

La Spinetta One Liter Club, for the real wine lover...



Summer 2013

Keeping our fingers crossed...

Vintage report 2013: who says 13 is a lucky number in Italy? First, the winter seemed endless, then the Spring did not want to come and now our Summer is still dealing with Spring. Everything is green after getting so much water in the past three months—we would make it through any drought, which is exactly what the vineyards need. This year's vintage is about three weeks behind in its growth as we head into the hot and dry weather of June, July and August.

What can we do? We keep our fingers crossed and pray for a hot and merciless Summer. We promise, we won't complain if we have to sweat. By the way, a terrific Summer is also what all other wine regions in Europe need—can you imagine, it snowed in Burgundy on May 26th.

Bruno, Carlo and Giorgio Rivetti and the La Spinetta Team

A word from Giorgio



“The grape does not fall far from the vine”...?

I consider myself a very fortunate man. Among the many good things in my life that are all somehow related to wine and my passion for it, I am also a very proud father of three children. While my two girls from my second marriage are still very young, I have a grown up son, Andrea, 32 years, who not only shares my passion for grape juice, but who is driven, designated, very hard working and who shows great respect for me and what my family has done in the past 35 years.

I was once thinking that the apple does not fall far from the tree or in our case the grape from the vine, but experience tells me that I am very fortunate as one more of my dreams comes true, my son is following my foot steps.

I am sure that many of you have asked the same question I ask myself: What makes a son want to do what his father is doing? Is it something genetic? Does the passion for making wine run in my and my sons veins or DNA? Or, does it

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come from being exposed to vineyards, the winery, the work involved from an early stage? I recall little Andrea following me around the cellar, watching every move of my work when he was as young as five years. At the age of 15 Andrea decided to go to the wine making school in Alba. When he graduated he started working for La Spinetta full time. He never wanted to work anywhere else. Today I could not run La Spinetta without my son. How fortunate I am.

I never pushed Andrea into this direction, then again I never had to either.

Unfortunately, my personal fortune is not shared by every winemaking father. Sometimes I see children taking over their parents winery with very little or no passion for wine. And then I see many young and passionate wine makers, who are not so fortunate to have parents that own a vineyard. Since I know how wonderful it is to work with passion, I believe I would have never pushed my son into La Spinetta. Of course it is easy for me to say, given what I just described. I can proof myself hopefully, when my two girls get older, ready to decide for the direction of their career and their future... If you hang around some years, I will keep you posted!



Giorgio, the farmer

The new woman at The Wine Advocate...

It was announced in December that Robert Parker, one of the most, if not the most, influential figures in the world of wine sold his majority stake in The Wine Advocate after four decades.

A Singapore-based investor now owns the Wine Advocate and is ready to make changes. One of the first major changes came with Antonio Galloni vacating his post as Italian wine writer. Mr. Galloni already left The Wine Advocate and founded his own wine critic website called VINOUS www.vinousmedia.com, where he reviews wines from Italy, Burgundy, Champagne and California.

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The Wine Advocate quickly named Monica Larner as the new Italian wine critic .

Delivered to Italy at age 11 by The Winds of War, Monica has lived most of her life in her adopted home. A Los Angeles native, her family moved to Rome for filming of the 1983 World War II TV mini-series thanks to her father, Director of Photography Stevan Larner.

Her father fell in love with wine as a film student in Paris and Monica grew up in a household that celebrated a deep appreciation for the culture of wine. After high school in both Italy and California, Monica earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in journalism from Boston University and New York University respectively. She went on



to work for the Italian daily La Repubblica, followed by four years as a reporter in the Rome bureau of BusinessWeek. She spent two years as a staff writer with Italy Daily of the International Herald Tribune where she penned her first wine column.

In 2003, Monica was approached by Wine Enthusiast to be the magazine's first Italy-based correspondent and was formally trained to use the 100-point scoring system. She set up a tasting bureau near the Colosseum in Rome and continued her intense travel to far-flung wine zones. Her proudest achievement is the 185-page special collector's Wine Enthusiast "Wines of Italy" edition that showcases her decade-long body of work.

Excerpt from eRobertParker.com, About Monica Larner

Now Monica is set to continue her writing and tasting skills with The Wine Advocate. Backed by the publication's new management, she is set to make some changes in the reviews. She wants to give more in depth information on the producers and their wine making philosophy rather than just another generic wine description.

We believe Monica is on the right track with her new ideas and her desire to make changes. La Spinetta wishes her all the best for her new power position!

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A day in the life of one of our vineyard workers...

Sania Gjeorgjieva was born in 1973 in Delcevo, Macedonia. At the age of 21 she and her husband decided to move to Turin, Italy when her husband had found work in the city as a bricklayer. After two years in Turin and many different unofficial jobs, Sania maintained her life and also had enough money to send back home to her parents. This was also when her daughter was born. When Barbara was two the family of three left Turin and again moved to the country side for work, as Sania's husband found a job in Castagnole Lanze.

Sania's home in Macedonia was also in the country, she was used to seeing her parents and family cultivate the ground and grow produce. It was therefore only natural for her to start working in the vineyards. By coincidence she met somebody from back home, who had recently started at La Spinetta and introduced her to the Rivettis.



For 15 years she has been with La Spinetta and she still likes the vineyards and would not change them with any other.

The Spring, Summer and Fall are the intensive work months. At 6.00 am Sania gets up and prepares the food for the day to take with her in the vineyard. Her 17-year-old daughter Barbara is self sufficient and no longer needs her help in the mornings. At 7:30 am she has to meet with everybody else in front of La Spinetta winery, where Giovanna Rivetti divides the team into groups of 7-9 people. Each group takes a small bus and drives to the vineyard, where Giovanna told them to work. At precisely 8:00 am the work starts. Depending on the season the work changes, but all work is manual and the team works together. This team work also allows possibility to chat (chatting in Macedonian not in Italian). The first break is at 10:00 am for 15 minutes. Then, they return to the same work until 12:00, when the lunch break starts. Depending on the work load the lunch break is either 1 hour, while having lunch in the vineyard or 3 hours, while returning home for lunch and a nap. With one hour lunch at 1:00pm work runs

again until 3:00pm for a little "Merenda" (afternoon snack) and then more work until 5:00pm, when the work day ends.

This sums up to 8 hours of vineyard work that Sania does not mind at all. Sometimes in the Summer, when it gets very hot, Sania could think of better places to be than working in the sun of a steep south facing hill, but the company of her colleagues, who are half friends and half family, make the days in the outside more enjoyable. Also Sania appreciates working for a winery that takes such good care of their vines. She likes that all the vineyards need to always

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be 100% cared for, it gives the work a clear direction and she always knows what is expected. Very different from the work some of the Macedonians do at other producer vineyards, she says, where one year they work like this and the next completely different.

Sania feels that working for La Spinetta is not only like working for a winery, it is also working for the Rivetti family, who she respects very much. The Rivettis, she says, have been there for her much more than just an employer. When her family situation was a bit difficult a few years ago, it was the Rivettis who showed understanding and support and treated her as much more than just an employee.

Summer Cocktail with CONTRATTO...



Yeah we know, you only drink wine and Vermouth is not your thing, at least that is what you think. Well, we are certain that on a hot Summer day, also you will go crazy for this brilliant cocktail.

- One part Contratto Vermouth Bianco
- Two parts Tonic Water (we love Fever Tree Tonic)
- Cubed lemon or lime
- Smaller pieces of sage

Mix and then serve on ice!

This is pure freshness and herbal sophistication, that not only refreshes but leaves you with lots of desire to drink more! Try it.

Interview with Vivian and Bernard De Raad

OLC members and owners of Cap's On The Water in St. Augustine, Florida...

Vivian and Bernard are wonderful people who have great passion for food and wine and have been fantastic La Spinetta supporters for many years, which made it easy for us to become really good friends.

Some of you met Vivian and Bernard at our 2012 Hands On Day at Contratto (click for details on our 2013 Hands on Day and find information at the end of the newsletter).

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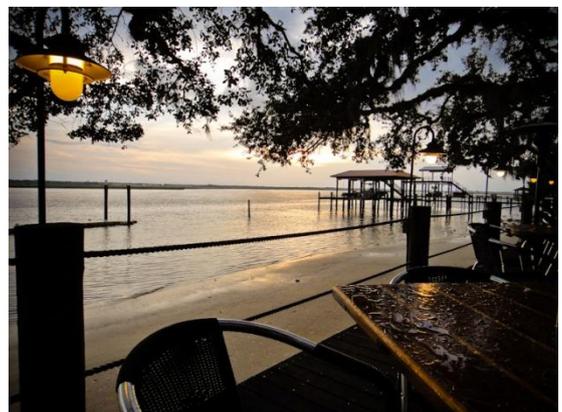
But it is not only their love of great Italian wines and for Italy that made us want to interview them, Vivian and Bernard have a great philosophy about wine, when it comes to their restaurant.

Vivian and Bernard, before we ask you more about your ideas, please tell us a bit about yourselves and of course about your restaurant. How did Cap's On The Water start and what has it become today? Who are your guests and how do you see your role as hosts?

I (Bernard) was born in The Netherlands and met Vivian, a Florida native, while on vacation in Florida in 1983. We married in 1984 and after living together in Bernard's hometown of Utrecht for 5 years we moved to the US in 1989. In 1993 we moved into our current home in Saint Augustine, just around the corner from this cool little waterfront restaurant, called Cap's Seafood. It is located on the water under a canopy of old oak trees, with beautiful views of the water and amazing sunsets most every night.

We purchased the restaurant in the summer of 1999. It was our vision to combine the authentic Old Florida atmosphere with good food and service. Since we owned it, Vivian has gradually morphed the old Cap's into a magical place full of interest and design detail. Nature plays a large part in our restaurant. We built an outdoor deck around old live oak trees and used antiques from around the world and indigenous cypress to decorate. Since 1999, Cap's has grown from a small local hangout into a destination restaurant, with 450 seats, with a reputation for great food, great service and a great wine list. The fact that there are so few places left to dine outside on the water sure helps!

As hosts we make sure our guests have a great experience. It all starts with buying quality ingredients and an interesting menu. We train our waitstaff to assure a high standard of service. Since we find our customers value service and ambiance over food quality, we focus on providing customers an overall good "experience".



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Where does your passion for Italian wine and Italy come from and has one of you "infected" the other with his/her passion? And do you remember when, where and how you came across La Spinetta?

Being raised in the Netherlands I (Bernard) still have a passion for good beer. When we started the restaurant, we were drinking mostly champagne or chardonnays. The restaurant started our journey into wine. Simply by tasting wine and visiting vineyards, our palate began to change and red wine started to play a dominant role. Our wine list started to grow as our interest in wine grew. After several visits to Napa, we visited Italy in 2003 with friends. On our first night we went to a restaurant in Lucca, called Locanda Vigna Ilaria. We ordered a bottle of Le Volte, because it was on our wine list. After dinner the owner asked us, if we were interested in seeing the "cantina". At first I thought it was the kitchen, but soon found out we were in the cellar. Our friend pointed to a bottle with a rhinoceros on it. The owner said this was one of his best bottles and the La Spinetta winery was one of the best wineries in Italy! We did not try any that night because it was already late, but the name stuck. A few days later in Florence, while our wives enjoyed shopping for fashion, I was hitting all the wine stores looking at bottles. My American Express magazine had mentioned the 2001 Massetto was the perfect wine to look for. I learned that Massetto was made from 100% merlot, like Petrus, a grape I did not hold in high regard. I also learned it cost \$600 a bottle and was not ready to shell out that money for a bottle of wine (now, I gladly would do so). On my quest I saw a wooden case with that same damn rhinoceros again! When I asked the shop owner about this wine, I received a similar response as at the restaurant in Lucca. La Spinetta was "winery of the year" and Giorgio Rivetti was soon to be elected king of Barolo! I had 6 bottles of 2000 Campe and 2 bottles of the single vineyard Barbaresco shipped to our house in Florida. It was my attempt to rival Vivian's shopping spree.

A few weeks after returning home, we opened our first bottle of La Spinetta. It was love at first sight. We then found the distributor for this godly juice in North Florida. We also found out we could have purchased these bottles from our distributor wholesale for half the price. We immediately featured the Barolo and Barbaresco's on our wine list. Our wine rep invited us to a wine dinner in Orlando with Giorgio (an audience with the King of Barolo!). We all know that when in the presence of Giorgio it is impossible not to be affected by his passion for wine and single (Italian) grape varieties. We loved the Lydia, the Pin and all other wines at the dinner. The purity and elegance of La Spinetta wines were clear. We went out on the town later and drank many, many more bottles of champagne; the beginning of a long friendship was established.

From that day forward, Vivian prefers to drink either big Italian reds or champagne. I still like my Burgundies and Bordeaux blends, but it always amazes me how easy it is to drink a La Spinetta wine. Giorgio's wines are elegant, pure and clean. You feel good the next day as well, if you know what I mean.

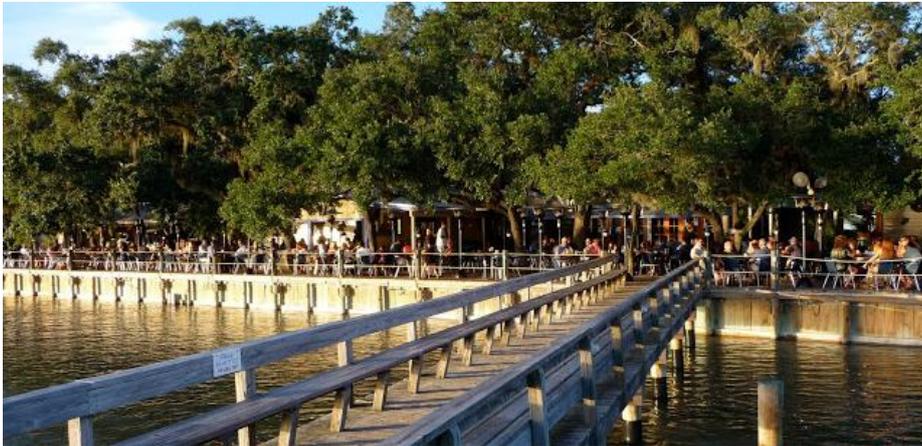
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When you travel in Italy, which are the places you like to visit and what do you like to do?

There is no place in Italy, we do not like. Venice, Verona, Santa Margherita Ligure, Piedmonte, Rome, the Amalfi Coast and Tuscany are favorites. Capri, Sicily and Puglia are still on our bucket list. We like sleeping in, having a leisurely breakfast with black coffee and a paper and do a little



afternoon exploring with a nice lunch. Evenings usually include dinner out, soaking in the wine, the food and the culture. We relax and catch up on reading. Highlights to are our visits always include to La Spinetta. Many of the lunches with Anja and Giorgio rank in our top personal memories of Italy. How can you not like great

food, great wine and fabulous company, while being educated on our favorite subject of wine.

Please tell us a bit about your wine program at Cap's. How do you make your selection and what is your idea behind your pricing? Most places like to sell cheap wine with a high mark up and you have your heart set to offering very great quality wines for a fair price. Do you think more restaurants in the US will follow your ideas in the near future?

Before we owned a restaurant we were always annoyed by the usual high mark ups on wine. When you know you can buy the same bottle for \$30 in a store, why do they charge you \$80? It sometimes prevented me from ordering a bottle of wine and opted for a beer or a glass of wine instead. Often I give this example to my customers: a couple goes out to dinner on a special occasion and decide to fork out \$150 for a nice bottle of wine. Waiters seem to be trained to keep filling your glass constantly and by the time the main course arrives you are left with too little wine to wash down your steak. At that point you do not want to order another bottle, because it was an expensive bottle!



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When we took over the restaurant, we decided to use a straight \$20 mark up over our cost. We hoped that the word of mouth would bring us new customers. It was almost a replacement to advertising. Now we have a wine list with over 500 wines (most of La Spinetta's wines are featured) and our high end wines are cheaper than you would buy them in a wine shop. For example; Sassontino 2004: \$59, Staderi 2003: \$114, Pin 2009: \$59, Bordini 2007: \$64, Giscours 2001: \$117, 2009 DuMol Pinot Noir \$69; 2007 El Nido \$139.

Do you think that many guests return to Cap's because they love your philosophy on wine prices and because they learn about Italian wines through you and your wine list?



Cap's has become a wine destination. We now sell around 100 bottles of wine per week and nearly 1000 glasses of wine. The by-the-glass program is what makes the money. We pour 4 glasses from a bottle and have a profit margin of 75%. Our total profit mix on wine stays around 50%. The reality is that many of the high-end wines sell slowly. So it is fabulous advertising for our

customers to tell their friends that the popular Cakebread Cabernet only cost \$70 at Cap's, while it is priced \$90 in their local wine store. Even if they do not purchase the bottle their friends now know Cap's is the place for wine. Our wine pricing allows people to try a different (more expensive) wine and also leaves room in the budget for that (very necessary) second or third bottle.

Wineries are exposed to all the hard work and wine making risks. We just open a bottle and pour. The only risk we have is that a bottle is corked or does not sell. Vivian and I figure if we purchased the wine, we like it and we will drink it if it does not sell. A corked bottle usually gets reimbursed by the distributor. Since it makes no difference if we open a \$40 or \$400 bottle of wine, we are wide open to what our customer wants and can hopefully guide them to a great bottle.

In addition to our paper menu, we recently added five menus to iPads. It gives the option to choose wine by price, varietal, region, ratings or food pairing, which encourages customers to try different wines.

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How do you choose a restaurant when you go out to eat, by the food, the atmosphere or the wine list?

Vivian and I try to go out to a different restaurant twice a month and the wine menu definitely plays a role in the decision of where to eat. Often I bring my own wines, when I suspect the choices are poor or grossly overpriced. Other criteria include atmosphere and food.

And the famous last question, if you had to spend time on a deserted island, which six bottles of wine would you take with you?

My (Bernard's) 6 bottles:

2000, Dom Perignon, Champagne Rose

2003, Comtes Georges de Vogue, Musigny, Vieilles Vignes, Burgundy, Pinot Noir

2007, Du Mol, "Finn", Russian River Pinot Noir

2001, Tenuta dell'Ornellaia, Masseto, Bolgheri Merlot

2001, La Spinetta, Campe Riserva, Barolo

2001, Ornellaia, Tenuta dell'Ornellaia, Bolgheri Bordeaux Blend

Vivian would take 6 bottles (all magnums) of 2001 Campe Riserva Barolo.

Cooking Piemontese with Giovanna Rivetti

Giovanna Rivetti, our vineyard manager and in-house chef, was born in 1947. She learned the work in the vineyard from her father and the work in the kitchen from her mother. Both parents taught Giovanna skills that remain treasured assets of *La Spinetta*.

In each newsletter, Giovanna shares one of her secret recipes. Today she is teaching us to make a Summer Primo, "Risotto agli Asparagi". Did you know, that Piedmont was Europe's biggest rice producer? Of course Giovanna's recipe has a secret ingredient, that is called "Lidia Chardonnay".

Following you will find the preparation for 4 people:

Ingredients needed:

400 g of green asparagus

320 g risotto rice from Piedmont

1 small carrot

2 small onions



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1 clove of garlic
parsley
Lidia Chardonnay
5 spoons of olive oil La Spinetta
salt and pepper
grated Parmesan cheese

First clean the asparagus and cut away the broader white ends. Keep the ends and cook them in water together with the carrot, one onion, parsley, salt, pepper and a clove of garlic for 45 minutes to make your own vegetable broth.

Cook the "good" asparagus in water adding a table spoon of olive oil and salt to the water for a couple minutes. Do not overcook the asparagus, it needs to stay crisp. Remove from hot water immediately, when you decided to stop cooking.

Then at the same time heat up the vegetable broth and take a separate pot, in which you fry in olive oil another chopped onion until all is golden. Add and fry the rice in the olive oil until it gets a bit toasted. Then add some of the broth to stop the frying and start the cooking. Keep adding liquid (broth but also Lidia Chardonnay). Giovanna is always very generous with the Lidia. She says, the alcohol will cook off anyway. Keep on adding liquid until you reach a rice consistency that is to your taste. The Italians like their rice a bit raw inside, some more some less, this is just a matter of taste and so you should cook the rice as long or as little as you like.

When the rice is nearly finished, add the asparagus, that before you have cut into pieces. Let the risotto rest a moment and then add some more olive oil and parmesan cheese.



Buon appetito!

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Where can you find us (Giorgio) this Summer and Fall...?



Meeting Giorgio on his travels around the globe and sharing our wines with him is easier than you might think. We have to admit, this Fall the Swiss have the biggest opportunities to spend time with Giorgio and to taste our wines.

For further information please contact Anja: anja@la-spinetta.com

USA June 28th:

Maui, Hawaii, Roy's Ka'anapali
Winemaker dinner with Giorgio Rivetti
www.roysrestaurant.com

USA July 12th, 7:00 pm:

Scranton, Pennsylvania, Cultural Centre Scranton
AWS Tasting with Giorgio Rivetti
For more information please contact Fred Magnotta fred@fredmagnotta.com

USA July 17th to the 21st:

New Orleans, Tales of the cocktail
With Giorgio Rivetti and Contratto Vermouth
www.talesofthecocktail.com

Switzerland, August 30th and 31st:

Belp near Bern, Italian Tasting Wyhus Belp
www.wyhusbelp.ch

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Canada: September 24th:

Toronto, Portfolio Tasting Profile Wine Group with Giorgio Rivetti

On trade only

www.profilewinegroup.com

Switzerland: October 4th and 5th

Samnaun, Hotel Chasa Montana

Wine weekend with Giorgio Rivetti

www.hotelchasamontana.ch

Germany: October 8th and 9th:

Berlin, Bar Convent Berlin

Fair for cocktails and spirits with Contratto Vermouth

www.barconvent.com

Austria October 10th:

Vorarlberg: "Nashoernli - event" with Giorgio Rivetti

More information gives Dietmar Alge: dietmar.alge@alge.at

Germany, October 11th:

Wolfach-Halbmeil, Restaurant Loewen Harter

Wine & Dine with Giorgio Rivetti

www.loewen-halbmeil.de

Germany, October 12th:

Schramberg, Ristorante Grissini

Wine & Dine with Giorgio Rivetti

Ristorante Grissini

Oberndorfer Str. 243

78713 Schramberg, Telefon 07422 245245

USA, October 30th:

NYC, A Voce Restaurant

Wine & Dine with Giorgio Rivetti

www.avocerestaurant.com



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Switzerland: Nov 13th

Bern, Enoteca Vero Vino
Tasting and More with Giorgio Rivetti
www.verovinobern.ch

Switzerland: Nov 14th

Wikon (between Biel and Luzern) Restaurant Bahnhofli Wikon
Wine & Dine with Giorgio Rivetti
www.bahnhofli-wikon.ch

Switzerland: Nov 15th:

Emmenmatt, Hotel Moosegg
Wine & Dine with Giorgio Rivetti
www.moosegg.ch

Switzerland: Nov 16th:

Bad Bubendorf, Hotel Bad Bubendorf
Wine & Dine with Giorgio Rivetti
www.badbubendorf.ch

Find a complete list of our travels and events around the world on our website, [LA SPINETTA ON TOUR](http://www.la-spinetta.com/ontour.html) <http://www.la-spinetta.com/ontour.html>

One Liter Club Hands on Day 2013...

Only a few more months and an energetic group of OLC members will join us on **Saturday, September 7th** for a day of harvest work, harvest talk and education, as well as lots of fun, food and wine. The program is still in the "making", however we plan on an early morning start of harvesting (yet to be seen which varietal, as it will largely depend on the weather conditions of this Summer), interrupted by a picnic in the vineyard, followed by more harvest work in the cellar (La Spinetta Castagnole Lanze) and then completed by a dinner at Contratto, where this time our members have to do more "Hands On Work" and help prepare the meal under the trained eyes of Chef and vineyard manager Giovanna Rivetti.

Interested to join? Write to anja@la-spinetta.com