

American Sangiovese: Not So Easy



North American Sangiovese's are not always a quick pick at wine outlets. Often these are relegated to the "other reds" section of the wine store and many people have to get sales assistance just to locate the right shelf.

There are many reasons for this, but the most plausible is just the relatively low amount of American acreage that gets devoted to the Sangiovese grape. So every time these get popular, they tend to vanish.

For those of us who eat Italian food several times a week, and would like to experience more U.S. grown vino, finding a reliable source of this delicious red can be a challenge. Right now, it looks like the Italians are winning!

There is also the "spaghetti wine" factor. Some North American Sangiovese's just don't cut it. They often come off "too big", resembling Zinfandel or Cabernet, and clash with the acidic tomato sauce of a good Southern Italian dish. In addition, their higher alcohol just adds more fire to a piping hot plate of Lasagna.

Here are a couple suggestions, one is [Noceto Sangiovese](#). It has a lighter ruby color, almost like a Pinot Noir, nice balance between berries and earth in the bouquet, low alcohol, with a firm acidic structure to match many Italian dishes. [Total Wine](#) usually has it in stock and [AJs](#) can order it from the local distributor. It runs about \$17-\$25.

Another excellent choice is [Consentino's](#) Sangiovese. It also has a well balanced bouquet of cherries and flowers, but it is a slightly bigger red than the Noceto. Total Wine has this \$20 wine in stock on a fairly regular basis.

Serve slightly chilled from the fridge after 20 minutes (60 degrees). Sangiovese's beg to be consumed with food, their acidic content just makes it so. Italian food is the best pairing, of course.