

Beyond Barolo: The crisp joy of Italian white wine



Though the reds are arguably more famous – the revered Barolos, the bold Super Tuscans, the classic Chiantis – the white wines of Italy are quickly on the rise. Often refreshing with notes of sun-ripened citrus and wild herbs, they are the orderable crowd-pleasers on any wine list.

Who doesn't like a Gavi? Everyone likes a Gavi! The bright, crisp Vermentino, the more generous Grillo and of course the ever present, inoffensively bland Pinot Grigio (admittedly the only wine I am yet to see the point of). The sparkling wines have been sidelined by that attention-hog, the ubiquitous, endlessly popular Prosecco but next time take a punt on the traditional method Trentodocs and Franciacortas. There are fewer of them around and they may be a tad more expensive, but they are worth it.

Italian wine is made to be drunk with Italian food – indeed there are few nations who take their mealtimes more seriously. Sadly, it is not always possible to jump on a jet to Tuscany for lunch, so here are some recent favourites.

Harry's Bar – Mayfair

This institution’s prestige was cemented at a recent dinner when the fabulous Joan Collins sat a few tables over. Only a star so glamorous could distract me from the opulent décor and even more opulent dishes. It is like stepping into an Italian foodie fairytale.

Seared scallops served with creamy ricotta and stuffed courgette flowers, Meuniere Dover Sole dripping in butter and a richly decadent tiramisu – all served with Ca’ Del Bosco Franciacorta, one of the best examples of this brilliant traditional method sparkling. Should you find yourself near their winery in Italy, it is worth a look for its eclectic art collection. The life-sized rhino suspended in the winery was quite the surprise.