



“As is our custom, [our panel] first tasted all 12 wines ‘blind,’ trying not only to identify our favorites but also to place them as either Tuscan or Piemontese... What we can say emphatically is that our panel has never tasted 12 different wines that we rated so consistently outstanding.”

-James Stewart, *Smart Money* Editor on an IWM tasting

### **Who knows Italian Wine?**

With more than 2,000 grape varieties and 27,000 producers, the Italian wine world confounds wine professionals and enthusiasts alike. Since 1999, Italian Wine Merchants (IWM) has worked diligently to demystify Italian wine through its detailed website and weekly E-letter, Wine Clubs, and carefully selected portfolio of current and vintage Italian bottlings. Under the direction of owner Sergio Esposito and co-owners Mario Batali and Joseph Bastianich, IWM is widely considered the leading authority on Italian wine today.

Sergio represents an invaluable resource to collectors, enthusiasts, and wine writers. He travels to Italy up to ten times per year and personally sources 100% of IWM's selection. With over 20 years of experience in the industry, comprising roles of sommelier, vintage broker, and his present position as head of his brainchild, Italian Wine Merchants, Sergio has established a network of Italian *cognoscenti* in every region who aid him as he unravels many of the complex issues regarding Italian wine.

In addition to IWM's portfolio of current releases, Sergio has amassed one of the greatest collections of vintage Italian wine in the world. These gems can be obtained through direct consultation with an IWM Portfolio Manager, by joining “Sergio's Cellar” Wine Club, or by scheduling a private tasting in IWM's *Vintage Tasting Room* or *Studio del Gusto*. Each lot has been pretasted by Sergio himself and all of the wines are stored on-site in IWM's temperature-controlled cellar, ensuring the quality and integrity of every bottle.

### **Why Italian Wine?**

Americans have long had a love affair with Italy, but even those with the most sophisticated palates—who have become adept at decoding labels of New World wines and who are well-versed in the cru systems of Bordeaux and Burgundy—have been daunted by Italy's extraordinary array of regions, varieties, and producers. Italy boasts 900 indigenous varieties and no other wine-producing country in the world offers a wider or more varied selection of wines, winemaking styles, and diversity of terroir. From the semi-dried grape wines of the Veneto to the cru wines of Piemonte, from the pioneering Super-Tuscans of Bolgheri to the famed Brunellos of Montalcino, every Italian bottling is a pure expression of its region, terrain, and the culture and people who have produced it.

### **Why Italian Wine Merchants?**

In the spirit and tradition of an old world merchant, Italian Wine Merchants caters to collectors and enthusiasts nationwide by specializing in hard-to-find Italian wines and by providing personalized attention throughout each client's discovery and selection process. Sergio's vision is to provide the highest quality-to-dollar ratio in each price point and to offer the best customer service in the wine industry. IWM's inventory is stored in a specially designed climate-controlled cellar, guaranteeing that each bottle purchased has enjoyed optimal storage conditions. IWM Portfolio Managers work directly with every client, creating cellar strategies best suited for individual taste preferences and investment objectives.