

WINE OF THE WEEK

La Valentina, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2006, \$16.99



Montepulciano is the grape variety and Abruzzo is the area where it is grown. Montepulciano is a deeply colored variety with sturdy tannins, and it's true to form in this likable wine from Fattoria La Valentina. Aromas of blackberries and cherries fairly leap from the glass. In the mouth, the promised delectable berry flavors are layered with savory notes of tobacco and anise. Frisky acidity keeps the fruit in line, and those sturdy tannins demand protein from a grilled steak or sausage.

La Valentina is a fairly new winery, established in 1990, with vineyards around the winery influenced by the Adriatic Sea. There is another vineyard about 16 miles from the winery with much higher elevations and more extreme weather. The winemakers are minimalists, so grapes for this wine were harvested by hand, and only 15 percent saw wood for 12 months of aging before bottling. The result is a wine that shows its fruit proudly.

Available at Central Market.

Rebecca Murphy

