



HOLIDAYS 2023

CORTI BROTHERS

PANETTONE AND VENEZIANA: LOISON, BARDI AND COCCHI

When panettone rolls around, you know it's Christmas in Italy. This year we have the usual suspects and once again, the delicious Cocchi Panettone al Vermouth di Torino. Then there are also the Veneziana and the Filone, a loaf shaped bread similar to a panettone. In Italy, panettone is seasonal, but there is a movement afoot to make it all year round. In San Francisco, local bakeries do make it all year long, since it is wonderful toasted for breakfast and some people can't resist eating it all the time. However, for the time being, in Italy, it still remains a traditional, SEASONAL, product. Loison's Filone, the loaf shaped style, is the only one to be made all year long.

I, for one, am in the seasonal camp. But then, for how long...? Here are the Panettoni, Veneziane, and the like for the Holidays 2023.

COCCHI PANETTONE AL VERMOUTH di TORINO: kilo size, wrapped. \$33.99 (#5800)

BARDI PANETTONE ALTO: traditional tall shape, kilo, boxed \$23.99 (#5801)

BARDI PANETTONE BASSO: low shape, kilo, boxed \$26.99 (#5802)

BARDI PANETTONE SENZA CANDITI: no candied fruit, only raisins, alto, wrapped \$24.99 (#5803)

BARDI PANDORO: the New Year's cake, without candied fruit, boxed \$25.99 (#5804)

LOISON PANETTONE, VENEZIANA, FILONE

LIMONE: with raisins, candied lemon peel and lemon cream, boxed \$37.19 (#5805)

AGRUMATO: (Five citrus fruits) replaces Chinotto, boxed \$37.89 (#5806)

CLASSICO A.D. 1476: with raisins, orange and citron peel, Manara vanilla, boxed \$35.99 (#5807)

MARRON GLACÉ: with marron glacé pieces and cream, boxed \$38.29 (#5808)

CLASSICO: with raisins, orange and citron peel, wrapped \$29.99 (#5809)

REGAL CIOCCOLATO: with chocolate, boxed \$35.99 (#5811)

FICO di CALABRIA: with raisins and Calabrian white Dotato fig, boxed \$39.29 (#5812)

AMARENA: with large black cherries, boxed \$35.99 (#5813)

ALLE ROSE: with Ligurian rose syrup, raisins and rose cream, boxed \$36.99 (#5814)

A.D. 1476 LATA: In this year's decorative tin, 750g \$35.99 (#5815)

CREMA: with vanilla cream, wrapped \$29.99 (#5816)

MANDARINO di CIACULLI: with raisins and late mandarin from Sicily, boxed \$36.99 (#5817)

NOËL: with raisins, candied pear, cinnamon, clove and star anise, boxed \$35.99 (#5818)

A.D. 1476: boxed, 500g, with raisins, candied orange and citron peel, Manara vanilla, \$26.99 (#5819)

PANETTONCINO: boxed 100g, the smallest made \$9.99 (#5820)

CLASSICO MAGNUM PANETTONE

3 KILO \$89.19 (#5821) **5 KILO** \$125.99 (#5822) **10 KILO** \$249.00 (#5823)

VENEZIANA AMARENE e CANELLA: Cherries and cinnamon, wrapped, 550g \$25.99 (#5824)

VENEZIANA CIOCCOLATO e SPEZIE: Chocolate and spices, wrapped, 550g \$25.99 (#5825)

VENEZIANA ALBICOCCA e SPEZIE: Candied apricots, ginger, spices, wrapped, 550g \$24.99 (#5826)

FILONE FRUTTA: with raisins and orange peel, boxed 500g \$16.49 (#5828)

FILONE UVA: only raisins, boxed 500g \$16.49 (#5829)

FILONE PERA e SPEZIE: candied pear, raisins, spices, boxed 500g \$16.99 (#5830)

FILONE LIMONE: Amalfi lemons, Piemonte hazelnut icing, boxed 500g \$16.99 (#5831)

FILONE MANDARINO: Ciaculli mandarin, raisins, Piemonte hazelnut icing, boxed 500g \$16.99 (#5832)

CORTI BROTHERS AMADOR COUNTY ZINFANDEL 2022

In 2015 Corti Brothers had made at Andis winery in Amador County a wine to remember the 50th anniversary of the Amador County Zinfandel made by Charles Myers, a friend in Sacramento who, as a home winemaker, made the 1965 Zinfandel that started Bob Trinchero of Sutter Home Winery in St. Helena on his first vintage of Amador Zinfandel in 1968. Charles is gone, but Bob and I are still here, and the 2015 vintage was a delicious wine. In 2022, I decided to try it again, using Charles's notes on how he made the 1965 wine. We got lucky. The grapes came from the mature vineyard at the Old Massoni Ranch and were harvested just the day before a heat wave hit Amador county at harvest in 2022. This wine is unusual for the area since it has only 12.5% alcohol naturally. Nothing was added and nothing taken away. As I said, we got lucky. But it only proves that this kind of zinfandel can be made in Amador County, but you have to want to do it. The production was less than the 2015 and is in both bottles and magnums.

This is a very pretty zinfandel. It is not a zinfandel for the ages, but a delicious drinking wine that will be enjoyable for some time and will give a lot of pleasure. Right now, this is the kind of wine I like to drink. It is not a wine to "make old bones with," and it is probably not what a lot of zinfandel lovers want to see in the grape. But it is delicious and a bottle in two people may not be enough wine. But it is a very valid style, rarely, if ever found in the area and a stroke of luck in getting it made. With wine, as in life, sometimes you win and sometimes you don't. This is a winner.

The label with Wayne Thiebaud's painting of Charles Myers reading, called "A man reading" is the same as was used on the 2015 bottling to honor the man who first made the wine.

CORTI BROTHERS AMADOR COUNTY ZINFANDEL 2022, 12.5%

\$29.99 750ml (#5833) \$323.00 cs/12 (#5833C) \$59.99 magnum (#5834) \$323.00 cs/6 (#5834C)

WHISKY RISING, 2nd edition, STEFAN VAN EYCKEN, revised and updated

This is a book on Japanese whisky--if not the last word on the subject, close to it. The author, Stefan van Eycken lives in Tokyo and teaches music while devoting his odd hours to whisky from all lands, but Japan is particular. This is the second edition. If size has anything to do with it--the first edition was some 399 pages long--this second edition is 639 pages long! Spending just a bit of time looking over Japanese whisky, the entire class has exploded into a world of products, now made more sensible and eminently more understandable with Stefan's book. Recent changes in Japanese law have also made Japanese whisky a definite class of product rather than what it used to be, where a lot of Scotland found its way into bottles with Kanji and Katakana on the label. It is as if an entire world has been discovered that before was vaguely known, but now has become a completely different world than what was before. We should all be grateful for the work that Stefan van Eycken has done. Available through good bookstores and Amazon.

LUXARDO 200th ANNIVERSARY MARASCHINO

The Italian company LUXARDO is probably more famous now for its cherries used in cocktail making than for its main product the cherry liqueur called MARASCHINO. Yet the firm has been making it since 1821, first on the Dalmatian coast in what was Yugoslavia and then as now, in the Colli Euganei, just outside of Padova in Italy's Veneto. Luxardo Maraschino was so famous that it created a whole slew of imitators, including of its packaging. Luxardo is the first firm to win international notoriety for its handling of trademark charges for its Maraschino. With 200 years of history under the same family, Luxardo has entered the ranks of Les Henokiens, the association of family firms with at least 200 years of history, still in the same family.

To celebrate its 200th anniversary, 2021, which could not have come at a worse time--the middle of the Covid period--the Luxardo family has used a very precious distillate, an aged "dry" Maraschino which they used to sell called Perla Dry to confect this 200th Anniversary bottling which is a delight to offer.

A clear liquid, water white, the 200th Anniversary bottling is in a blue leather presentation coffret, bottled in the flagon shaped bottle used for the 19th century Riserva, semiwrapped, as are all the Luxardo Maraschino bottles. The base has been aged for some 50 years partially in large larchwood casks which do not impart any color to the distillate, but make it smooth and harmonious. Maraschino is similar to Kirsch, also a cherry distillate, but with a character all its own, having been distilled from the Luxardo clone of Marasca cherries. It is a sweetened liqueur that is irreplaceable in mixed drinks and of late, not much drunk on its own. But it used to be, hence its fame and fortune.

There were only 4,999 bottles of this bottling for the world. If you want to have a real specialty, here you have it. Maraschino improves in bottle, gaining finesse and delicacy the longer it stays in bottle. I enjoy Maraschino over ice after dinner, It is indispensable with sliced, fresh pineapple for dessert. If you want to make a Martinez cocktail, it is absolutely necessary, but you don't have to use the 200th Anniversary bottling. Use the regular bottling. The 200th Anniversary bottling should be brought out on splendid occasions and special feasts, just because we won't see another anniversary bottling in our lifetimes. Enough said.

LUXARDO MARASCHINO 200TH Anniversary Bottling, blue leather coffret 40% \$228.00 700ml.(#5835)

ANDIS SCIOPELOT 2021

This is a very special red wine made at Andis winery from two very different red varieties grown in the Sierra Foothills. One variety is called SCHIOPPETINO, a variety which almost disappeared from Friuli where it is native. It was revived in the 1960s and has gone on to become a darling of Italian wine fans. The other variety is CINSULT, which cannot decide how it wants its name spelled either with an "l" or without an "l"

The blend is delicious. The majority is Cinsault and can be inferred from the back label. The name is the acoustical equivalent of the name in Friulan dialect for Schioppettino. This variety lends its rather definite, sharp, crisp character to the more soft Cinsault making the blend just a delicious, savory, mouthful that prompts another mouthful, until the bottle is finished. I can't tell you how the wine will develop because the blend has never been made before, but both varieties age well and the synergy between them may well make this a revelation. Right now, I am enjoying it very much for its snappy freshness and harmonious balance. Nothing sticks out and everything seems to be in place. It is a wine to take advantage of and to be seduced.

ANDIS WINERY SCIOPELOT 2021 Sierra Foothills, \$22.99 750ml (#5836) \$248.00 cs/12 (#5836C)

TERMS OF SALE: This list supersedes all others. All taxable items, such as wine, beer, spirits, books will be taxed at the rate of 8.75%. This is for all sales since we sell in California. Foodstuffs are not taxable. Shipping will be charged at prevailing rates. PLEASE NOTE: In extreme weather, either hot or cold, please give us a shipping address where your order may be properly received and stored. Corti Brothers cannot be responsible for items left without protection. Please order early for best selection. Shipping times increase during the busy Holiday season.

CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR WINE TASTING, 2023
BEST OF SHOW WHITE WINE--NEW CLAIRVAUX ASSYRTIKO 2022

This is a white wine variety grown and produced at a monastery. The Abbey of Our Lady of New Clairvaux is a Trappist monastery founded in 1955 on part of the Vina vineyard and winery property of Governor Leland Stanford, which, when established, was the largest vineyard and winery in the world. It suffered various vicissitudes, and in 1955 some 450 acres of the original property were purchased by the Trappist Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky for the establishment of a daughter monastery, New Clairvaux. The Trappists are a branch of the Cistercian order, called of the "Strict Observance," yet remain part of the Cistercians responsible for the great winemaking properties in Germany, France and Spain. The monks essentially drained swampland to produce some of Europe's most renowned vineyard lands--Think Clos Vougeot and Kloster Eberbach.

In the early 2000s, New Clairvaux decided to plant some grapes since their property was originally a vineyard, now producing walnuts and prunes. They planted vines, and of the varieties planted, two were Greek: Assyrtiko from Santorini and Moschofilero from the Peloponesus. Both have done very well in the area which is very warm and where these varieties do very well. The Assyrtiko in particular. It is here that the first planting of Greek varieties were made in California, and the present result shows why: The California State Fair Wine Tasting awarded the New Clairvaux Assyrtiko the Best of Show in 2023.

Winemaking is overseen by Aimée Sunseri, who also is the winemaker for her family's winery, Nichelini in Chiles Valley, an off shoot of Napa Valley to the east. At New Clairvaux, the monks grow the grapes and Aimée makes the wine, in a wing of the original winery building, which, when Stanford built it, was two acres under roof. The then world's largest facility of its kind.

Vina is about 17 miles to the north of Chico, California, and merits a visit both for the wines produced and for its new church which was reconstructed using stone from the Chapter House of a previously torn down Spanish Cistercian monastery once purchased by William Randolph Hearst for his Winton ranch. It was never built at Winton, but was rebuilt with additional new stones cut and reassembled at Vina.

About two hours north of Sacramento, New Clairvaux merits your attention, both for its wines and its Sacred Stones.

New Clairvaux Assyrtiko is a pale, crisp, fragrant, stoney-like white wine that does well with a few years of bottle age, as does the white wine of Santorini. It is a revelation in what can be grown if you know what to grow. Clean, snappy with natural acidity, and dry, New Clairvaux's Assyrtiko shows that more than what we thought able to grow well in California can be found in some of the most unlikely places in the world. If you have not tried it, you should. A new world awaits you.

NEW CLAIRVAUX ASSYRTIKO 2022, Tehama County, \$23.99 750ml (#5837) \$259.00 cs/12 (#5837C)

COCCHI RISERVA REALE VERMOUTH: The last stock in the world

I was pleasantly surprised on a recent trip to Piemonte to be told that Corti Brothers has the last stock for sale in the world of the magnificent COCCHI RISERVA REALE VERMOUTH DI TORINO. We had purchased a good stock some years ago and have it for sale. The product is now sold out at Cocchi, and the recipe will not be remade. So what we have is 18 cases of the original bottling of 1891 bottles. Not only is it now rare, it is also a collectible since both the name and recipe will not be reproduced.

Cocchi Riserva Reale Riserva was made with some of the herbs necessary for the recipe grown in the gardens of the royal palace, the VENARIA REALE, outside of Torino. The special mint from Pancalieri is used in a good amount which gives this vermouth its "cool and intriguing character."

Vermouth ages very well in bottle and a real treat is to be able to enjoy bottle aged vermouth, but in order to do this, you must cellar it yourself. Vermouth was and still is the aperitif “par excellence” for Italians. Served cool with a lemon twist, it really is the symbol of Italian hospitality.

I remember very vividly my grandparents going to visit my uncle Gino’s in-laws on Sunday after church. They drank a ceremonious glass of vermouth, and I who couldn’t drink was given the delightful cherry aged in brandy, a single one, served in a shot glass. I only got one and had to make it last!

Vermouth has made a serious comeback. I don’t know from what, since I have always loved vermouth, but it has now taken on a life of its own and it seems that vermouth is to be found everywhere. The idea of the “Vermouth Hour” is really just another way of spending some time enjoying a delicious, complex drink that until just a few years ago had a poor reputation. Yet try and make a good cocktail without a good vermouth. Except for some, it can’t be done. But if you want to experience aged vermouth, you have to age it yourself. Here we have done it for you.

COCCHI RISERVA REALE VERMOUTH 18% \$89.99 500ml (#5838) \$485.00 cs/6 (#5838C)

NOCCIOLINI DI CHIVASSO: The world’s small cookie

On a July, 2023, telephone conversation, Roberto Bava from Piemonte, asked if I knew what the world’s smallest cookie was. I did not know. He replied: “the Nocciolini di Chivasso.” These have made Chivasso, outside of Torino, world famous. So, on my last trip to Italy, I went to see them. They are definitely small and delicious. They are ½ inch in diameter and crunchy like an amaretto cookie made out of bitter almonds. They are also a PDO product, with a Protected Denomination of Origin, made from only three ingredients: Tonda Gentile Piemonte hazelnuts, sugar and eggwhite. Their history is slightly convoluted--we are in Italy after all and their history is said to begin in 1810. But they were made famous at the first of the great International Exhibitions where they were given medals for quality. The recipe now belongs to Chivasso city and there are only four producers. The Bonfante pastry shop is the largest and most famous of them.

They are made from a batter created with the toasting and peeling of the hazelnuts; their grinding with sugar and then the addition of beaten egg white. This batter is then sent through an ingenious machine which extrudes the batter in drops onto a paper baking sheet. Left to then dry slightly, they are baked until crisp and then removed from their paper.

Curiously, before the Fascist period in Italy in the 1920s, the Nocciolini were called either Noisettes, as in French for hazelnut or Noasetti or Nuasèt, the acoustical equivalent of the same in Piemontese dialect. But in that period, all foreign terms had to be Italianized, hence “hotel” became “albergo,” “menu” became “lista.” Bonfante Nocciolini are packed in the traditional pink colored bag which symbolizes Nocciolini. The other producers use the same color. Nocciolini are really small. Two cookies are about the size of a normal hazelnut and should be eaten by the handful. Not particularly sweet tasting due to the hazelnut intensity, they are a dry cookie with a very pleasant hazelnut flavor. If you can imagine eating a cookie as if it were a hazelnut, you understand Nocciolini di Chivasso. Served with a glass of vermouth, in particular a Vermouth Bianco, they would not be out of place. Moscato d’Asti washes them down very well, Caluso Passito is another dessert wine that is traditional with Nocciolini. Topping really good gelato with them is traditional as well as serving with zabaione, the fluffy egg yolk, sugar, and Marsala foam.

I think, once tried, you will come up with even more combinations for these smallest cookies in the world.

BONFANTE NOCCIOLINI DI CHIVASSO \$9.99 100g bag (#5839)

SNACKS FOR HOLIDAY PARTIES

During the holidays, when unexpected guests and spur-of-the-moment entertaining happens, there is nothing better than to not fret and have a stock of simple, delicious things to put out for people to munch on while getting a drink or thinking about getting one. I know that I, for one, like the ease that already prepared snacks offer for entertaining. And these three items might just entice you to keep them on hand all year round.

The first are the **TINGLY PEANUTS**. Very large, smooth peanuts are roasted with Sichuan peppercorns that give these large peanuts the “tingly” sensation so typical of Sichuan peppercorns. We buy them very frequently and consequently they are always very fresh and “tingly.” I brought a tin to give as a gift to a very important tea growing family in Uji, Japan. They were opened and during our visit finished! I had nothing to go on as to what to expect, but even with green Uji tea, they were literally devoured. The tingly experience is actually that of 50 Hertz, the frequency length that the Sichuan peppercorn produces. It is a pleasant, “tingly” sensation in the mouth, rather like a very mild electrical shock. But very agreeable. The flavor of the peanuts ain’t bad either.

TINGLY PEANUTS 5.47 oz tin \$6.99 each (#5840) \$37.00 case of 6 (#5840C)

Corti Brothers **TUERCA DE MAIZ**, our own packaging of toasted whole corn kernels is simply addicting. It is not I who says this, but the many customers who, trying a package, re-order more. They like them so much, the comment is nearly always, “They’re addictive.” They really are one of those, “I bet you can’t eat just one” items that are delicious and which, when put out, tend to disappear immediately, since you cannot eat just one! We package them in one pound bags and hope that they go around for a decent aperitif period. To be provident, one should always buy two bags.

CORTI BROTHER TUERCA DE MAIZ 16 oz bags \$4.69 (#5841) \$25.00 case of 6 (#5841C)

The last are the flavored pretzels of the Sisters of St. Benedict from Ferdinand, Indiana, that are not whole pretzels, but broken ones in three flavorings: Spicy, Honey Mustard, and Sweet pretzels. The Sisters originally are from Germany, brought to minister to the German immigrants in the Mid-West of our country and for some time they have baked to make money for their monastery. These pretzel pieces are also addictive and in pieces that will beg for a sampling of at least two or three, if not more.

With these three snacks, putting something out for drinks is utterly simple, easy, and delicious entertaining. You just open the container, pour the contents into an attractive bowl and set it out for compliments. If all entertaining were so simple and easy!

MONASTERY PRAYERFUL PRETZELS 12 oz bags \$10.49
Spicy (#5842) **Honey Mustard** (#5843) **Sweet** (#5844)

POJER e SANDRI FRUIT VINEGARS: CHERRY AND QUINCE

Fruit vinegars fall into two camps: one, flavored with fruit and the other, the real one, vinegars made from fermented fruit juice. The Trentino based winery POJER e SANDRI make their vinegar from fruit juice, pressed and fermented in a special vinegar cellar in the Val di Cembra, a porphyry mining area in northern Italy in the Trentino, where there are very few, if any, vineyards and wineries. Both vinegars begin life as freshly pressed juice from local cherries and quinces--pressed and fermented into wine--then acetically fermented to produce a 6 grain (60% acetic acid) vinegar with all the fragrance and flavor of the original fruit. They are not sweet, but dry, having the delicate scent of the original fruit. The Quince vinegar is golden in color and the Cherry, deep red like the skin of the raw fruit.

These vinegars are completely natural and unpasteurized so that with time, they will change color slightly, may throw a deposit and are still acetically active. All of this is completely natural. Over time, they may become turbid and can be used to start your own vinegar

What is very useful are the flavors. The Quince has that lovely, aromatic scent of ripe quince and the scent of well made, clean vinegar. It can be used just as you would any white vinegar, but having the “cotogna” scent which I find intoxicating. The Cherry vinegar is a deep red color, with the scent of mature Marasca cherries, a lightly sour cherry with great body. This can be used for any recipe calling for good red wine vinegar. The cherry scent merely complements the clean vinegar flavor.

A delicious summer drink can be made using one or the other of these vinegars, a slug in a glass topped up with chilled sparkling water and the water adjusted to suit your vinegar preference. Historically, this was “Posca,” the drink the Roman army marched on. It was vinegar flavored water, much healthier than was natural water.

POJER e SANDRI VINEGAR QUINCE 6% acidity \$19.99 250ml bottle (#5845) or **CHERRY** (#5846)

PHILIPPE GONET 2011 BLANC DE BLANCS CHAMPAGNE GRAND CRU, MAGNUMS

In 1969, Corti Brothers offered for the first time a Grower Champagne called Gonet Pere et Fils. It had been found for us by André Tchelistcheff on a trip he made to France. Gonet was the very first of the “grower” Champagnes to come to California. Philippe Gonet was a son who was instructor at the viticulture school in Avize. At the death of his father, Philippe took over the family firm. The house of Gonet is now a seventh generation firm in the Côtes des Blancs, specifically Le Mesnil sur Oger and Oger. We have just bought a rarity, a 2011 vintage Blanc de Blancs from the Grand Cru vineyards owned by the family in Le Mesnil sur Oger.

The best wine from the first importation was a 1961 Brut Champagne, acknowledged by San Francisco Bay Area customers to have been an exceptional wine. Now, almost fifty years later, we are offering magnums of a similar wine for your delectation. It is only in magnums and will be able to live for a good many years with careful cellaring. The magnums were just recently disgorged. But its best attribute is that it is now perfect for drinking and is at a special price for the Holidays 2023. Just like its predecessor many years ago, here is a wine not to be missed. In magnum, the best size for the best experience in wine, you can be certain of a glorious glass either as an aperitif or throughout a meal.

In Champagne there are 318 classified villages, only 17 are classified as Grand Cru. Gonet 2011 comes from only Les Mesnil and Oger vineyards owned by Gonet. Vine age is over 40 years old. It shows that exceptional wines are made from Chardonnay in years when black grapes do not achieve such high quality. I have often thought that Blanc de Blancs Champagnes are the best wines of the area both for their longevity and structure. Here is a lovely, powerful example of what is great Champagne.

Champagne Philippe Gonet finds itself in very good company. The family house and cellars are at the beginning of the street where both Delamotte and Salon are located. From their dining room window, Krug’s Clos de Mesnil is seen next door. The cellars are beneath the family “maison.”

PHILIPPE GONET 2011 BLANC DE BLANCS, Grand Cru, magnums

\$199.99 mag (#5847) \$1,079 cs/6 (#5847C)

(After January 30, 2024, the price goes to \$224.99 magnum and \$1,214 cs/6)

TO OUR CUSTOMERS:

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR CUSTOM AND TO WISH YOU A JOYFUL AND SERENE HOLIDAY SEASON AND A GOOD NEW YEAR.

Darrell Corti

