

best new wine lists '07

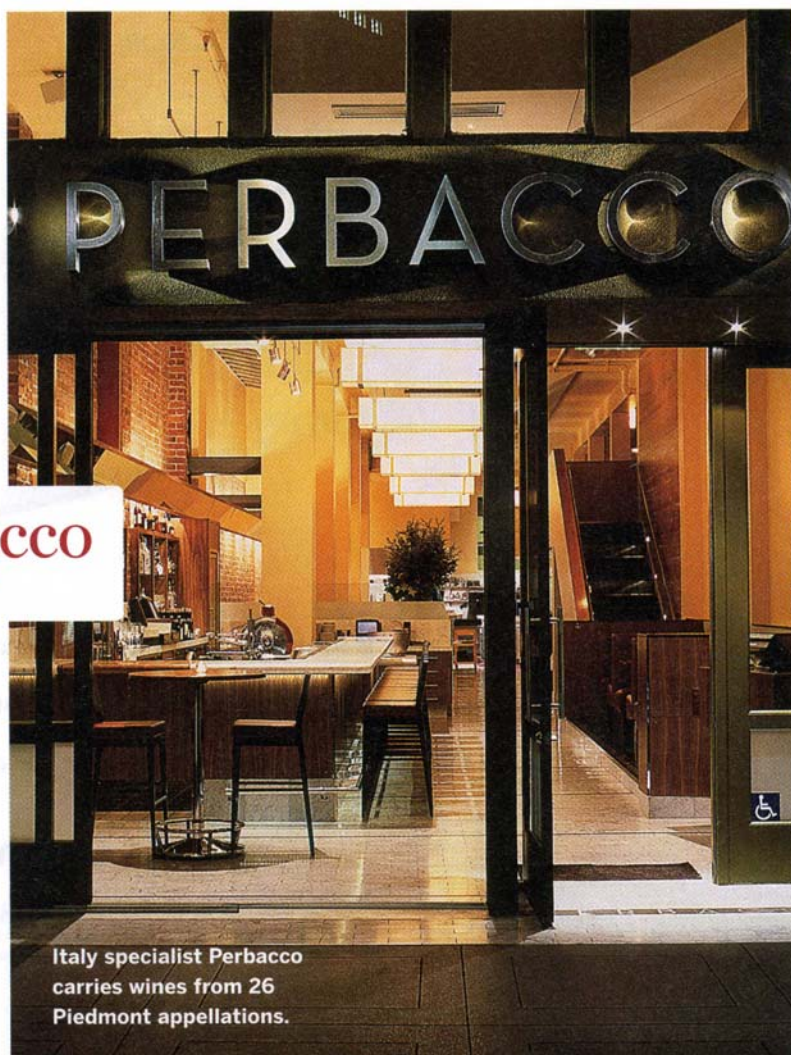
This year's seven winning wine lists push the edges of the expected, from the super-focused (26 separate Piedmont appellations on one list) to the superluxe (a 1961 Château Latour for \$11,500, for instance, on another). Yet they never lose sight of their primary purpose: offering great wines to pair with terrific food.

by richard nalley

"WE SHOWCASE THE WINES AND FOOD OF northwestern Italy, Piedmont and Liguria," says Mauro Cirilli, wine director of this stylish, Milanese-inspired restaurant in the heart of San Francisco's Financial District. "Though we are also aware that we are in San Francisco"—meaning that Cirilli reserves 20 percent of the 250-bottle list for California labels. But there's no mistaking the focus at Perbacco (which roughly translates to "wow"): The red wine offerings alone include 26 separate appellations in Piedmont; both the famous (1995 Gaja Barbaresco, \$265) and those deserving to be more so (2004 Renato Corino Barbera d'Alba, \$32). They're generally terrific with chef Staffan Terje's rustic cooking, based on "the richness, meat and butter of Piedmont and the seafood and olive oil of Liguria," according to Cirilli. **BEST PAIRING**

A 2004 Vietti red blend from Piedmont, coincidentally named "Perbacco" (\$50), with Pappardelle with Braised Short Rib Ragù and Roasted Chanterelles. "The wine fits perfectly with the texture and richness of the dish," says Cirilli. **DETAILS** 230 California St.; 415-955-0663.

best value 2005 Moccagatta Barbera d'Alba (\$32). This Piedmont red has great acidity, black plum and fig flavors, and a touch of earthiness.



perbacco
SAN FRANCISCO

Italy specialist Perbacco carries wines from 26 Piedmont appellations.