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## Aperitif is a civilized way to end hectic day, begin your evening

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First Posted: September 26, 2011 - 4:44 am

Last Updated: September 26, 2011 - 4:44 am

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If you're just starting to put together an aperitif bar, here are a few essential bottles to get you started:

—Campari: Invented in Novara, Italy, in 1860 and still made with the same recipe. Red in color, made from herbs steeped in alcohol and water. A classic aperitif is Campari and soda.

—Dolin Vermouth de Chambéry blanc: For me, the best of the French vermouths, made with white wine from the Savoie region of France and botanicals from Alpine meadows above Chambéry. The company has used the same recipe since 1821.

—Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino: Giulio Cocchi's original recipe from 1891, reintroduced to celebrate the Piedmontese firm's 120th birthday this year. Makes a terrific Negroni, but you can also drink it straight.

—Carpano Antica Formula dal 1786 vermouth: Intensely aromatic red vermouth from Italy. Drink it on the rocks, or use in making cocktails.

—Lillet: A sweet French aperitif wine made from a blend of sauvignon blanc, semillon and muscadelle, mostly from Bordeaux — and quinine. Produced since the 19th century. Usually served on the rocks with a wedge of citrus.

—Pastis (Pernod, Ricard, Berger Blanc and 51 are widely available brands): Anise-flavored liqueur developed as a substitute for absinthe and popular throughout the French Mediterranean. When water is added to the yellowish liqueur, it turns cloudy.

—Dry sherry: Fino or manzanilla sherry from Andalusia. Serve chilled, preferably in a sherry copita, a small tulip-shaped glass.