



2015, O.C. Dining

Must-Try Wine of Week: 2011 La Valentina Montepulciano d'Abruzzo

March 27, 2015 | Rusty Gaffney | [Add a comment](#)



Italian wine nomenclature can be daunting, but there are many excellent values in Italian wine waiting for those who seek them out. Here's a perfect example.

Here's the breakdown on the name: [La Valentina Farm](#) is the winery, which has been producing quality wines for over 20 years; montepulciano is a widely planted red Italian grape variety, and Italy's most widely grown indigenous variety behind sangiovese; montepulciano d'Abruzzo is

made from the montepulciano wine grape grown in the Abruzzo region of east-central Italy. The label notes that it is classified as *Denominazione di origine controllata* (DOC), guaranteeing the wine is produced under strict Italian laws that insure that at least 85 percent of its grapes must be montepulciano.

This wine is sourced from vines that are 25 to 35 years old. It's aged for 12 months in a combination of cement, stainless steel, and wood tanks.

Dark reddish purple in color, this full-bodied wine smells and tastes of fresh black cherries and black raspberries, with hints of spice, black pepper, and dark chocolate. The intensity of the fruit on the palate is remarkable, yet this hardy wine is easy to enjoy now. Pair with herbed lamb kebab, lasagna, spaghetti Bolognese, or pepperoni pizza.

La Valentina Montepulciano d'Abruzzo is reasonably priced with a SRP of \$14, and is available at [The Wine Club](#) in Santa Ana and [Cucina Enoteca](#) in Irvine and Newport. Try it with Cucina's risotto carbonara for a real treat!