

## **Italian Grape Varieties**

The following is a list of Italian grape varieties that are available each fall starting in October.

### **RED GRAPE VARIETIES**

#### **CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

Cabernet Sauvignon is one of the most widely planted grape varieties in the world. Wine made from Cabernet Sauvignon is generally stronger than Merlot and full flavored. The Cabernet Sauvignon grape has a thick skin that results in wines that can be high in tannin, which provides structure and the ability to age. This grape is strongly associated with the red wines of Bordeaux and is blended with Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Malbec. The aroma of Cabernet Sauvignon has been described as chocolate, ripe jammy berries, oak, pepper, earth, violets, blackcurrant, spice, and cedar.

#### **LAMBRUSCO**

Lambrusco is the name of both a red wine grape and an Italian wine made principally from the grape. The grape itself is not particularly sweet but many of the sweet Lambrusco are made by either partial fermentation or with the addition of the sweeter Ancellotta grapes to the blend. When not fermented sweet, the Lambrusco grape is capable of producing a dry wine with strawberry notes and a slight bitter finish. The wine is noted for high acidity and berry flavors.

#### **MERLOT**

Merlot is a red wine grape that is used as both a blending grape and for varietal wines. Merlot based wines usually have medium body with hints of berry, plum, and currant. Its softness and "fleshiness", combined with its earlier ripening, makes Merlot a popular grape for blending with the sterner, later-ripening Cabernet Sauvignon, which tends to be higher in tannin. Along with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot, Merlot is one of the primary grapes in Bordeaux wine where it is the most widely planted grape.

#### **MONTEPULCIANO**

Montepulciano is a type of wine grape as well as a type of red wine made from these same grapes. It is typically a fruity, dry wine with soft tannins, and as such is often consumed young. Montepulciano makes a beautifully deep ruby red wine that is clear and brilliant with purplish shades. Over time the wine turns to garnet red during its maturation.

### **WHITE GRAPE VARIETIES**

#### **TREBBIANO**

Trebbiano may have originated in the Eastern Mediterranean, and was known in Italy in Roman times. In Italy, most wines contain some Trebbiano, including several reds such as Chianti. Trebbiano is blended into some of the world's finest brandies, such as Cognac or Armagnac. Frascati, which originates from Lazio in Italy, also uses the Trebbiano grape. The white wines produced by the Trebbiano grape are generally table wines intended for quick consumption. They go particularly well with seafood and pasta dishes.