

FOOD & WINE

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italy's best recipes

12 classic Italian dishes
you need to try now

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25 must-have
Italian ingredients +
simple ways to use them



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A-Z guide to Italian wines

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Where To Go Next

florence

BY ONDINE COHANE

Editor's note: Writer Ondine Cohane and her husband, John Voigtmann, recently opened La Bandita, an inn in Pienza, outside Siena.

Alla Vecchia Bettola

Florence is famous for its old-school trattorias, and one of the best is this place off the main tourist drag. At lunch, the benches are filled with businessmen; at dinner, it's foodies. Tender *agnello al forno con patate* (baked lamb with potatoes) and truffle-packed *taglierini con tartufo* are just two of the extremely good classic dishes. *Viale Vasco Pratolini 3/7; 011-39-055-224-158.*

Dolci & Dolcette In a town not known for its pastries, this 15-year-old bakery is a Florence institution. The lovely Art Deco shop displays the day's tarts, many topped with wild berries, in the front window. Inside, Florentine biddies sip espresso at the bar and eat cream-stuffed *cornetti*; Italy's answer to the croissant is usually dense, but these are light and flaky. *Piazza Beccaria 8/r; 011-39-055-234-5458.*

Sant'Agostino 23 At this hip new restaurant, terrific young chef Mirko Innocenti mixes traditional Tuscan dishes like *bistecca alla fiorentina*, made with

Tuscany's famed Chianina beef (his tasty burgers use the same meat), with lighter options, like an exceptional *tagliani con bottarga* (pasta with dried fish roe). *Via Sant'Agostino 23/r; 011-39-055-210-208.*

hotel

Riva Lofts Designed by Claudio Nardi, one of Florence's most famous living architects, this boutique hotel opened late last year on the banks of the Arno. Its nine suites, outfitted with floor-to-ceiling windows and oversize furniture, feel more like chic apartments than hotel rooms. As an added bonus, guests can use free bicycles to bypass Florence's notorious traffic. *Doubles from \$260; Via Baccio Bandinelli 98; 011-39-055-713-0272.*

SIENA

Tre Cristi This recently renovated spot near the Campo has been around for almost two centuries. Besides serving some of the region's most inventive seafood—like just-caught prawns with an Italian version of tuna tartare—it boasts a fine wine cellar with bottles like Masciarelli's Trebbiano Marina Cveti, made from a grape usually used in *vin santo*. *Vicolo di Provenzano 17; 011-39-057-728-0608.*



Chef Francesco Fineo in his garden at Villa Bordonni

new chianti hotel

VILLA BORDONI Last spring, Catherine and David Garner opened Villa Bordonni, a small luxury hotel in a 16th-century property near some of Chianti's best vineyards. Francesco Fineo, who oversees Bordonni's excellent, traditional Italian restaurant, makes good use of produce from the villa's garden in dishes like Chianina beef carpaccio with green beans and balsamic vinaigrette, and red mullet with swiss chard and beet puree. Before Bordonni, Fineo cooked at Beccofino, the Garners' popular restaurant in Florence. *Villa Bordonni: doubles from \$230; Via San Cresci 31/32, Greve in Chianti; 011-39-055-884-0004. Beccofino: Piazza Degli Scarlatti 1r, Florence; 011-39-055-290-076.*