

HIGH SPIRITS

THE
ELEMENTS
OF STYLE

Call it reverse chic or call it confidence—the results are the same: We're much less status-conscious when it comes to wine and spirits. Knowledgeable, yes. Looking for quality, sure. But \$3 wine gets as much attention as \$40 cognac nowadays—maybe more, since the \$3 wine is a discovery. Our trustworthy expert explains it all for you

THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS



By Colman Andrews

Late last

METODO CHAMPENOIS SPARKLING WINES
from Italy—*spumantes*, but not the sweet Asti variety—make terrific aperitifs. They're more refined than most Spanish and many American sparklers and less expensive than true champagne, but they're serious wines with good fruit and a champagnelike yeasty nose. The best are Ca' del Bosco (try their ultradry Dosage Zéro), Berlucchi and Antinori, all in the \$12 to \$18 range—or try the bargain-priced La Versa at around \$8 to \$10.

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of America's own fine bourbons, of course, but also the best sparkling wines of half a dozen countries, the best Dutch and English gins, the best rums of the Caribbean, the finest vodkas (from Japanese to Swedish, Smirnoff to Stolichnaya) and an array of first-class Scotch whiskies such as even Scotland rarely sees—as well as a veritable rainbow of sweet exotic cordials from every corner of the globe—*among many other things*. (If you want to expand the definition of the alcoholic beverage market just a little, we've even got whole cascades of domestic and imported mineral waters—those racy brand-name substitutes for, or enhancers of, the harder stuff.) My local *supermarket*, for heaven's sake, stocks South African sherry, chardonnay from Chile and Finnish cloud-berry liqueur. In the variety, quality, and (sometimes) sheer maverick novelty of what's available to us, Americans are probably the luckiest imbibers in the world.

METROPOLITAN HOME

MAY 1984 \$1.95

HOT PROPERTIES



The "A" list:

Giulio Ferrari Brut
Antinori Nature
Ca' Del Bosco Rose
Rainoldi Brut Nature
Valdo Prosecco

PHOTO: GRANT ROBERTS

By Regina Nadelson
Italy's new sparkle

One of the best-kept oenophile secrets is Italy's sparkling spumantes. They run the gamut from brut to refreshingly fruity, can stand up to hearty food and range from a rock-bottom \$3 to \$22. Just now becoming available in the U.S., they're a bit hard to find but worth the effort. The best are listed at left. Earning honorable mentions are: Ca' Del Bosco Franciacorta Pinot, Contratto Brut, Gran Cavit