



OLIVER MCCRUM

WINE PORTFOLIO

Year Founded: 1994

Region: Italy

Owner: Oliver McCrum

Known For: Representing many of Italy's best producers.

Cool Fact: With a focus on indigenous and native grape varieties, Oliver has many of the best examples of: Frascati, Lagrein, Schiava, Lambrusco, Bardolino, Nero di Troia, and Müller Thurgau, among others.

-Organic, Sustainable-

OUR GOALS: To import the best expressions of Italy's enormous range of native grape varieties. To find vintners whose winemaking philosophies tend toward tradition and minimal intervention.

To discover wines that are true to the grape, the people, and the place.

After working many years in the retail and distribution sides of the business in New York, London, and San Francisco, Oliver began importing and distributing wines on his own in 1994. While Italian focused for many years, he decided in 2007 to focus exclusively on the importation of Italian wines. Since then the portfolio has expanded from a predominantly Northern Italian selection to include an equally powerful and fast-growing Southern Italian selection. Oliver and team look for wines with clarity, focus, and precision made from indigenous Italian grape varieties using traditional winemaking



techniques and no obvious use of oak. Our wines are known by the best sommeliers and wine professionals in the industry for being classically styled, clean, vibrant examples of the most important Italian wine types, from Barolo and Brunello to intriguing, less well known bottlings from the South. Our portfolio includes about 60 small producers from 17 regions of Italy, including some of the top names in Italian wine. The McCrum portfolio has many of the most affordable, interesting, and delicious wines on the market, and we are thrilled to offer them to our friends in Oklahoma.

ERSTE + NEUE, TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE

-SUSTAINABLE, ORGANIC-

‘The best part is the irresistible price point.’

- Robert Parker

‘A series of wines that has impressed all of our tasting panels.’ - Gambero Rosso

“We guide the grape on its journey from the vine into the bottle, that has been our Credo since 1900. Tradition has inhabited the vaulted cellars of our winery since 1900 and our name Erste + Neue (first + new) obliges us to preserve what is valuable from the past while remaining open towards the new. Our wine embodies our history. Our history is our wine and our passion. Where the Mediterranean south joins the mountains of the Alps, where the sun drenches our soils with warmth and the vines reach out to the sky with their arms, there the vines capture the landscape and transmute it into dreams...” - Erste+Neue Winery



2023 Erste + Neue Pinot Grigio

Fermentation and storage in stainless steel tanks (4 months, on lees); long contact time with the fine yeast to develop a multilayered body. This wine graces your palate with lovely purity in its clean, focused fruit. There is a wonderful warmth that radiates through the wine even if this remains a fresh, mineral-driven style of Pinot Grigio. Pinot Grigio sometimes lacks the vivid freshness of Pinot Bianco/Weissburgunder, but the best examples from the Alto Adige have the typical varietal texture and spice notes punched up with good bright acidity. Absolutely textbook: pear, apple, hint of nutmeg, very good balance of weight and acidity. A very good versatile everyday white wine, and it's a steal.

90 Points – '22 James Suckling



2021/2023 Erste + Neue Müller Thurgau

A highly aromatic Riesling cross created in Switzerland in the 1880s. The best Müller-Thurgau comes from the Alto Adige (and from just south of here, in the Trentino region). E+N's Müller is planted in limestone-rich glacially deposited soils. Fermentation at low temperatures in stainless steel tanks. 4 months in stainless steel, on the lees. Exuberant aroma of lime peel and flowers; zesty, bright and dry on the palate. Drink this in warmer weather as a dry aperitif, and it's delicious with cured meats. This wine has a soft bouquet with hints of nuts and Muscat. A very fresh wine with mild acidity and a pleasant fruitiness. An excellent wine for oysters and other fish dishes.



2022 Erste + Neue Lagrein

Lagrein (pronounced lah-**GRAH'EEN**, lah-**GRINE** or lah-**GRI'NE**) is a red wine grape variety native to the valleys of South Tyrol, northern Italy. Along with Marzemino, it is a descendant of Teroldego, and related to Syrah, Pinot Noir and Dureza. Mash fermentation in stainless steel tanks; storage and ageing in big wooden casks. Powerful bouquet with pleasant cherry fruit. Palate and aftertaste full of smooth tannins with hints of bitter chocolate long lasting.



2022 Erste + Neue Pinot Bianco

100% Pinot Bianco. Fermentation at low temperatures in stainless steel tanks; long storage in contact with the fine yeast to develop a multi-layered body.

90 Points – James Suckling – *“Sliced green apples, grapefruit and melon rind on the nose, with some green tea. It’s medium-bodied, creamy and fruit-forward, with bright acidity and a sleek finish.”*



2022 Erste + Neue Sauvignon

100% Sauvignon. Fermentation and storage at low temperatures in stainless steel tanks; particularly careful treatment of the grapes to save the typical spicy aroma.

91 Points – '21 Wine Enthusiast – *“Tangy and delicious, this opens with varietal aromas of elderflower, citrus and crushed tomato vine. It’s bright and savory, offering succulent grapefruit, gooseberry and white peach alongside vibrant acidity.”*

90 Points – '21 James Suckling – *“This is worth lingering over! A self-confidently grassy sauvignon with good substance and a properly dry finish, this has a lot of character at the bold, structured finish.”*

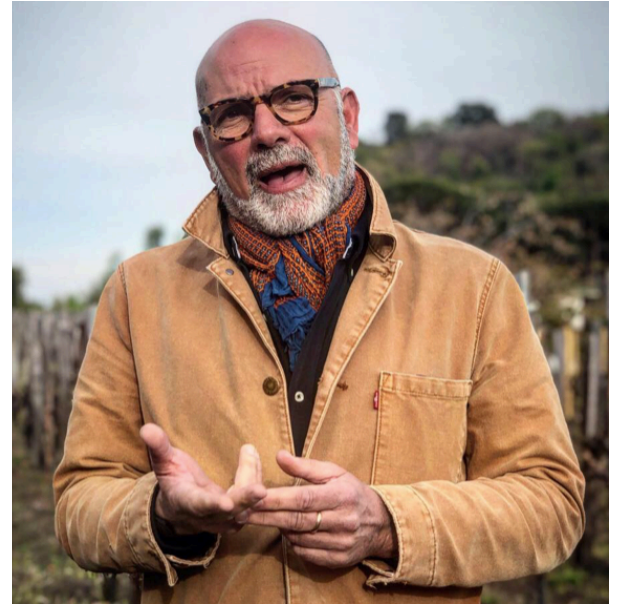
BIONDI, SICILY – MT. ETNA

-ORGANIC-

“A source of impeccable whites and reds alike. **Ciro Biondi’s family has farmed vineyards on the southeast slope of Mount Etna since the early 1800s. His modern-day operation, scarcely larger than a backyard garden, qualifies him as a modern-era “O.G.” and is one of the heritage gems of this star-studded appellation.”**

“The whites of Etna, like the reds, are claiming their rightful place among the world’s elite. Time to get some in your cellar!”

-David Lynch, Sommelier



The reputation of the wines of Mount Etna, the enormous active volcano that dominates the north-eastern corner of Sicily, has shot up in the last few years. It is now known as one of the best wine-producing areas in Italy. **Ciro Biondi’s family has owned vineyards in this area since at least 1800, and first sold bottled wine under their label a century ago; the modern iteration of the Biondi winery started in 1999. (Ciro is an architect by training) and his wife Stef own three vineyards near the small town of Trecastagni, and have reworked an old palmento in one of their vineyards as a winery. Barrel storage is in the little old cellar of the family house in the center of Trecastagni. Once the overall reputation of an appellation is established, the next step (particularly for an area as large as Etna) is to find out how the parts of the appellation differ. Biondi’s cellar and three single vineyards are on the south-east slope of the volcano, in Trecastagni. At the moment, the wines grown and produced on the north side (such as Passopisciaro and Terre Nere) are better-known, but in my view this is because there are more established producers there, not because the wines are better there. (Historically, the south side was better known than the north.) The south side of Etna tends to produce wines that are more subtle, more Pinot-like, often paler in color than the north side (and for this reason often blended with Nerello Capuccio, a darker variety than Nerello Mascalese, the predominant variety in all Etna Rosso); the northern slope of Etna produces wines that are more structured and darker. I like both styles, and I think time will show that the very best wines from Etna will come from both sides of the mountain. Biondi’s wines are now unquestionably in this top echelon, and they are improving every year.**

Ciro’s entry-level Etna Bianco and Rosso both bear the name ‘Outis’. This is not a vineyard name, but rather a clever allusion to the mythos of Sicily. In Homer’s epic, *The Odyssey*, Odysseus and his crew are at one-point ship-wrecked on an island inhabited by cyclops. The crew is captured by one of these creatures, and in order to free them, Odysseus blinds the cyclops in his sleep. While stumbling around blind, the Cyclops asks, “who his attacker was?”. Odysseus replied, “Outis,” which translates to ‘no one’. As the blind cyclops tried to convince his cohort that he was blinded by ‘Outis’, Odysseus and his crew were able to escape the island, which is thought to have been Sicily.



2018 **Ciro Biondi ‘OUTIS’ Etna Bianco**

“If you were to experience today’s wine in the place where it is made—a terraced vineyard rooted in black pumice, with the smoldering, snow-capped peak of Mount Etna looming in the distance—it would be etched in your memory forever. You might not want to drink anything else: That’s the power of this place, as anyone who’s visited this still-active Sicilian volcano will tell you. Still, this shimmering, mineral white will stay with you even if your first sip is at your kitchen counter. Real wines of place do that.” -David Lynch, Sommelier

Primarily Carricante, an intriguing white indigenous grape variety with a distinctive stony minerality. It is blended here with several other more aromatic local varieties, including Minella, Malvasia, Catarrato and Moscattello dell’Etna (unblended Carricante can be almost too lean and minerally). Controlled, low temperature fermentation in stainless steel with selected yeasts. Aged on its lees for 6 months in stainless steel.

91 Points – ’17 James Suckling – “A waxy yet citrusy Etna Bianco that suggests lemon meringue, apple pie and cooked peaches.”



2019/2020 **Ciro Biondi 'PIANTA' Etna Bianco**

Ciro's 'Pianta' Etna Bianco comes from a single 2.5-hectare vineyard. Owned by the Biondi family since at least 1800, the name 'Pianta' means 'to plant' in Sicilian dialect. The vineyard lies on the side of a steep terraced crater, dating back thousands of years. The supporting dry-stone walls were built by Cirino Biondi, Ciro's grandfather. Like the 'Outis' Bianco, 'Pianta' is also a blend of mostly Carricante, with support from Minella, Malvasia, Catarrato, and Moscatello dell'Etna. 24 hours maceration, controlled low temperature fermentation in barrel with selected yeasts. 10 months in 225L neutral barrel, on the lees. The juice is fermented in oak and then aged in the oak rather than just aging in oak, a trick Ciro learned from a Burgundy producer because a byproduct of the fermentation in oak is it prevents the wine from picking up too much of the oak character. The oak fermentation and aging makes for a complex, pretty, heady white wine — an interesting wine to show CA Chardonnay drinkers who want to try something new.

94 Points – '19 James Suckling – *"Intense and complex nose of smoked almonds, lemon curd and praline. Full body with a creamy, oily texture. Complex and layered, with compact fruit and nut character and a long, persistent finish."*

2019/2020 **Ciro Biondi 'OUTIS' Etna Rosso**



'Top 100 Wines Of The Year' -Wine Enthusiast 2019
'A regional reference point.' - Somm Select

Biondi's Outis Rosso is made of Nerello Mascalese, with the permitted addition of up to 20% Nerello Cappuccio, of which Ciro Biondi takes full advantage. This is the most elegant wine I have tasted from Sicily, and one of the best; it shows an almost Burgundian combination of finesse and substance, leaving a wonderful lingering impression on the palate. The wine shows no overt oak, only excellent, clean and balanced winemaking. 11 days maceration, controlled low temperature fermentation in stainless steel with selected yeasts. Aged 10 months in a combination of stainless steel and neutral barrels.

90 Points - '19 Vinous - *"Crushed cherries, plums, sweet rose petals and cinnamon aromas form an inviting bouquet. This is soft-textured and juicy in style. Citrus hints offset a silky wave of ripe red fruits toward the close. Finishes with medium-length and a cranberry-like crunch, leaving a gentle tension to linger."*

2020 **Ciro Biondi 'CISTERNA FUORI' Etna Rosso**



'Cisterna Fuori' means 'outside cistern' and is a reference to an ancient water cistern in the middle of this vineyard site. This vineyard has been owned by the Biondi family for many centuries and is also used to grow red grapes. The vines lie on the side of a spent crater, which dates 125 BCE, and is very steep with supporting dry stone terraced walls. This site is in the opposing crater to 'San Nicolo', and is essentially across the street. Despite the closer proximity, the variety in exposure and temperature creates two totally different wines - San Nicolo's elegance and perfume offers an amazing contrast to Cisterna Fuori's power and complexity. Ciro and Stef Biondi were married in the very heart of this vineyard in 2004. 80% Nerello Mascalese, 20% Nerello Cappuccio. 11 days maceration, controlled low temperature fermentation in stainless steel with selected yeasts. 18 months in 225 and 500 L neutral barrels.

93 Points – '19 James Suckling – *"Aromas of iron, black cherry and nutmeg. Medium-to full-bodied with fine tannins and very nice transparency. Ash and smoke color the red and black fruit. There is some ground spice character here, too. Coriander and white pepper. Mineral finish."*

GIROLAMO RUSSO, SICILY

-ORGANIC-

'Italy's answer to top-tier red Burgundy!'

- David Lynch, Sommelier

Founded in 2005 by Giuseppe Russo, in memory of his late father. The family are natives of Passopisciaro, one of the key villages at the heart of the rebirth of Etna's most important grape variety, Nerello Mascalese. This is the north face of Europe's largest active volcano, Mount Etna, in the north-eastern corner of Sicily. The Russos have 26 hectares of land in and around Passopisciaro, with 15 hectares of vineyards surrounded by olive and hazelnut groves. The vineyards are high up, between 650 and 780 metres above sea level, inland from the beautiful town of Taormina. Many of the free-standing bush vines are over 80 years old, surviving in harmony with Etna's black, mineral-rich volcanic soil. Giuseppe works the vineyards organically and makes the wines himself. He vinifies each parcel separately, seeking out their individual identities in a series of wines that reflect the diverse character of their terroirs. Did You Know: Some of the lava flows are so recent that you can't even plant on them!



2021 Girolamo Russo Etna Rosso 'a'Rina'



All estate bottled fruit. Vines range from 20-100-years of age, rooted in weathered volcanic lava flows on the north side of Mount Etna, head-trained or modified head-trained. 94% Nerello Mascalese, 6% Nerello Cappuccio. 15 days maceration, controlled low temperature fermentation in steel and plastic tanks with indigenous yeasts. 16 months in 2,500 L barrel, cement and used barrique. **Certified Organic!**

94 Points – Vinous – *“Plenty of citrus, orange peel, honey and beeswax with some pumice and volcanic soil character. Medium body, with firm and integrated tannins that are energetic and integrated.”*

93 Points – Robert Parker



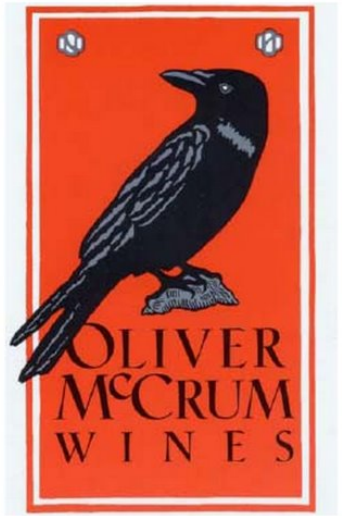
OLIVER MCCRUM SPIRITS

Italian spirits are almost as varied as the wines - grappa, the bitter liqueur called amaro, vermouth, and other temptations like limoncello and nocino. Our criteria are the same for spirits as they are for wine: we want typical, distinctive products, mostly from smaller producers. Spirits can have regional typicity too! Aperitivo is the general Italian word for a drink before a meal. The word aperitivo comes from the Latin verb 'aperire', meaning 'to open'; aperitivi are thought to stimulate the appetite. The three different kinds of drink used as aperitivi, or as ingredients for them, are as follows and all can be used with a splash of soda water, and are also used to make cocktails, such as the Negroni, which contains sweet Vermouth and Bitter (and gin):

Vermouth, wine with herb-infused alcohol added to bring the total alcohol up to roughly 18-20% by volume, then sweetened to the appropriate level for the vermouth type (the types are Sweet, which is red in color; Dry, white with less sugar; or White, with a little more sugar.)

Aperitivo, an infusion of herbs and spices in pure alcohol that is generally slightly sweeter and slightly less alcoholic (11-20% by volume).

Bitter, an infusion of herbs and spices in pure alcohol that is generally higher in alcohol (20-30% by volume) and a little less sweet.



BORDIGA, NORTH PIEDMONT

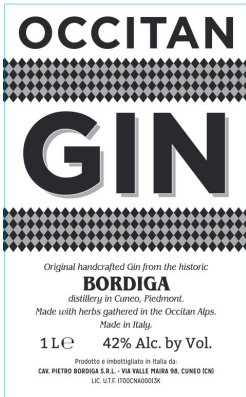
'The Gem of Piedmont'

Bordiga is different from many of the Vermouth labels sold now because they produce the vermouth themselves, they don't buy it from a producer, and they've been producing quality Vermouth for over a hundred years. The winery says 'Bordiga is a producer, not a label,' and 'Tradition is our present, and our future.'

Vermouth, Amaro, and Gin from the Piedmontese Alps Since 1888 At the end of the nineteenth century Pietro Bordiga owned a famous bar in Turin. He decided to use his knowledge of botanical flavorings and the extraction of essential oils to open a distillery, and he decided to locate it in a city near the mountains where the wild plants used to make amaro and other spirits grew. He chose the city of Cuneo, a little over an hour south of Turin and close to the Occitan Alps. The climate here, influenced the mountains and by proximity to the ocean just over the Alps, creates herbs that are particularly rich in essential oils and aromas. The distillery used to be in the historic heart of Cuneo and was then moved to the road just outside town leading to the mountains, where it is now. At the heart of the building is the ancient copper pot-still that dates from 1888. Bordiga make all of their own infusions, and many of the wild plants they use, such as gentian, juniper and chamomile, are still gathered in the Alps nearby. They produce Vermouth, including the classic Vermouth di Torino, Gin, and a number of Amaros (herbal liqueurs with a balance towards bitterness). The word 'vermouth' is a corruption of the German word ('wermut') for the bitter herb wormwood (*Artemisia Absinthium*), which is still part of the botanical base of vermouth, although regulated by the US government. The original classic areas for the production of vermouth were in Chambéry in France, and in Piedmont, south of Turin, both part of the historic duchy of Savoy.



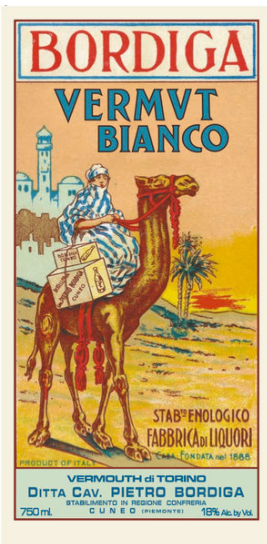
Bordiga Occitan Gin



'Top 100 Spirits of 2020' -Wine Enthusiast
93 Points - Wine Enthusiast

Gin was first made by Bordiga in 1889, and this gin is made from the original Bordiga recipe. Only four main botanical flavors are used, from the Occitan Alps, hence the name. The four are angelica, juniper, cardamom, and a secret ingredient (with traces of orange and lemon peel). Occitan Gin has traditionally been made exclusively from juniper that grows wild (not cultivated) in the Maritime Alps, near Cuneo, which are some of the highest mountains in Europe. This combination of altitude and maritime influence enriches the essential oils of the juniper berries grown here, giving them a unique flavor; the berries are picked by hand. The different botanicals are macerated separately in triple-distilled grain alcohol, then distilled before being bottled. It's double distilled in their copper pot still which is also from the late 1800's. The still is actually so old it's now protected as a historic artifact! Clean, fresh, and easy to drink, try this in a Negroni with their delicious vermouth for a true Italian cocktail.

Bordiga Vermouth Bianco di Torino



This classic vermouth type is based on Piedmontese white wines, including some Moscato, and infused with a wide range of different botanicals, many of them grown in the Occitan Alps near the winery. The flavor of this vermouth is complex and vivid, with an excellent balance of sweetness and bitterness. Some vermouths taste strongly of a single botanical, but the interplay of components here is distinctive and delicious. We drink it with a splash of soda water as an aperitivo, and you should too. At least 30 botanical flavorings are used, including exotic plants like nutmeg and coriander, typically Italian plants like fennel seed, typical Piedmontese plants such as absinthe (locally referred to as Erba Bianca, botanically Artemisia Absinthium), and exclusively from the Piedmontese Alps plants such as gentian root (Gentiana Lutea) and gentian flowers (Gentiana Acaulis). These botanicals are collected wild by hand in the mountains, not cultivated, and allowed to dry at altitude (they keep their aromas better this way). They are infused individually, not all together, because different botanicals have different requirements for the best extraction of essential oils. Once all the extractions have been done, the infusions are added to the base wine, and the mixture is left for 10 days before the sugar (Italian or French beet sugar) is added; then that mixture is left for 5-6 days before being cold stabilized. In other words, this vermouth has a strong local component, and is entirely traditional.

Requirements for authentic Vermouth di Torino:

1. the producer must be 'historic,' which is to say must have been operating for at least 50 years (Bordiga has been in continuous operation since 1888)
2. the recipe or the brand must be historic (again, Bordiga Vermouth was first produced at the end of the 19th century)
3. must be produced in an artisanal manner
4. must be produced in Piedmont
5. must be based on wine, and have an alcohol content of at least 16°, and must use the botanical flavorings typical of the area.

ROSSA SICILY, SOUTH SICILY

-SUSTAINABLE-



Amara, the feminine form of 'amaro,' is made by an orange grower on the east coast of Sicily, just south of Catania, in sight of the enormous volcano that dominates this whole corner of the island, Mount Etna. Sicilian blood oranges from the Tarocco variety are famous throughout Italy for juice (a glass of Tarocco juice in Sicily in season is a revelation), but this grower decided to also use the zest from his oranges as a raw material for an amaro. As you'd expect, orange zest is the main flavor in Amara, but it is supported by a range of herbal and bitter notes, with a very attractive balance between orange and herbal flavors, and also between sweetness and bitterness (some amaro is so sweet as to be essentially herbal liqueur, this is more serious). Amara works very well as a Spritz with soda water and a slice of lemon, according to Marie here in our office, and we are looking forward to the creation of craft cocktails made with it. A glass after dinner certainly does the trick for me. -O.M.



Amara Rossa D'Arancia Rossa

Only the best blood orange peel meets an herbs and sugar infusion: that procedure gives birth to a natural digestive, with unique and strong taste, golden and crystal clear, produced in small quantities, with the tradition in mind and using no additives. With its mediterranean scent every bottle embodies the love for our Sicily.

IL GUSTO DI AMALFI, AMALFI COAST

-ORGANIC-

Our friend and winemaker from the Amalfi Coast, Luigi Reale, introduced us to Valentino Esposito and Mario Anastasio, who make our liqueurs under the label 'Il Gusto di Amalfi.' Their small facility, which looks like a large kitchen, is in the little town of Praiano, just down the coast from Positano. This area is famous for growing amazing citrus, especially lemons; these lemons are grown by Mario and his family and friends.



Il Gusto Di Amalfi Limoncello



Il Gusto di Amalfi

LIMONCELLO
LIQUEUR

Made in Italy 750 ml Alc. by Vol. 30%

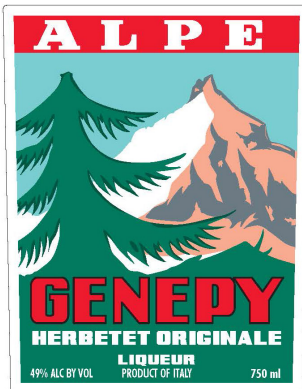
Most fine wines and spirits are great because of the way they balance different components, but limoncello is different. Limoncello is a pure infusion of lemon peel, and the quality of the limoncello depends on the quality of the lemons. 'Il Gusto di Amalfi' is a tiny company that takes organically-grown lemons from the hillsides of the Amalfi Coast (near Tramonti), peels them by hand with potato-peelers in small batches, and macerates them in pure grain alcohol in stainless steel vessels like very small wine tanks. (Commercial limoncello is sometimes bitter, a sign that the pith of the fruit has been accidentally included with the zest; hand-peeling avoids this.) The variety of lemon is 'Sfusato Amalfitano', and the groves are owned and farmed by Mario Anastasio's friends and family. This limoncello is pure expression of an excellent raw material, and that's it. Drink cold but not iced as a digestivo; the liqueur may need to be shaken occasionally to mix in the lemon oils that rise to the top. I bet this would also make a killer Tom Collins with some good Gin. -O.M.

DISTILLERIA ALPE, VALLE D'AOSTA

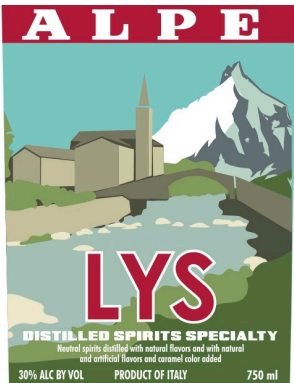
Fulvio Calvetti is the third-generation distiller for Alpe, a distillery started by his grandfather in 1948. Located in the Valle d'Aosta, a mountainous area in the northwest corner of Italy near France and Switzerland, Alpe produces a range of products showcasing the area's fresh alpine herbs. This artisan production, marked by constant research for the best quality, follows the traditions of Aosta Valley's ancient distillers. Thus, with the same procedures and perfection, our liqueurs, produced by brewing and distilling rare alpine herbs, entirely preserve the perfumes and healthy properties of the Italian Alps.



Distilleria Alpe Genepy Herbetet

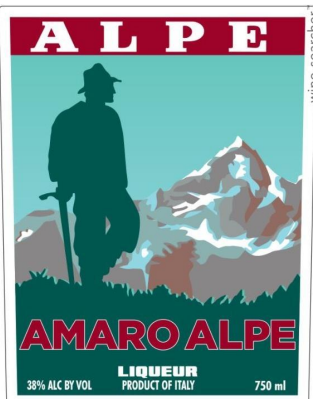


This name brings together certain small rare mountain herbs belonging to the Artemisia genus. During the summer months, they grow at an altitude of 2000 metres in their natural habitat, namely at the foot of glaciers, along the length of the western Alpine range. We use Artemisia genipi (spicata) and Artemisia mutellina. These uniquely scented artemisiae are by far the most aromatic and offer the highest concentration of active ingredients which produce a stimulating action on the digestive tract. Herbetet Genepy is named after the Herbetet Peak in the Gran Paradiso Massif, where the Genepy herb grows copiously. Due to its many healthy properties Genepy was known in Aosta Valley as the “aspirin of the mountain folk”.



Distilleria Alpe Amaro Lys

Features a recipe of twenty different herbs including gentian and gentianella, blended with bitter botanicals such as rhubarb root. The alpine herbs are picked in August, then dried, then infused in pure alcohol together with the other botanicals for about a month. Part of the liquid is re-distilled after infusion, to give the liqueur a more persistent flavor and to clarify color. It's bottled at 30%, after the addition of spring water and sugar. As amaros go, this is only mildly bitter, perfect for an after-dinner digestivo. Almond and vanilla notes balanced by citrus and bitter baking spices, making the Lys a fantastic cocktail option for Negroni variations, or a complex drink to be sipped neat.



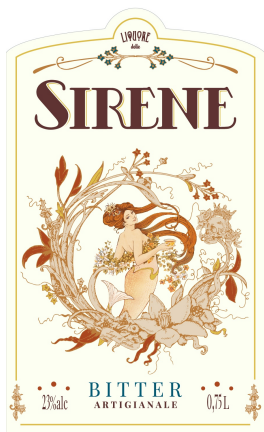
Distilleria Alpe Amaro

An amaro made mostly from more than twenty locally grown herbs, roots and flowers, including gentian, artemisia (genepy), and mint, with the addition of bitter botanicals like rhubarb root. The alpine herbs are picked in August, then dried, then infused in pure alcohol together with the other botanicals for about a month. Part of the liquid is then re-distilled, to give the liqueur a more persistent flavor and to clarify color. It's bottled at 38%, after the addition of spring water and sugar. Alpe is more bitter than Lys.

LIQUORE DELLE SIRENE, LAKE GARDA, ITALY

-ORGANIC-

The Liquori delle Sirene are a collection of bitters and liqueurs made by the lovely Elisa Carta, a trained sommelier and olive oil taster, and a passionate herbalist. All of her products were born on Lake Garda, and were inspired by its gardens, colors, sunsets and aromas. Many of the botanicals come from here. The name Sirene is a tribute to one of the most beautiful bays in the lake, Baia delle Sirene (Bay of the Sirens), and its story. Liquori delle Sirene are the fruit of a long and passionate research, and the reworking of old family recipes for Italian liqueurs and elixirs. No chemicals or artificial coloring are used in any of Elisa's products. Elisa makes her liqueurs near Lake Garda, using recipes handed down to her that have been in her family for generations. They are artisanal creations made from herbs, flowers, roots and fruit; botanical ingredients that are infused singly in alcohol, then combined to give complex, distinctive aroma and flavor. Most of the botanicals she uses come from around the lake with the exception of some from the Far East that do not grow in Italy but have been traditionally used in Italian liqueurs for centuries, such as Chinese Rhubarb Root. Mount Baldo, on the Verona side of Lake Garda, has been called 'Hortus Europae,' the garden of Europe, for its environment and its richness of flora and fauna, and Elisa has made a detailed study of the herbs of this ecosystem. Many of the local botanicals were no longer grown here until just a decade or so ago as much of the population left for big cities and higher wages after the World Wars. A group of young Mount Baldo residents, disenchanted with city life, are staying in the region and have banded together to resurrect the botanical industry that the region was previously famous for. They have replanted fields, are farming organically, hand harvesting, and using proper cutting and drying techniques. The local economy has responded enthusiastically and Elisa is sourcing some of her herbs from them to make her range of bitters and liqueurs.



Liquore Delle Sirene Bitter

A bittersweet aperitivo liqueur made from 23 botanicals. Botanicals include olive and lemon tree leaves, linden and acacia flowers, wild rose berries, sweet and bitter orange, absinthe, gentian and ginger. All infusions are done individually, blended according to Elisa's recipe and then rested for a short time in small oak cask. A light filtration is performed with paper filter to preserve color and aroma. No chemicals or artificial coloring are used. Though the category is dominated by more traditional red bitters, Sirene is characterized by a beautiful golden-auburn hue. The flavor is soft and warming but not overly sweet. The floral and herbal botanicals play off of each other and the kina and gentian surface on the finish, which is long and balanced with notes of salted caramel and vanilla. Sirene Bitter is wildly versatile and works in a wide variety of different cocktails. Some people enjoy using it as you would the traditional red variety: on the rocks with soda as an aperitivo; in a Negroni or Boulevardier; or it can also be enjoyed as you would an amaro, at the end of a meal as a traditional Italian digestivo. Other good pairings include ginger beer, bergamot or grapefruit soda.

MAP OF ITALY

Valle d'Aosta
Distilleria Alpe

Trentino Alto-Adige
Erste & Neue

Lake Garda
Liquore delle Sirene



Piedmont
Bordiga

Sicily
Girolamo Russo,
Amara Rossa, Biondi