

## Puttin' On the Spritz

A little sweet, a little bitter, the fizzy Italian *aperitivo* is having its moment  
By Laurie Winer

**I**n the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of the Italian *aperitivo*. It offers something pretty, fizzy, sweet and bitter all at once—a pre-dinner drink to remind us of the season's brevity and the astringent truth that time is racing. No truth should be too brutal in the spring.

As a complement to the soft fizz of Prosecco, there is nothing like Campari—which it's said you must taste three times before appreciating. But the ruby-colored classic has a noteworthy cousin relatively new to the states. Aperol is more orangy and mellow, but it still nobly hits its distinct bitter note. The Paduans have been consuming it since 1919, so we have rather a lot of catching up to do.

Terroni, a newish trattoria on Beverly Boulevard, proves its affinity for classic Italian glamour, and not only by projecting an excellent print of "La Dolce Vita" on its southern wall. The bar is completely in the spirit of Italian spring, offering a spritzer—made with Aperol, rosé Prosecco, a splash of seltzer and an orange slice—a refreshing and subtle drink in a calming shade of persimmon. Terroni also goes deeper and redder with the Negroni Sbagliato, made with Campari, sweet vermouth and Prosecco.

For the newly remodeled Osteria La Buca on Melrose Avenue—and just in time for strawberry season—mixologist Vincenzo Marianella has devised a well-orchestrated delight in a flute. He calls it the Loredana, after the restaurant's ma-



Terroni Spritzer

ternal chef (also known as Mamma). To muddled strawberries and Prosecco he adds half an ounce of Campari, "for its dryness and complexity," he says. The strawberries then float in a rosy puddle at the top of the drink. "Muddling releases the flavor of the strawberry," he says. "It's like the moment when you take the first bite of the fruit."

Over at Rustic Canyon in Santa Monica, mix master Jon Hoerber enjoys making his own bitters. He adds them to his fresh-blood-orange-juice-and-Prosecco cocktail, which otherwise "would taste a bit like orange soda," he says. "Bitters adds depth and makes it a more grown-up drink." Blood oranges should be around for a few more weeks, then later this month, Hoerber says, he'll add the Tuscan—which involves Prosecco, lemon and his own licorice bitters.

"As far as I'm concerned, April kicks off summer in Los Angeles," Hoerber says. Refreshing and bright and light and fun, these drinks are just bittersweet enough to mark the waning of the longish day. With a spritz. ■

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### TERRONI SPRITZER

Makes 1 *aperitivo*  
Adapted from Terroni restaurant's recipe

1 ½ ounces Aperol\*  
2 ½ ounces Prosecco  
Splash of club soda or seltzer

Pour the Aperol and Prosecco over ice in a rocks glass, top with a splash of soda or seltzer and stir.

Garnish with a slice of orange.

\*Available at fine wine and liquor retailers

### THE LOREDANA

Makes 1 *aperitivo*  
From Vincenzo Marianella for Osteria La Buca

1 ripe strawberry, sliced  
Dash of simple syrup\*  
5 ounces Prosecco  
½ ounce Campari

In a mixing glass, muddle the strawberry slices with the simple syrup. Add the Prosecco, and pour the drink into a flute. Add the Campari. Serve immediately.

\*To make simple syrup, combine equal amounts of sugar and water, bring to a simmer, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Cool and store in the refrigerator.