

WINE EXPO / Enoteca Centrale / champagne World HQ

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featuring Conti Sertoli Salis

These brilliant comments appeared in the WINE EXPO's Holiday 2006 News

Roberto Rogness, the General Manager, is the author.

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It is matter of fairness and courtesy. Enjoy the reading! Paolo Boselli

Love Nebbiolo but need to pay your bills? Time to discover the Valtellina... "A valley surrounded by tall and terrible mountains, it makes really powerful wines."

In that brief but fundamentally correct description in his *Codice Atlantico*, Leonardo Da Vinci summed up the Valtellina, a remote and beautiful zona that has always been at the center of our selections as its top wines bring the depth of flavor of Barolo yet with the elegance and sensuality of Burgundy.

Conti Sertoli Salis, Tirano, Lombardia (Salis for short!)

"Last Stop...Tirano!" If you take the train from Milano to the Valtellina the tracks literally stop, blocked by a large steel and concrete barricade, at Tirano as you have come to the Swiss border and if you want to continue you will have to get off of one train and on to another. Instead, we suggest you pay a call on this estate (made world famous by our dear friend the late Cesare Salis who, despite being an actual Conte living in a fantastic centuries old Palazzo, was also wonderfully down to earth and a real renaissance guy besides). The Salis family has been making wines since 1637 (tasting notes of their Sforzato from that era can be found in *The Noble Red Wines of Italy* by Sheldon Wasserman!) but under Cesare's leadership and with the able assistance of dedicated enologist Claudio Introini they have truly set the standards for the zona, bringing them fame and distribution all over the world.

Salis Terrazze Retiche di Sondrio Bianco Elevato in Barrique *Torre della Sirena* 2003, Valtellina \$26.99

Ethereally scented blends of Rossola and Pignola (which are lightly colored RED varieties), this lovely Bianco is flowery and inviting on the nose with rich, luscious textures on the palate sure to please the resident Chard-o-Holic yet bring something more interesting to the table.

Conti Sertoli Salis Terrazze Retiche di Sondrio Rosso *Il Saloncello* 2001, Valtellina \$16.99

The softer, more feminine side of Nebbiolo: bright berries and a touch of black tea. Try it with Indian or Vietnamese for a nice change of pace.

Conti Sertoli Salis Valtellina Superiore *Capo di Terra* 2003, Lombardia \$25.99

100% Nebbiolo from incredibly steep terraced vineyards, harvested a tad overripe and given a whole berry fermentation for fruit and zest but then aged for 15 months in barriques for roundness and texture. This may just supplant the Sgubin Schioppettino as our red wine with fish wine of the year. The wine has the soft, smooth, almost too easy to drink textures of a nice Pinot Noir or Ripasso Valpo but a deeper, meatier, mineral driven flavor profile and enough acidity to deal with at least Salmon and Tuna if not Halibut or Catfish (and, of course, it will be magnificent with roast birds, veal or pork dishes).

Conti Sertoli Salis Valtellina Superiore *Corte della Meridiana* 1999, Lombardia \$31.99

Ok, now we are starting to get serious! Old vine Nebbiolo from the Grumello and Sassella zonas with a good bit of the fruit air dried before fermentation to add richness, depth and meat then aged traditionally in 450 liter barrels. Compare with Barbaresco at \$\$\$.

Conti Sertoli Salis Valtellina Sforzato *Canua* 2001, Lombardia \$49.99

Conti Sertoli Salis Valtellina Sforzato *Canua* 2001, Lombardia \$130.00 MAGNUM

Conti Sertoli Salis Valtellina Sforzato *Canua* 2001, Lombardia \$28.99 / 375ml

Conti Sertoli Salis Valtellina Sforzato *Canua* 2001, Lombardia \$299.00 / 5 liter

Mack Daddy, Mack Daddy, who is the mackest of them all? The best grapes from the oldest vines, air dried five months for insane concentration. Elegant and nuanced Nebbiolo with the rich flavors of chocolate and dried cherry, this exudes aromas of exotic spices and roasted nuts and is soft and smooth like the Pinot of your dreams. We have tasting notes from the 17th Century noting how German pilgrims who had WALKED over the Alps on their way to Rome were "revived from near death by a thimbleful of Madame Salis' fine Sforzato"! Classy packaging makes it a standout as a gift or on your table. Put some Duck, Venison or at least Lamb with this one and don't skimp on the mushrooms, you will not be disappointed.