the server who spots an empty water glass and performs the service of providing happiness by filling it,"* Scott explains. His commitment to his staff is paramount and reciprocal.

Scott takes great pride watching the people around him grow, and he is happy to provide them with not only the right tools but also the opportunity: *"At certain points in my own career, I have felt the frustration of not being able to achieve my potential; I never want my staff to feel that way."*

The loyalty factor goes beyond the paycheck. Scott can recite each staff member's resume by heart, probably because he's been part of most of their culinary journeys. Scott has worked with some of his staff for more than a decade. And he often feels responsible for them. Once, a few years back, Scott used his own rent check to take care of his staff when one establishment at which they worked could not pay them. Loyalty is a two-way street, and it also means the right placement of staff and the nurturing of relationships. Scott is careful to do both.

Take **José Atelio Ramos**, a sous-chef at *Scarpetta*. Scott fondly remembers the first time he watched Atelio cook, 12 years ago, when they both worked at *Chianti*. What impressed Scott most was the way Atelio used his hands: *"He just had that touch, and even then I knew we would end up doing something together in the future."* They started by jointly >



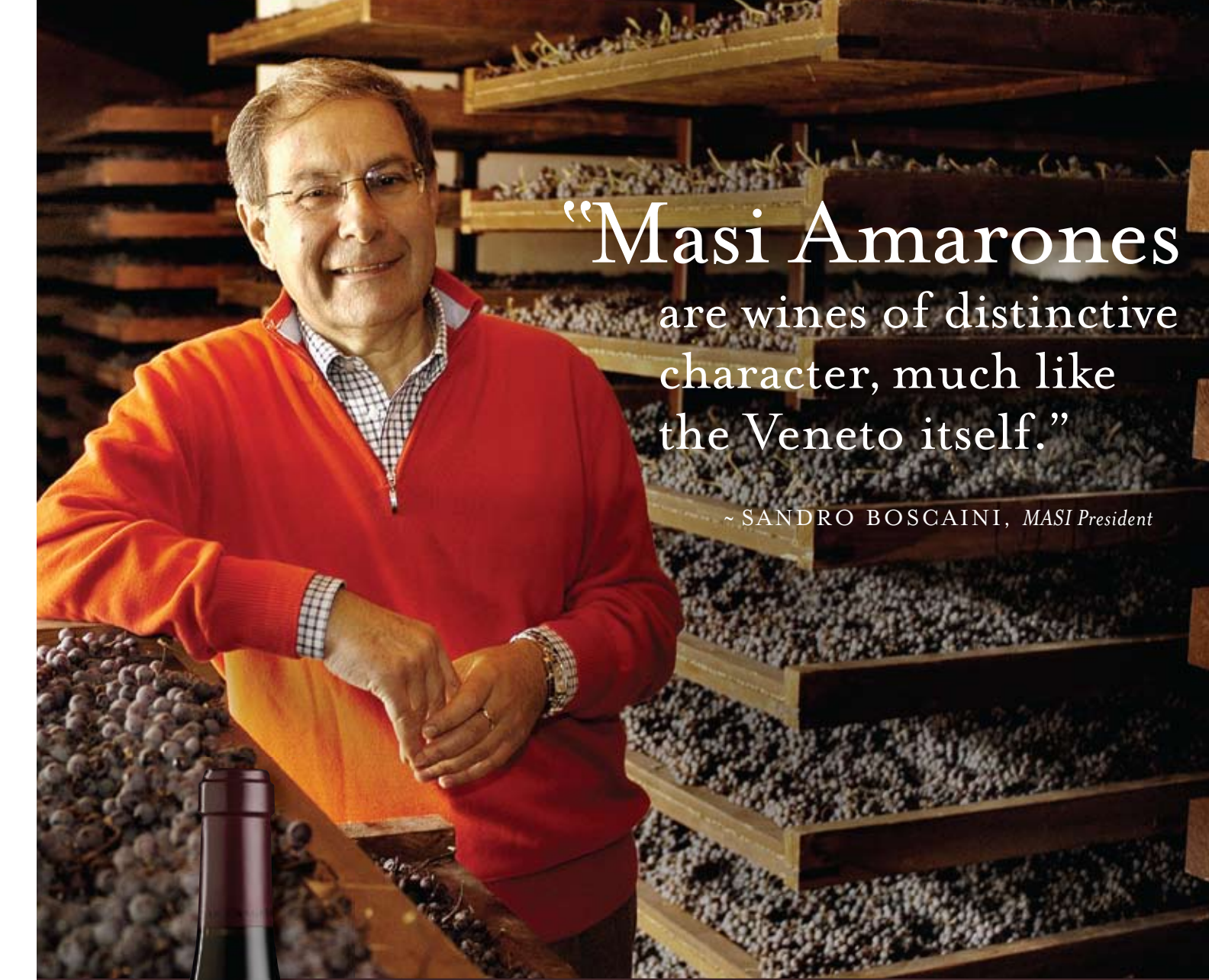
reworking the recipes at Chianti and garnered a great review in the *New York Times*. When Scott moved on, Atelio moved with him. Today, Scott trusts Atelio like he trusts his right hand.

Then there is **Rosendo Lozano**, who started with Scott five years ago as a pastry prep. It was Atelio who pointed out Lozano's skill and had him first moved to the fish station and later the meat station. When Scott decided to move him to the pasta station, he nailed that too. *"He's a natural,"* says Scott. *"When I have Rosendo and Atelio in the kitchen, I never worry, even if a food critic is in the dining room; I always know they are going to put the best product out there."* Ultimately, it's the team effort that moves the food forward. Scott has taught them things and they, in turn, bring their own ideas to the table. *"We discuss improving or creating recipes together. Atelio has this uncanny ability to remember a dish we did ten years ago and fill in the recipe blanks as we recreate it."*

Ryan Morrison, chef de cuisine, is the most laid-back guy in the kitchen and another Scott Conant veteran. *"He's great at interpreting whatever I throw at him—seasoning, tweaking, tasting, constantly trying to improve on everything. He's a great example of someone who not only appreciates the opportunity but uses it for the benefit of everyone in the kitchen."* Case in point: *agua fresca*, Spanish for "fresh cold" waters, a refreshing beverage of blended fruit, sugar, water, and ice. To Scott, *agua fresca* is a metaphor for the camaraderie in the kitchen. Ryan makes a different flavor each night, special for the kitchen staff, to cool things off as they work behind the hot stoves. *"This is Ryan's thing; he's the maestro of the*



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agua fresca," notes Scott, smiling. "He's constantly trying to train the other guys to make it and then adds his own fancy touches. Everyone has a favorite flavor. Mine happens to be the coconut, lemongrass, condensed milk, Coco Lopez, sugar, ginger, and rice combo!"

While some things happen behind the scenes, the family feel of Scott's restaurant extends to the front of the house, where **Giovanni Giambrone** holds court. Giovanni is a major part of the service spoke in the restaurant wheel. "He's Italian, he belongs here, he is the face of Scarpetta," Scott explains. "I love the way he greets guests with an open sense of welcome, which imparts the overall vibe of the place, that this is what we do and we spend a lot of time doing it, happily, for your benefit." Just because Scarpetta falls below 23rd Street doesn't mean service is compromised, and Giovanni is the perfect example of this—his resume lists the likes of Le Cirque, Lespinasse, Daniel, and Picholine. "The combination of his background at these amazing classic French establishments, where they really know how to run a restaurant, and his own Italian way of family is lethal!"

So has enough goodness and goodwill been created at Scarpetta for more of the same to follow? Of course. Scott has plans—big plans—but new

restaurants will have to reflect the space and place in which they are located as uniquely as Scarpetta does. Scott loves to travel, so setting up shop in other cities is completely in line with his nature, as long as the goal remains the same, the common thread being the ability to please. "Food allows me to communicate what I do with the rest of the world. I try to focus on that. Often it's not about what I do, but what I don't do. It's about laserizing in and concentrating on what makes a place unique."

Miami was the first opportunity Scott was presented with to try to please a new audience. With Scarpetta now open at the Fontainebleau Resort Hotel in Miami Beach, Scott immediately recognized not only the necessity of menu alterations but also an adjustment to the temperament of the Miami diner: "People in Miami are looking for something a little honest, humble, sincere, and unique," Scott says. "It's about capturing the inherent spirit of a city and catering to it, and I am looking forward to this new adventure."

Scott Conant has the distinctive personal quality to take life as it comes and make the best of what he has. He can't tell you his five-year goals, only his daily aspirations: to continue to do something he loves and provide opportunities for others who might not otherwise have them.

CREAMY POLENTA WITH A FRICASSEE OF MUSHROOMS

Serves 4

This polenta dish has become a signature starter of mine. Waiters bring the mushrooms to the table in tiny copper saucepans, the lid to the pan is ceremoniously lifted, and the mushrooms and their heavenly cooking juices are spooned over a waiting bowl of polenta. You may not go to such lengths at home, but I do suggest serving the mushrooms piping hot just after the addition of the truffle oil, so that, like our patrons, you appreciate the aroma of this dish at its peak. My favorite mushrooms to use in the fricassee include blue foots, black trumpets, and hen-of-the-woods, but even if you use only cultivated mushrooms say, a mix of creminis and shiitakes—the result will be delicious.

For the Mushroom Fricassee

¼ cup olive oil

2 medium shallots,
thinly sliced

8 ounces (2 cups)
mixed mushrooms,
sliced or cut into
pieces

½ cup chicken stock

1 tablespoon snipped
fresh chives

½ teaspoon white
truffle oil

For the Polenta

2 cups heavy cream

2 cups milk

1 ½ teaspoons
kosher salt

3 ounces cornmeal,
coarse ground

1 tablespoon
unsalted butter

2 tablespoons
Parmigiano-Reggiano,
freshly grated

1 teaspoon chopped
fresh chives



In the Pan

Scott Conant shares some of his favorite recipes—with cooking techniques and special touches that make his dishes magically come together.

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MUSHROOM FRICASSEE: In a large sauté pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring, until they just begin to color on the edges. Add the mushrooms and cook until the liquid is released. Add the chicken reduction, bring to a boil, reduce to a bubbling simmer, and cook until the liquid is reduced by half.

POLENTA: In a heavy-based saucepan, combine the cream and milk and heat over medium-high just until small bubbles begin to appear on the surface. Add the salt and whisk the cream and milk until quite frothy.

Add the polenta and continue to whisk the mixture as it comes to a boil. Continue whisking for an additional 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to very low, cover the pan, and cook the polenta, stirring every 5 minutes or so, until the cornmeal is completely cooked and tender, about 1 hour and 45 minutes. Be patient—even if the polenta has thickened and

seems good after an hour, longer cooking will make it even better. As the polenta cooks, a skin will form on the bottom and sides of the pan (if you are not using a nonstick pan), which gives the polenta a slightly toasted flavor.

Just before serving, stir in the butter, Parmigiano-Reggiano, and chives. The polenta should pour from the spoon as you serve it and will thicken as it cools. If necessary, you can thin the polenta with a little milk before serving. Divide the polenta among heated bowls or plates.

TO FINISH: Toss the mushrooms with the chives, and drizzle the truffle oil over the mushrooms. Be careful not to cook the truffle oil more than a few seconds, because the flavor and aroma will dissipate quickly.

Spoon mushrooms and some of the cooking juices over each serving of the polenta.

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SPAGHETTI WITH TOMATO & BASIL

This is a straightforward, traditional, fresh tomato sauce in which ripe tomatoes—and little else—get cooked quickly to retain their vibrant flavor. Why then is this dish such a hit? The key is in the finish. Here's how I put the dish together at the restaurant: I take a single portion of pasta, cooked just shy of al dente, and add it to a sauté pan that holds a single portion of hot, bubbling tomato sauce. To toss the pasta and the sauce together, I use that pan-jerking method we chefs are so fond of. I also do this to look cool . . . kidding! The real reason for this technique is that it not only coats the pasta evenly with the sauce but also introduces a little air into the process, making the dish feel lighter and brighter. When you add the pasta to the sauce, gently toss the pasta with a couple of wooden spoons, lifting the pasta high above the bottom of the pot. Finish the dish with some butter, cheese, and basil.

20 ripe plum tomatoes

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil,

plus a touch more to finish

pinch of crushed red pepper

kosher salt and freshly

ground black pepper

1 pound spaghetti

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

6 to 8 fresh basil leaves, washed, dried, and stacked and rolled into a cylinder that is then cut thinly crosswise into a chiffonade

1 ounce Parmigiano-Reggiano, freshly grated

TO PEEL THE TOMATOES: Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Have a large bowl of ice water nearby. Cut a small X on the bottom of each tomato. Ease about five tomatoes in the pot and let boil for about 15 seconds, then promptly move them to the waiting ice water; continue this method with the remaining tomatoes. Pull off each tomato's skin with the tip of a paring knife. If the skin sticks, try a vegetable peeler using a gently sawing motion. Cut the tomatoes in half and use your finger to flick out the seeds.

TO COOK THE TOMATOES: In a wide pan, heat the olive oil over medium-high until quite hot. Add the tomatoes and crushed red pepper, and season lightly with salt and pepper. (I always start with a light hand, because as the tomatoes reduce, the salt will become concentrated.) Let the tomatoes cook for a few minutes to soften. Then, using a potato masher, finely chop the tomatoes. Cook the tomatoes for 20 to 25 minutes, until they are tender and the sauce has thickened.

TO SERVE: Bring a large pot of amply salted water to a boil. Cook the spaghetti until just shy of al dente. Drain the pasta, reserving a little of the cooking water. Add the pasta to the sauce and cook over medium-high heat, gently tossing the pasta and sauce together with a couple of wooden spoons and a lot of exaggerated movement (you can even shake the pan) until the pasta is just tender and the sauce, if any oil has separated from it, now looks cohesive. (If the sauce seems too thick, add a little pasta cooking liquid to it.) Take the pan off the heat, toss the butter, basil, and cheese with the pasta in the same manner (the pasta should take on an orange hue), and serve immediately.



September 2008 JAMES BEARD HOUSE DINNER Featuring Scott Conant

PAIRING	DISH	TASTING NOTES
	<p>Passed</p> <p>Roasted Beets and La Tur Organic beets, endive, radicchio, truciolo</p> <p>Creamy Polenta Fricassee of truffled mushrooms</p> <p>Chilled Puree of Summer Pea Soup Crabmeat, riesling, and crispy shallots</p>	<p>VENETO</p> <p>Prosecco di Conegliano, Cima Nonvintage Straw color with greenish hues, aromas of green and Golden Delicious apples, demi-sec-like taste, soft and long-lasting finish.</p> <p>Cima da Conegliano Distillery is located in the province of Treviso, in the heart of Veneto, close to the beautiful hills of Conegliano. The distillery was founded in the 1970s by Franco Da Ros, a pioneer of the prosecco culture. Today, it is still a family-run artisanal distillery, distinguished by exceptional attention to the very high quality of their products.</p>
	<p>Second</p> <p>Seared Scallops Cauliflower, bottarga, and capers</p>	<p>TUSCANY</p> <p>Vermentino, Cecilia, 2007 Bright straw color with some green highlights, full fragrance of white flowers and herbs, with lash notes of almonds and citrus fruits.</p> <p>Azienda Agricola Cecilia is located on Isola d'Elba (Elba Island, belonging to the Tuscan Archipelago in the Tyrrhenian Sea), partly famous for the incarceration of Napoleon.</p>
	<p>Third</p> <p>Agnoletti Dal Plin Mixed meat and fonduta, mushrooms, and Parmesan</p>	<p>PIEMONTE</p> <p>Langhe Rosso Segreto, Cascina Ebreo, 2001 Round and jammy, bristling with tannin, luscious, concentrated, and exuberant.</p> <p>The Cascina Ebreo Estate was founded in 1993 by German-born Peter Weimer and Swiss-born Romy Gyga. The duo masterfully enriched and developed the vineyard over the course of several years, producing their first wine, the Segreto, in 1996.</p>
	<p>Fourth</p> <p>Boneless Braised Veal Shank Saffron-Parmesan orzo, bone marrow, and gremolata</p>	<p>CAMPANIA</p> <p>Aglianico Naima, De Conciliis, 2004 Dark garnet in color with pronounced chocolate and coffee aromas. Tannins are sweet and soft, resulting in a velvety finish.</p> <p>The De Conciliis Estate is located in the beautiful Paestum region of Campania. Having long produced wine for local consumption, they are now part of a wave of small producers making wines of superior quality and expanding their reach.</p>
	<p>Dessert</p> <p>Amedei Chocolate Cake Burnt orange—caramel gelato and espresso sauce</p>	<p>Passito di Pantelleria, Abraxas, 2003 Intense aromas of dried fruits and almonds and a round, sustained acidity; well balanced and complex, with a long finish.</p> <p>Passito wines come from the southernmost territory of Italy—the small island of Pantelleria, where the main grape is an intensely aromatic variation of the Muscat family, the zibibbo.</p>

WINE PAIRINGS BY DINO TANTAWI

Since 1999, Dino Tantawi of Vignaioli Selection has scoured Italy to bring his best wine finds to the American consumer. Tantawi's approach to selecting wines is reflected by his own wine attitude, philosophy, and experience, and he feels the history and background of vineyards and winemakers are essential to the character and regional depth of their wines. Found in each of Tantawi's selections is an interpretation of terroir, varying microclimates, and winemaker philosophies.

Vignaiolo (vee-n'yah-EE'OH-loh): Italian for "vine-dresser," someone who tends to the vines (pl. *vignaioli*)

AMARI:

BITTERSWEET ENDINGS

Amari, the plural of *amaro*, an Italian term for “bitters,” refers to distilled spirits containing an infusion of bittering compounds such as herbs, roots, or barks. Basic elements are the aromatic herbs gentian, rhubarb, quinine, saffron, calamus or sweet rush, and centaury, among others. Bitters were originally produced to soothe and relax the stomach after meals, and therefore are often referred to as “digestives.” They are also used as ingredients in some cocktails.

Aperire, a simple Latin word that means “to open,” is the origin of the word *apéritif*—a beverage that usually “opens” lunch or dinner as a stimulant to the appetite. Most *apéritifs* are initially sweet with

a somewhat bitter aftertaste because of the use of quinine (or cinchona bark). This slight harshness whets the appetite and cleanses the palate.

Although Italy certainly produces the lion’s share of *amari*, you’ll also find delectable offerings from Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Hungary, and the United States.

There is no one correct way to serve *amari*—they are great served neat, at room temperature, chilled, or on the rocks. Each can be served in a tall drink, with sparkling mineral water and a wedge of lemon, lime, or even orange as a garnish. A maraschino cherry on top provides a finishing touch.



At Scarpetta, amaro is mixed in a nontraditional cocktail intended to be served as an *apéritif*. Aptly named The T, it tastes almost exactly like a glass of fresh-brewed iced tea—with a kick, of course. The amaro provides the bitterness we tend to look for in an *apéritif*, and the prosecco refreshes and cleanses the palate.

The T

1 oz Ramazzotti Amaro
juice of half a lemon
2 oz simple syrup
4 oz prosecco



APEROL (22 proof) was developed in Veneto, Italy, by Silvio Barbieri in 1919. Made from an infusion of more than 30 aromatic herbs, spices, and roots—including bitter orange, gentian, and rhubarb—Aperol has a luminous, distinctive deep orange color and is made from grain-neutral distilled spirits with natural orange flavors.



CYNAR (34 proof) is a zesty, bittersweet *apéritif* made from artichoke leaves and herbs, conceived in 1950 by Angelo Dalle Molle. The late A. Charles Castelli, said the organic acid cynarin in Cynar “*makes what follows taste softer, taste better.*” The brown digestive has a bouquet and taste of almonds, herbs, honey, and walnuts and is bittersweet, with a hint of orange in the aftertaste.



JÄGERMEISTER (70 proof) is a dark red, bitter liquor made from 56 botanicals, fruits, and herbs—including aniseed, citrus peel, ginger, ginseng, juniper berries, licorice, poppy seeds, and saffron—that are steeped in alcohol and aged for one year. The name is German for “the hunter,” and the bottle’s label depicts a picture of a noble stag.



CAMPARI (48 proof) was first developed shortly after 1862 by Gaspare Campari, a master drink maker by the age of 14 and a native of Castelnovo southwest of Milan, Italy. This ruby-red, bitter beverage is a mixture of more than 68 aromatic extractions from herbs, roots, plants, and fruits. Campari has a bouquet and taste of bitter orange, cherry, ginger, lemon, licorice, orange zest, and strawberry, with a bittersweet aftertaste.



FERNET-BRANCA (80 proof) is a dark brown, extremely bitter tincture introduced in 1845 by Bernardino Branca in Milan, Italy. Fernet contains more than 40 herbs and spices (among them, cardamom, chamomile, cinchona bark, gentian, myrrh, rhubarb, saffron, and sage) in a base of grape alcohol, and it is aged for one year in oak barrels.



MONTENEGRO (46 proof) has a delicate bouquet and flavor of bitter orange, coriander, cucumber, orange peel, pekoe tea, red cherries, and tangerine. Its initially sweet taste quickly turns mildly bitter.



VELOCE (70 proof) is a pale yellow, bitter liqueur made from such selected herbs as absinthe, licorice, and rhubarb for power and the fruits peach and apricots for elegance. A touch of barrel-aged nebbiolo grape spirit rounds out the finished product.



CIOCIARO (60 proof) is a dark brown, bittersweet mixture of carefully selected herbs and spices that was conceived in 1873 by Italy’s Paolucci family.



Ramazzotti Amaro (60 proof) was created in 1815 in Ausano Ramazzotti’s small shop in Milan. The naturally bitter *apéritif* is produced from 33 medical herbs and roots, including gentian, cinchona bark, rhubarb, cinnamon, oregano, sweet orange from Sicily, bitter orange from Curaçao, and other ingredients from around the world.

by Bob Lipinski



GIVING CHIANTI ITS DUE

Some wines are for special occasions; some wines are for every day. People are not inclined to think of chianti as a special wine, but how wrong they are!

Curiously, while Tuscany captures our imagination—with its rolling hills, colorful history, and cuisine that enchants us with complexity in its simplicity—for many, chianti is dismissed.

One could say chianti got a bad rap but, in fact, it was deserved: many of those familiar chiantis in straw flasks that were imported into the United States through the middle part of 20th century simply weren't very good. But by the end of the century, an increasing number of producers took control of their properties, not just to resurrect the reputation of chianti but also to place it among the finest wines of the world. The paths they have chosen are varied: some cling to old ways for their own sake; other producers rushed to adopt modern methods of production and French varieties with little regard for their heritage; yet others explore how recent advancements in grape growing and winemaking can help them elicit the finest expression of that heritage.

Francesco Ricasoli, the 32nd Barone of Brolio, has been one of these latter producers. His family has controlled their estate for 10 consecutive centuries. One of his ancestors is Baron Bettino, Italy's Prime Minister in the mid 1800s, perhaps better known as the father of modern chianti. Unfortunately, chianti's deterioration forced the family in the 1970s to relinquish control to a succession of outside companies. Quality, however, did not improve, and in 1993, concerned that the interregnum threatened his family patrimony, Francesco effectively staged a coup: he shucked his career as a photographer, took the estate back into family hands, and launched an extensive overhaul of winegrowing and winemaking practices designed to produce fine wines that fully express the personality of the different vineyards.

The quality of all the Ricasoli wines now reflects the intense efforts to produce fine wines of distinction. Critical to the quality revolution at Brolio was the research into and planting of sangiovese clones, or strains, that are likely to produce the best quality fruit and individual vineyard expression. Notwithstanding Baron Bettino's codified "recipe" of chianti as a blended wine, the sangiovese grape has always been the dominant component. What makes it so special? Its cherry fruit is naturally dynamic on the palate; the wine always has a savory, sometimes earthy component, offering a dash of complexity; its naturally crisp acidity lifts the wine's flavor, especially on the finish. This perfect combination makes it a brilliant food wine, as the flavors complement—and are complemented by—a range of dishes, from meats to poultry to pasta. Further, the crispness refreshes the palate, preparing you for the next bite.

To focus on just three wines in their range, Ricasoli's Chianti Classic Brolio is a wine that enhances any meal—honest and pure, but complex, with flavors of tart cherries, a whiff of earth, and a savory finish. Castello di Brolio is the estate's grand vin—a blend of its best grapes, producing a stylish, complex, quietly more-powerful wine, capable of aging for well over 10 years, during which time it becomes more complex and harmonious. And the Rocca Guicciarda Chianti Classico Riserva, from one of the family's finest vineyard plots, is aged for roughly 20 months in larger wood casks and will reward those able to forget about it for a few years—the vigor, complexity, and harmony that will waft from the glass is not only worthy of any special occasion; it creates one.

by Lisa Granik

AROUND TOWN

SCARPETTA NEW YORK TOP FIVE FAVORITE AFTER-WORK HAUNTS

DELL'ANIMA
38 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10014
212.366.6633

When we haven't gotten our fill of bustling crowds, great Italian food, or wine, we head over to this great little spot in the West Village. Owned by our good friends Joe Campanale and Gabe Thompson, it boasts a great, esoteric wine list, inventive cocktails, and delicious plates, like charred octopus with rice, beans, and chorizo; tonnato aioli bruschette; and a simply wonderful chicken al diavolo. Kitchen's open 'til 2:00 a.m.

SHORTY'S .32
199 Prince Street
(between Sullivan and
MacDougal streets)
New York, NY 10012
212.375.8275

Josh "Shorty" Eden was Jean-Georges Vongerichten's right-hand man for 12 years. At his first solo venture on a quiet street in SoHo, we enjoy his veal-cheek ravioli and crispy crabsticks, and when it comes to pork dishes, we're torn: either the pork belly with cranberry bean salad or the pork milanese with passion fruit beurre noisette. Add a killer soundtrack, some stiff drinks, and a thoughtful wine list, and you can see why it's hard to get one of the 32 seats. Kitchen's open Wednesday through Saturday 'til 12:00 midnight.

CASELULLA CHEESE
AND WINE CAFÉ
401 West 52nd Street
New York, NY 10019
212.247.8137

A café that serves 40 different cheeses, all with their own expertly paired condiments; unusual cured meats, such as goose breast and duck sausages; and quirky-named small plates, like the Pig's Ass Sandwich. Great neighborhood feel, great wine list, and great service—these people are cheese psychos! Be sure to try the Barely Buzzed, raw cow's-milk cheese from Utah that is rubbed with coffee and lavender, or the Weisslacker, a cow's-milk cheese from Germany that the menu declares "will take the skin off the roof of your mouth!"

ARA WINE BAR
24 Ninth Avenue
New York, NY 10014
212.242.8642

Sometimes we need to wind down and relax on big, comfy couches; chat about Obama, gewürztraminer, or sexual indiscretions. We also need a nice glass of wine from a very well-constructed list and to listen to music that places us right in the middle of a Wes Anderson film. We love Ara, our little wine bar, for all those needs it satisfies. The guys at Scarpetta have closed Ara on more nights than we care to (or can) remember.

DEL POSTO
85 Tenth Avenue
New York, NY 10011
212.497.8090

For managers who aren't closing the restaurant, it's a mad dash to get to Del Posto before they close for a number of reasons: the gorgeous Bible of a wine list, wonderful service, expertly prepared cocktails, and arguably the greatest bar snacks ever. The ambiance is classy, classy, classy—and you're always bound to meet a wealthy eccentric at the bar who can't wait to chat you up on just about anything.





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HAUTEPHOTO

JOAN GARVIN is a New York City photographer and cofounder of Magnet Images. With a business background and trained in photography at New York University and the International Center of Photography, her unique approach results in compelling photographs of people and events. In addition to corporate images, Joan specializes in editorial and documentary photography as well as portraits of children and pets.

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Scarpetta
355 W 14th Street
New York, NY 10014
Tel. 212.691.0555
www.scarpettanyc.com

Scarpetta
Fontainebleau Miami Beach
4441 Collins Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33140
Tel. 305.538.2000

HAUTEMIXOLOGY



10 CANE HOT BUTTERED RUM

2 oz 10 Cane Rum
2 oz hot water
1 tbsp maple butter or
apple butter
cinnamon stick, for garnish

Combine 10 Cane and hot water in a snifter glass. Stir in butter, and garnish with a cinnamon stick. Then take off your scarf. Created by Anna Kimball, 10 Cane Rum Socialite Chicago, Illinois



HENNESSY POM SIDECAR

This is one of the best classic cocktails, with a twist of the ever-popular pomegranate juice. The Hennessy Pom Sidecar has the balance every good cocktail should have: alcohol, sugar, and acidity, all mixed up in a tasty drink.

1 oz Hennessy VS
1/2 oz Grand Marnier
3/4 oz fresh lemon juice
1/2 oz pomegranate juice
1/2 oz simple syrup
fresh thyme (optional garnish)

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CASTELLO DI MONASTERO

POGGIO ALLE SUGHERE




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Thirty years ago, a successful industrialist decided to devote himself to his great passion: wine-making. And so began a fascinating and complex story of three very important estates in Tuscany.

- The purchase and restoration of an historic monastery (dating from 1000) at Castelnuovo Berardenga, in the heart of the Siena Chianti Classico area, the present day *Castello di Monastero*.
- Montalcino, the homeland of one of the most famous wines in the world, saw the acquisition and renovation of the *Coldisole* estate.
- Lastly, the foundation of *Poggio alle Sughere* in the Tuscan Maremma area.



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