

Gavi Is Always a Good Idea

By [Maeve Wade](#)

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For many people, the mention of [Gavi](#) calls to mind the [crisp](#) and [acid](#)-forward whites for which the region initially rose to popularity. While Gavi's fresh whites are its calling card, this generalization only scratches the region's surface. With a history that extends much further than its turn-of-the-century Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG) classification and a slew of delightful white wines with serious [aging potential](#), Gavi is ready to prove itself as a compelling and reliable winemaking region.

In the southeastern corner of [Piedmont](#), Gavi spans just over 1,600 hectares throughout the Alessandria province. As cool winters turn to warm summers and a gentle breeze blows in from the coast, the Cortese grape flourishes across picturesque hills—and has done so for centuries. Evidence of the grape's cultivation dates back to the 17th century, and local legends suggest that the region itself was named after a Middle Ages-era Princess named Gavia.

Still, it wasn't until the middle of the 19th century that Cortese was widely cultivated, and in the decades that followed, the grape's presence became more widespread as exports increased around the world. Today, Gavi winemakers have mastered their [terroir](#) to produce wines that skillfully balance the grape's natural expression with the influence of the soil.

"The producers of Gavi have spent years researching and focusing on understanding their territory and how best to express it in the glass," says [Jeff Porter](#), Wine Enthusiast Writer-at-Large and reviewer of wines from Northern [Italy](#). And this mission was no easy feat, considering that Gavi encompasses three distinct terroirs that produce three distinct variations of Cortese.

Red [clay](#) is most commonly found in the northern areas of Gavi, with some patches scattered across the center belt. Rich in iron, this [soil](#) can produce wines with considerable [body](#) and depth. Alternatively, the southernmost regions of Gavi creep closer to the sea and are known for their pale marine marl, bestowing supreme freshness, [minerality](#), and lift on their wines. In the middle, the center belt blends marl and sandstone to yield wines with balanced texture, levity, and flavor.

TL;DR: In Porter's words, "Gavi today is as good as it has ever been. [It] is great now and has the ability to age well, too!" Whether you're in the mood for a fresh and gluggable white or

are looking for something with more complexity and [aging](#) potential, Gavi is the answer. From crisp and floral to full and flavorful, here are some of our favorite bottles for any occasion.

Fresh and Youthful



[La Raia 2024 Pleo Cortese \(Gavi\)](#)

A stunning wine from a vastly underrated region, this wine opens with vibrant orchard fruits and cascading spring blossoms, creating a seductive aromatic cloud that pulls you into the glass. The dynamic palate dazzles with tart fruit, almond skin, and peach stone complexity, while fresh herbs add layers of intrigue. This brilliant Gavi captures both immediate pleasure and serious aging potential. Drink Now – 2035. **Best Buy. 93 Points — Jeff Porter**

[Inquire with the winery](#)



[Villa Sparina 2024 Cortese \(Gavi del Comune di Gavi\)](#)

Fresh floral aromas dance with sweet apple and bright lemon notes in a graceful display. The juicy palate bursts with mixed orchard fruits and ripe Meyer lemon, all perfectly centered around a core of crunchy sea salt and vibrant acidity that propels the wine forward. **90 Points — J.P.**

[\\$19 Wine.com](#)



[La Mesma 2024 INDI Cortese \(Gavi del Comune di Gavi\)](#)

Crushed stones mingle with ripe red and green apples while sun-warmed flowers float above in the glass. The vibrant palate crackles with tart lemon peel and pithy crunch, while bright acidity drives through to a mouthwatering, saline-tinged finish. **91 Points — J.P.**

[\\$28 Linwood Wine](#)



Pio Cesare 2024 Cortese (Gavi)

Elegant aromas of crushed stones and lemon peel rise with delicate precision from the glass. The energetic palate snaps with tart citrus and stony mineral notes, while zippy acidity propels everything forward to a refreshingly saline finish. **91 Points — J.P.**

\$29 Wine.com