

RACCONTI DALLA GRANDE MELA

Biodynamic Bacchus

In years past the notion of organic or biodynamic wine in the US—often you only came upon one or two bottles—was what one might describe as “earthy-crunchy,” inexpertly made, without subtlety or complexity, and basically unrefined. All that has changed. At Appellation Wines in Manhattan, the first organic-biodynamic wine store in NYC, the wines, from all over the world—with an emphasis on France, Austria, and Italy—are every bit as good, and sometimes better, than what one would find in any high quality,



neighborhood wine shop. Nearly 70 % of the 250 labels represented in Appellation Wines are either organic or biodynamic, with prices ranging from \$7.99 for a Spanish sparkling wine to \$455 for an Italian Dal Forno Amarone. Appellation Wines is the invention of Scott Pactor, a highly personable wine professional with excellent credentials: he started out as an accountant, and spurred, on by a wine course he had taken at university, decided to pursue his passion and worked as a wine manager in several NYC top restaurants—Balthazar, Pastis, and Felidia. Now, he is the proprietor of a unique wine store and an expert member of a wine panel for Wine and Food magazine. There are three things you know about

Mr. Pactor immediately: he has a grand, subtle yet rapturous, passion for wine, he loves to share his wide knowledge of wine and vinification techniques, and he is serious about living an environmentally sustainable lifestyle. Mr Pactor is the ideal ambassador for good wine, reflected not only in his accessible, open minded style of communication but also in the layout of Appellation Wines—at heart of the store is a large table and a large bookcase with wine and food references of all kinds—and an open invitation to sit, consult a volume, partake of one of his many wine tastings.

Organically produced grapes are typically cultivated and grown by small tenuta or domaines with a minimum of te-



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chnical intervention, with little or no pesticides. Biodynamic is a deeper level of commitment, with animals plowing the fields, composting of the soil, use of natural fertilizers, planting and harvesting according to the sun's position and the earth's rotation and no pesticides whatsoever. Scott says that, "There is very little effort to market wines made from organically grown grapes, and many producers who use organic techniques don't even mention this, but this is changing. My view is that if I am tasting an organic or biodynamic wine and it's as good as or better than a conventionally produced wine, why not champion methods that don't use chemicals, save the environment and sustain traditional ways and local communities?" The Austrians, French and Italians have ideal growing con-

ditions: low yield family vineyards, traditional agricultural techniques and a quest for great quality. "A few people," Scott notes, "like Terry Theise, an importer of Austrian wine, are, however, ahead of the learning curve and understand the allure and importance of biodynamic wine." The allure is real and readily experienced by tasting the biodynamic Austrian wine, Nikolaihof Wachau Riesling. In the US the trends are numbingly massive—first it was chardonnay, then merlot, and then pinot—now hopefully there will be a growing and more enduring recognition of organic and biodynamic wine.

Appellation Wines, 156 Tenth Avenue (at 19th Street) - NYC - www.appellationnyc.com



Scott Pactor è un grandissimo appassionato di vini e il proprietario dell' Appellation Wines di Manhattan, la prima enoteca organica e biodinamica di New York. Le 250 etichette qui rappresentate provengono da tutto il mondo, ma in particolare da Francia, Austria e Italia. A fare onore al nostro Paese, tra gli altri, il pregiatissimo Amarone Dal Forno, venduto a 450 dollari la bottiglia! Il signor Pactor è convinto che l'interesse per la viticoltura organica e biodinamica non sia una moda passeggera, ma una tendenza destinata ad affermarsi sempre di più. E allora, se un vino prodotto da uve coltivate biologicamente è altrettanto se non più buono di uno prodotto in modo tradizionale, perché non dovremmo sostenere un'agricoltura che non utilizza agenti dannosi per l'ambiente e aiuta le piccole comunità locali?