

Italian, Not Pinot Grigio

Written by Jacqueline Coleman, BT Contributor
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Red, white, and you: Agreeable wine for \$15 or less

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Pinot Grigio lovers everywhere rejoice when summer rolls around. Hot, sticky weather seems like the best environment to sip a zesty, refreshing white wine.

There's no doubt that one of the most popular white wines here is a great choice for summertime sipping, but what happens if there is no Pinot Grigio? For die-hard Italian white wine drinkers, this may seem like an emergency, but this month, we're covering several equally refreshing Italian whites that can take over in the event of any Pinot Grigio outage.

Italian wine labels can be difficult to decipher unless you know what you're looking for when decoding them. European labels in general emphasize the region where the wine is from, whereas New World labels highlight the grape varieties. Therefore, if you're used to grabbing your trusty Pinot Grigio, it may seem daunting even to try to find a comparable Italian white if you don't know which grapes grow in which regions.

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Have no fear. Look for some of these labels on your next wine shopping spree, and enjoy a refreshing Italian white this summer.

The **2016 Piccolo Fiore Bianco di Sicilia** is a steal for \$7.99 at Whole Foods. This is a perfect go-to wine in hot weather, with bright, fresh citrus aromas and flavors throughout. It's a soft and light wine with an energizing finish. Think about serving it as an aperitif or with a light summer salad.

For all that poolside sipping, consider the **2017 Santa Cristina Bianco**. If the first wine is light, this wine is extra-light. Bright floral and lemon-citrus flavors greet you on the nose and palate, and invigorate your senses. There's nothing complicated about this wine, and it won't linger long. If you think of it as a refreshing spiked summer spritzer, you won't be disappointed.

With elegance and sophistication, the **2018 Villa Rosa Gavi di Gavi** is the only wine of this group labeled DOCG, which is the highest designation of quality in Italian wines. For \$14.99 at Total Wine, this may be the best price for a DOCG Gavi di Gavi, a young wine made from the Cortese grape. It has a beautiful floral nose, with some peaches and mixed lighter fruit aromas floating around. A very enjoyable soft and smooth wine, this bottle would be a lovely accompaniment to your summertime fish dinner.

For something a little stronger in flavor, consider the **2017 Casale Burgio Catarratto** from Sicily. Strong apricot aromas hit hard, with sweet peaches and tangerines following close behind. Throughout the nose and mouth, honeysuckle flavors tantalize the senses. More medium-bodied than some of the others, this Catarratto wine is characterized by the powerful honeyed apricot flavors that make it a delectable and fruit-forward warm-weather wine.

The **2017 Saladini Pilastris Falerio** is a blend of Trebbiano, Pecorino, Passerina, and Chardonnay, and is the fullest bodied wine of these Italian whites. Strong citrus and toasted almond aromas dominate the nose, with ripe, balanced citrus and apple coating the tongue. There is more complexity to this wine than some of the others, and it has a longer finish with a lingering green apple flavor in the back of the palate. Out of the wines in this month's lineup, this would be the best one to pair with a dinner of chicken marsala.

Another great poolside wine is the **2017 Ippolito 1845 Mare Chiaro Cirò Bianco**, which is a

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100 percent Greco Bianco wine. On the nose, you'll find fresh peaches and tropical fruits, while a crisp, light, floral experience awaits you on the palate. Some minerality is present to add crispness in the mouth, and light peach flavors linger on the finish. Another uncomplicated wine, this is a lovely option for white wine lovers at a backyard barbecue or on a Saturday boating excursion.

Made from organic grapes, the **2017 La Cappuccina Soave** is a nice and dry, medium-bodied option for an Italian-themed dinner party. Soave wines are made from the Garganega grape grown in the Soave area near the city of Verona in the Veneto region of Italy. Apples and apricots are the leading flavors, followed by subtle citrus, with fresh acidity and some smooth honey showing up for the finish. This would be an excellent wine to serve with chicken or fish in a citrus or light cream sauce.

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