



ITALIAN WINE REGIONS – WINES BY THE GLASS





ITALIAN WINE REGIONS – WINES BY THE BOTTLE



ITALIAN WINE REGION NOTES

TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE is Italy's northernmost wine region, located on the Italian border with Austria. The two neighboring wine regions of Trentino (the lower, more southerly part of the Adige valley) and the upper Adige valley produce Italy's most alpine wines. This region is known for its Pinot Grigio along with Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Blanc. The local Nosiola grape makes crisp dry white wines.

The wines of **PIEMONTE (PIEDMONT)** are among Italy's most prolific and best rated. The region is only the sixth largest producer in terms of volume and has the highest percentage of classified wines in all of Italy. Many factors contribute to the success of the region's wines – a long history of wine production, a great respect for tradition, a wave of young, dynamic producers who recognize the potential of the local grapes, and the affinity of these charismatic grapes with the terrain. The red wines lead the way in terms of quality and cellaring potential with wines made from the noble Nebbiolo grape.

The name **TOSCANA (TUSCANY)** is synonymous with its most famous, and probably Italy's most famous, red wine - Chianti. Chianti is produced in high volumes and exported worldwide. The Sangiovese grape is the key to the region's success. Chianti is made in eight zones around the prized Classico area. It is thought that the rugged terrain and diversity of soil and climate add to the wine's personality.

SARDEGNA'S (Sardinia) wines have little in common with those produced in the rest of Italy. The Island's remote Mediterranean location, as well as the historic influence from other cultures, gives the wines a unique character that might be considered to have more in common with Spanish than Italian wines. Sardinia's white wine industry is characterized by grapes that are seldom seen in other parts of Italy, like the prolific Nuragus, as well as clones of classic Mediterranean varieties like Moscato and Malvasia. Additionally, wines made from Vermentino have large commercial appeal and are clean, fresh wines.

The ancient heritage of its vineyards and a great respect for tradition hold the key to **CAMPANIA'S** success in the work of wine. Instead of seeking out international markets by planting Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Chardonnay, Campania's winemakers have stayed true to their proud heritage of indigenous grapes that best reflect Campania's terroir.

SICILIA (Sicily) winemakers have moved away from producing high-volume, unremarkable wines, to focus on quality wines of great character. The trend towards characterful wines made from indigenous grape varieties has been accompanied by the increasing importance of international varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Chardonnay. Often used in blends with local grapes like the dark, muscular Nero d'Avola, the well-known grapes have flourished in Sicily's climate, yielding pleasing modern wines that still display a distinctly Italian character.

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In Italy's north eastern corner lies **FRIULI-VENZIA GIULIA**. This little region sits on the Adriatic coast, with the Alps bordering it with Austria in the north and Slovenia in the east. The region has an outstanding reputation for its white wines which account for just over 60% of its output. A mixture of local and international grape varieties are grown with great success here. The region's winemakers are forward-thinking, even pioneering the "Friuli method", a modern technique for getting juice off the skins quickly.

VENETO'S wines are some of Italy's best known exports and have long been associated with eminently drinkable Italian wines. One of the most popular, in terms of volume, is Veneto's Valpolicella. The easy-drinking red blend has historically been intended for early consumption. Bianco of Custoza is a white wine region on the shores of Lake Garda. Made from Garganega, Trebbiano Toscana and Friuliano is popular locally and perhaps deserves wider recognition.

The **MARCHE** region is well known for the quality of its whites made from the prolific Verdicchio grape. Verdicchio in all its forms undoubtedly ranks among Italy's finest whites, with quality steadily improving for many years as producers have realized the grape's potential for making interesting wines that are capable of developing in the bottle.

Little is known about **MOLISE** wines internationally. Many winemakers in this region are creating unique and characterful wines using both Italian grapes and popular international varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. The region is able to make wines of great elegance and finesse.

More than any other region, **PUGLIA** (Apulia), Italy's "heel", has seen a shift away from producing a great volume of unremarkable wine, towards smaller quantities of concentrated wines of great character. The region has a long history of co-operative winemaking, which in recent years has been instrumental in moving towards premium wines. Some very fine red wines are made in the southern peninsula, particularly around Salento where the Negroamaro and Primitivo grapes dominate. Salento often indicates deeply colored fleshy reds influenced by the region's hot climate, but there is a modern trend towards reds that are less concentrated and more aromatic.