



BY ROBERT PARKER

# A Reason to Veer Off The Chianti Trail

**I'VE LONG BEEN AN ADMIRER** of the Falesco Winery in the Italian province of Umbria. There, winemakers/brothers Renzo and Riccardo Cotarella have helped put Umbria—just east of Tuscany—on the viticultural map. They make expensive wines, but some of their lower-cost cuvées offer unbelievable value. All of these are made to be consumed during their first several years. Falesco wines have good availability in the U.S., but call the importer, Winebow, at 201 445-0620 if you need help finding them.

#### 2005 Vitiano Sangiovese IGT

**90 points.** This outstanding effort makes a mockery of many of the over-priced sangioveses emerging from other areas of the world. A stunning value, it boasts a beautiful bouquet of sweet cherries, strawberries, bay leaf, spice, and blacker fruits. Full-bodied with superb length, good underlying acidity, and a beautiful texture, it spent six months in barrels before being bottled. \$11

#### 2005 Vitiano Bianco IGT

**89 points.** This crisp, elegant white, equal parts unwooded vermentino and verdicchio, offers loads of tropical fruit, good body, impressive purity (a hallmark of all the Cotarellas' wines), and impeccable balance, as well as length. It provides a heck of a glass of dry white for the price. \$11

#### 2005 Vitiano Rosso IGT

**89 points.** A terrific bargain in dry red wine, this blend of nearly equal parts sangiovese, merlot, and cabernet sauvignon was aged in barrels for a short time. It exhibits a deep ruby/purple color, a rich bouquet of black cherry jam, licorice, tobacco leaf, and spice box, surprising density, and medium body. \$11

#### 2005 Vitiano Rosé IGT

**87 points.** A blend of 30% merlot, 30% sangiovese, 30% cabernet sauvignon, and 10% aleatico (which the Cotarellas believe provides personality and perfume). The wine has a big, sweet nose of strawberries, plums, cranberries, and flowers. In short, it's a fruity, dry, medium-bodied rosé possessing abundant personality.

Visit [www.eRobertParker.com](http://www.eRobertParker.com) for the Internet's most active wine bulletin board, tens of thousands of tasting notes, or to order his recent book, *The World's Greatest Wine Estates: A Modern Perspective*. You can also subscribe to Parker's newsletter, *The Wine Advocate*. Request a sample copy at: *The Wine Advocate*, P.O. Box 311, Monkton, MD 21111.

#### 2005 Merlot Pesano IGT

**90 points.** An extremely intense, amazing bargain of a wine. This 100% merlot (barrel-aged for five to six months) exhibits a deep ruby/purple hue. The fleshy, deep aromas and flavors are black cherry, cassis, smoke, herb, and mocha. This medium-bodied, concentrated, unbelievably well-priced red is almost too good to be true. \$16

#### 2004 Ferentano IGT

**90 points.** Produced from the indigenous and little-known roscetto varietal, this white wine begins slowly and aromatically. Then it starts to build intensity in the mouth, revealing a tremendous, layered, honeyed character reminiscent of a southern Rhône blend of roussanne, viognier, and marsanne. Given its full body and intensity, you could even serve it as an accompaniment to hearty meat dishes. This noteworthy value represents a remarkable achievement for this estate. \$22



Wines rated from 96–100 are extraordinary; 90–95, excellent; 80–89, above average to very good. For more Parker picks, go to [businessweek.com/extras](http://businessweek.com/extras)