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THE ITALIAN WINE MASTERS 2011 SHOWCASES ITALY'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS DOCG WINE REGIONS: BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO, CHIANTI CLASSICO, VINO NOBILE DI MONTEPULCIANO AND CONEGLIANO VALDOBBIADENE PROSECCO SUPERIORE

New York, February 8, 2011 - The Consorzi Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti Classico, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore have continued their multi-year collaboration, “**The Italian Wine Masters**,” with a U.S. tour in February. The program’s 2011 events began in Miami on February 3 at the newly opened JW Marriott Marquis, followed by a showcase on February 8 at the New York Hilton in New York City.

The events featured a grand tasting in each city with more than 100 producers and master classes led by renowned wine educator and author, Kevin Zraly, founder of the Windows on the World wine course and author of the book by the same name. Master class topics included: *The Different Styles of Conegliano Valdobbiadene* and *The Waiting Game: Age-worthy Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti Classico and Vino Nobile di Montepulciano*. The latter seminar featured current releases alongside selected older vintages. The events attracted several hundred U.S. wine industry professionals.

Producers at the grand tastings featured their latest releases, including the 2006 Brunello di Montalcino and 2005 Brunello Riserva, the 2008 and 2009 Chianti Classico and 2006 and 2007 Chianti Classico Riserva, the 2007 and 2008 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and the 2006 and 2007 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva, and selections from Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore.

The Italian Wine Masters is a multi-year global collaboration that began in 2010 with events in New York and Chicago, showcasing wines from the four prestigious Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG) wine regions. Italy currently has 331 DOC regions and 56 designated as DOCG.

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CONSORZIO DEL VINO BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO: OVERVIEW

The Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino was created in 1967 to assure the quality and standards of the region's Brunello di Montalcino, Rosso di Montalcino, Saint'Animo and Moscadello di Montalcino wine production. Current membership is 250 producers. The Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino is overseen by a Board of Administrators consisting of 15 members, elected by the associates, who serve for three-year terms and who represent the vine-growers, wine-makers and bottlers. The Board elects a President and a Vice President from among its members.

Montalcino: The Region

The township of Montalcino (564 meters above sea level) is 40 kilometers south of Siena. The territory is bounded by the valleys of the Orcia, Asso and Ombrone rivers and has a surface area of 24,000 hectares. The prevailing economy is agricultural and covers a small part of the surface divided as follows: 50% is covered with woods and fallow land, 10% with olive groves, and 15% with vineyards; the remainder is arable land, pasture and other cultivations.

The hill of Montalcino (approximately 40 km from the coast) was formed during various geological eras and is characterized by extremely changeable soil; there are areas rich in limestone fragmented with schist of marl and dendrite, areas with a greater presence of clay and less stone, and areas with soils made of rainfall detritus. The climate is typically Mediterranean: sunny, dry summers; cold, dry winters with some snow; rain is concentrated in the milder spring and autumn months. Due to the region's hilly terrain, Montalcino has several microclimates.

The total vineyard area of the region is 3,500 hectares, divided as follows: 2,100 hectares planted with Brunello di Montalcino, 510 hectares of Rosso di Montalcino, 50 hectares of Moscadello di Montalcino, 600 hectares of Sant'Antimo DOC; the remainder is planted with IGT vines. On average, 6,500,000 bottles of Brunello di Montalcino are produced every year, as well as 4,000,000 of Rosso di Montalcino, 80,000 of Moscadello di Montalcino and 500,000 of Sant'Antimo. Around 60% of the production is exported, and the total value of the average turnover of the wine sector in Montalcino is 140 Million Euros.

Currently 100% of Montalcino's vineyards have denomination of origin status.





Brunello di Montalcino

Brunello di Montalcino is made exclusively from Sangiovese grapes grown within the territory of the Montalcino Township. Only wines produced and bottled in this region can be called “Brunello di Montalcino.”

Brunello di Montalcino was one of the first wines to obtain the Denomination of Controlled Origin (DOC) by Decree of the President of the Republic on March 28, 1966 and the first Italian wine to have obtained the Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin (DOCG) by Decree of the President of the Republic on July 1, 1980. Montalcino was the first wine-producing area in Italy in which two denomination wines could be obtained from the same variety: Brunello and Rosso. The production of Brunello, especially since the 1980s, has undergone a clear and widespread evolution in quality, followed by constantly-growing world fame. This wine is now considered the “diamond” of Italian wine production.

The main feature of Brunello is its long aging, which determines its characteristically brilliant transparent ruby red color, tending toward garnet. Its aromas are mostly intense and greatly persistent and complex, recalling scents of undergrowth, red berries, earth, as well as the sweet spicy aromas that come from wood and aging. On the palate, Brunello is both elegant and harmonious, with a rich, well-balanced structure and considerable acidic freshness. Its alcohol content is 12.5° (minimum), and often higher, easily reaching 13.5°; its total acidity (minimum) is 5 grams/liter and its minimum dry extract is 24 grams/liter. Brunello is only bottled in Bordelaise shaped bottles with a capacity in liters of 0.375, 0.5, 1.5, 3.0, and 5.0.

Since WWII to the present day, the “five-star” years, designated by the Consorzio del Brunello di Montalcino, have been the following: 1945, 1955, 1964, 1970, 1975, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1995, 1997, 2004, 2006, 2007.

Rosso di Montalcino

Montalcino is not just limited to Brunello as far as quality wines are concerned. This is why, perhaps, for the first time in Italy, the producers of this area were accorded the possibility of obtaining, from the same vineyards, two denomination of origin wines based on precise evaluation techniques: Brunello, destined for long aging, and Rosso di Montalcino, a younger wine that combines a superb structure with attributes of particular liveliness and freshness. Already appreciated and known with various denominations, Rosso di Montalcino acquired its precise identity and official recognition with its passage to Denomination of Controlled Origin. A valid alternative for the vintner, it is also such for the consumer.

Rosso di Montalcino is harmonious, elegant, tasty, not overly committing but a pleasant accompaniment. Its aspect is brilliant and limpid, with a composite ruby color: it has a good smell intense and fragrant, with recognizable hints of fresh fruit. Its taste is harmoniously dry; it has strength and freshness with a good persistent aroma. It is made for early consumption.

Its characteristics are exalted by typical Tuscan cuisine dishes with a straightforward decisive taste but it can just as well be accompanied by various international dishes. Rossi di Montalcino goes well with medium structure dishes, such as entrées of pasta with meat, chicken mushrooms or truffles sauces or composite risottos; and main dishes prepared with pork or veal with sauce.

Sant’Antimo

Sant’Antimo takes its name from the famous medieval abbey situated a few kilometers from Montalcino, which, according to legend, was founded by Charlemagne. It is the latest DOC to have been established in Montalcino in 1996, born of the desire of the producers to qualify all the wine production of the entire territory.





Sant'Antimo is a very ample denomination that provides for many typologies of both red and white wines. Sant'Antimo Rosso can be made from varieties such as Cabernet, Merlot, Pinot Nero or Novello. Sant'Antimo Bianco can be made with varieties such as Chardonnay, Sauvignon and Pinot Grigio. It is also possible to produce Sant'Antimo Vin Santo with white grapes and Sant'Antimo Vin Santo Occhio di Pernice with red grapes, both with the typology Riserva. One should not underestimate the importance of this wine, which finds its place in the productive pyramid of Montalcino. Sant'Antimo Rosso can also be produced from Brunello or from Rosso di Montalcino, allowing the producer to make wide qualitative choices based on the harvest or according to the winery's style.

Sant'Antimo has very varied characteristics depending on its various typologies. One can find both straightforward, pleasant wines to be enjoyed in casual situations and high-expression wines that come either from one single variety or from a skilful combination of different varieties.

The range of combinations and accompaniments is very wide, since the wines of each single typology can be paired with such a variety of cuisines, either local or Italian, international or of creative fantasy, from appetizers and hors d'œuvre to entrees.

Sant'Antimo was recognized as a Denomination of Controlled Origin by the Decree of the President of the Republic on October 18, 1996. The production area is Montalcino township. Bottling can only take place in the province of Siena. All grape varieties are authorized in Tuscany with specific limitations for the typologies with the variety name and for Vin Santo. Maximum yield of grapes: 90 quintals per hectare for the whites and for Sant'Antimo Rosso Yield of grapes in wine: 70%, 31.5% for Vin Santo Color, odor, taste, alcohol content, minimum total acidity, minimum net dry extract: variable depending on the typology.

Il Moscadello di Montalcino

Moscadello di Montalcino is a light, aromatic white wine made from Moscato grapes and produced in still, sparkling and late harvest styles. The particularities of this precious wine have been encoded in the regulations of the Denomination of Controlled Origin.

The sparkling Moscadello is light straw yellow; the still wine tends to be a softer yellow, and the late harvest has a golden yellow color. The Muscat aroma is fresh and well-balanced with floral notes. The palate is sated by the sweet aromatic harmony of the still varietal, while the sparkling also offers the inviting zing of a light perlage. The late harvest style boasts a golden yellow color with a velvety, round aroma of a raisin wine. Moscadello di Montalcino still and sparkling should both be drunk when they are still young, while the late harvest type is at its best after a few years. Moscadello di Montalcino is best enjoyed at the end of a meal and is a pleasant accompaniment to pastries, cakes and sweet biscuits.

Moscadello di Montalcino obtained the recognition of Denomination of Controlled Origin with the Decree of the President of the Republic on November 13, 1984, since which time various modifications have been added. The current regulations (Decree 28/09/1995) provide for the following: The production area is Montalcino Township. Moscato Bianco's maximum grape yield is 100 quintals per hectare for the still and sparkling types and 50 quintals per hectare for the late harvest. Yield of grapes in wine is 65% for the still and sparkling, 45% for the late harvest. Minimum alcohol content is 10.5% ABV for still and sparkling Moscadello di Montalcino and 15% ABV (11.5% ABV developed and 3.5% ABVI) in the late harvest. The wine is ready for consumption the second year after the harvest on January 1 for the late harvest

The wine has been immortalized in literature and history. The poet, Francesco Redi commemorated it as "The so divine and light Moscadello of Montalcino," in his dithyramb (an ancient Greek hymn on the virtues of wine) entitled *Bacco en Toscana*. Numerous similar historical mentions bear witness to the appeal of Moscadello di Montalcino in Italy and abroad.





**Sir Ezio Rivella,
President of the Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino**

Sir Ezio Rivella was born in Castagnole Lanze (Province of Asti) on March 30th, 1933. He studied oenology and wine-making at the School of Alba where he was assigned the role of Assistant Professor. In 1957 he moved to Castelli Romani, Rome, where he founded and managed the Company Enoconsult, specialized in the study of production technology, plant planning and development and also in management consulting for wine companies.

In 1977 Sir Rivella founded Banfi SpA. He created a unique wine company with a property area of 7,413 acres, 1,976 of which are vineyards, cultivated thanks to a large land reclamation and soil treatment, besides a wine cellar that is an example of technological organization and a refurbished medieval castle. The Company produces a highly valuable range of wines and has an average of 250 employees. As a result, in 1985 Sir Rivella was awarded the title of Cavaliere del Lavoro (Knight of Labor). Sir Rivella has been President of the Associazione Enologi Italiani (Italian Enologist Association) for 12 years and President of the Associazione Mondiale degli Enologi (Worldwide Enologist Association) for nine years. In 2000 after many years at Banfi, Sir Rivella left in order to take care of his own vineyards in Tuscany and in Piedmont. In 2001 he was elected President of the Confederazione Italiana della Vite e del Vino, "Unione Italiana Vini" (Italian Vine and Wine Confederation, "Italian Wine Union"), a role in which he served until 2004.

From 1993 to 1998 Sir Rivella was the President of the Comitato Nazionale dei Vini a Denominazione di Origine (Denomination of Controlled Origin Wine National Committee). For six years he has been Vice President of the Organisation International de la Vigne e du Vin (International Organization of Vine and Wine) of Paris and presided over the Group of Experts on "Social Aspects of wine consumption."

Sir Rivella is also the author of wine journals and scientific publications and a member of the Accademia Italiana della Vite e del Vino (Italian Vine and Wine Academy), of the Académie International du Vin (International Wine Academy) and many other Academies and Organizations of this field. Sir Rivella has been honored with many prizes, such as Grappolo D'Oro, Giovanni Dalmasso, Paolo Desana, Premio Masi per la Civiltà del Vino.



**Stefano Campatelli,
Director of the Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino**

Stefano Campatelli has been Director of the Consorzio del Vino Brunello di Montalcino since 1990. He graduated in Agrarian Science at the Faculty of the University of Florence in 1983. In 1989 he obtained his Masters in Enology at the Faculty of Agrarian Science in Piacenza at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. He was accorded the title of Enologist by the Ministry of Agrarian Policies. He is a Counselor of the Board of the Federdoc (National Federation of the Consortiums for the Safe-guarding of Wines) with headquarters in Rome.





An Exceptional Harvest in 2010

Montalcino, November 2010 – The 2010 harvest in Montalcino, distinct from other areas of Tuscany, is proving one of the best in recent years. This is the opinion shared by experts and producers, who, two months before the harvest, had sketched a first forecast of the crop and are now commenting on what Brunello 2010 could be, echoing the “forecasts of an excellent level of quality that we had pre-announced last October” from the President of the Consorzio.

The year 2010 will be remembered in Montalcino for the delay in the commencement of the budding, owing to below-average spring temperatures and frequent rains that characterized this period, a situation that subsequently favored strong vegetative development and provoked some problems in the setting of the flowers, which caused a slight cutback in production of around 10%. In this phase the steps taken to combat the development of diseases (particularly peronospora and oidium) were crucial in a situation like that of Montalcino, which is made up of mainly medium-sized and small farms. They achieved excellent results.

The summer period was marked by good, stable weather, with only moderate rain during August that mitigated the heat and favored a recovery of the phenological phase, even though the beginning of the veraison happened around ten days late, compared to the average of the last ten years.

Sangiovese showed all its capacity for recovery during the ripening period of the grapes when the weather conditions remained favorable, allowing a harmonious development of the phenolic and sugar ripening.

The wines obtained in this harvest – begun with delays that went from a minimum of 8 to a maximum of 14 days – show extraordinary characteristics for Sangiovese, both under the organoleptic profile (currently still in its evolutionary phase), and under that of the parameters of composition, which – apart from an excellent level of alcohol content, in some cases rather high – present extremely high levels of total polyphenols, anthocyanins and extract rarely found in this variety.

The strength of this terroir, together with the competence of the viticulturists, is a winning combination. Both experts and producers agree that the year 2010 is an excellent vintage. The President of the Consorzio Ezio Rivella states, “The forecasts of an excellent-quality vintage have been confirmed.” According to Attilio Scienza, **Professor** of Viticulture and Enology Studies at the Faculty of Agronomy at the University of Milan, 2010 is a five-star vintage.

So, how did the effects of unfavorable weather conditions not spoil the integrity of Montalcino wines? Professor Scienza states, “The answer is to be found in a simple observation: Sangiovese vineyards have a vegetative-productive balance that allows them to amortize most efficiently the strain and negative effects of excessive rains on the grapes. This balance is due to various factors, some are the result of a pedoclimatic environment extremely propitious for wines that age for a long time. The drainage of soil, their richness in skeleton, and their low chemical fertility enable a moderated development of the vegetation, through temperature variations between night and day. Other factors include the know-how of viticulturists, who have always followed two fundamental principles in the production of Brunello: their fidelity to the territory and their honor as producers.

“There are few places in the world so famous for the quality of its wines as Montalcino, where it is possible to see vineyards so well-tended and grapes with such regular maturity, even in difficult years. The proof is that a vineyard correctly balanced with the territory that hosts it has an inherent capacity to react to any climatic injury.”





Characteristics of the 2006 Vintage

2006 was a great year for Brunello, a year that will figure among the best of the last decade, according to the experts who have assigned the maximum grade of “five stars” to the vintage. This rating was conferred by the Consorzio after rigorous evaluation (chemical, physical and organoleptic) and observations on the weather conditions of the year by a special committee made up of twenty important enologists.

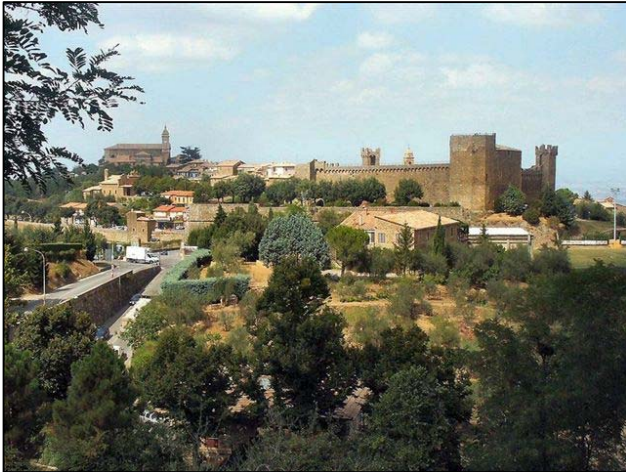
From April to June a period of persistent rainfall resulted in a considerable accumulation of water underground, which proved extremely useful during the summer heat. The month of July was very hot and sunny, with an excellent development of the grapes and the right phenological phases of the vine. The month of August was less hot than usual. The first part of September was very hot and sunny and ensured the final evolution of the grapes into a complete and balanced fruition. The second half of September began with some rainfall, causing a distinct weather change and the beginning of Autumn. The situation very soon became stable once more, enabling the start of the harvesting operations.

The resulting wines are rich and have ample polyphenolic components. These are wines with good body and structure that can be kept for a long time.

To celebrate the 2006 Brunello the American designer Adam Tihany, a great enthusiast of Montalcino wine, created the traditional ceramic plaque which represents the vintage and its corresponding mark in stars, to be placed on the walls of the 13th century town hall palace. Adam Tihany, born of Rumanian parents, brought up in Israel, graduated in architecture in Italy and settled in New York, literally invented the profession of “restaurant designer”, making internationalism the distinctive mark of his work and designing the concept of the interior spaces of around 300 shops, hotels and restaurants: from those of the Maccioni family to those of Jean-Georges Vongerichten and Thomas Keller. They include the intense atmospheres of The “Remi” Restaurant in New York (of which Tihany is co-owner) the “Aureole” (inside the Mandalay Bar Resort of Las Vegas), and the D.D.L. Food Show in New York. Tihany decided to dedicate to Brunello, one of his favorite wines, a work which will be added to those created in previous years by famous artists such as stylists Ottavio Missoni, Roberto Cavalli and Miuccia Prada, painter Sandro Chia, photographer Oliviero Toscani, ski champion Deborah Compagnoni, designer Giorgetto Giugiaro, actor Peter Weller.







Town of Montalcino



Brunello di Montalcino



Montalcino Vineyard



Sangiovese







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Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico: Overview

Chianti Classico is the oldest and first delimited wine production zone in Italy, dating back to 1716, when the Medici Grand Duke Cosimo III issued an edict about its boundaries. That zone has remained virtually unchanged and still amounts to about 172,000 acres.

Chianti Classico (DOCG) denotes a specific appellation between Florence and Siena. Chianti Classico DOCG is recognizable for the symbol of a Black Rooster (former logo of the Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico) on a pink DOCG state neckband. The Chianti Classico production area includes: Greve in Chianti and parts of Barberino Val d'Elsa, San Casciano Val di Pesa and Tavarnelle Val di Pesa in the province of Florence and Castellina in Chianti, Gaiole in Chianti, Radda in Chianti and parts of Castelnuovo Berardenga and Poggibonsi in the province of Siena.

Chianti Classico is a wine district covering 172,000 acres, 17,791 acres of which are Chianti Classico vineyards. Approximately 40 million bottles of Chianti Classico are produced annually. The most important export markets for Chianti Classico are the United States, Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland Canada and Japan.

The production regulations for Chianti Classico are quite stringent, as are all DOCG strictures. For example it has the lowest yield per hectare in Italy, with a maximum production of 52.5 hectoliters of wine. Sangiovese is the real soul of Chianti Classico, present in percentages ranging from a minimum of 80% to even 100%. Indigenous grapes, such as Canaiolo or Colorino, as well as international grapes, like Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, can also be used for blending, but cannot exceed more than 20%. Beginning with the 2006 vintage, blending with white grapes of any sort – usually Trebbiano and / or Malvasia – is now prohibited. Chianti Classico must contain an alcohol content of a minimum of 12%; Classico Riserva must have 12.5%.

More recently, producers in other parts of Tuscany have found it advantageous to make “Chianti,” using the same techniques and grape mixtures as in the zone of origin, because of the wine’s reputation. Such wine was sold under the name, “Chianti”, with emphasis on the fact that it was made “in the manner” of Chianti.

At that time, a geographical indication was transformed into a veritable enological appellation. Along with the original Chianti (defined, then, as Classico in recognition of its seniority), other types of Chianti wine appeared on the scene. A ministerial decree issued in 1932 sanctioned that state of affairs by distinguishing the Chianti made in the historic area (Chianti Classico), defined as the “oldest zone of origin,” from the wine produced in the rest of Tuscany.

Young Chianti Classicos often have a spicy nose redolent of cinnamon, floral notes and red berries; as they age, black berries, vanilla, tobacco and leather can become more prevalent. Chianti Classico can be cellared for between six to twenty years, and improves with bottle-aging.





Harvest Report: 2010 Chianti Classico

Weather

From a strictly meteorological standpoint, 2010 featured alternating situations. Temperatures were often below average for the same periods in recent years. A winter worthy of the name, which took temperatures in Chianti close to freezing, was followed by a cool, rainy spring, with temperatures remaining fairly low, and so the vines blossomed somewhat later than usual.

A hot July sped up full plant growth, which proceeded somewhat slowly during the hot, but not scorching, August and September. The second half of September and early October offered splendid days of normal weather, with temperatures close to seasonal averages but also several hours of rain, in some areas accompanied by harmful hailstorms. Contributing to the good results of the harvest were the sunny days at picking time in late September/early October, bringing high temperatures, especially at midday.

Harvesting the grapes was fairly laborious for producers who had to pick selectively and in various installments, choosing the grapes mostly on the basis of the ripeness of individual vines. The most important enological aspect of this year was the phenolic maturation of the Sangiovese, better in quality and more balanced than in the international grape varieties (Merlot, Cabernet, etc.) and testifying to our territory's special vocation for this noble grape.

While the weather wasn't entirely even, the experience of Chianti Classico grape growers made it possible to bring in another good year. There will be particular rewards for the most attentive vintners who, having carefully selected grapes in excellent health, were able to calmly wait until ripening was completed, taking advantage of the sunny end-of-summer days.

The 2010 vintage

Impressions from technicians and insiders note "surprising" results: fermentation proceeded without any hitches, and the wines emerging have intense colors and fragrances with acidity levels high enough to predict a good capacity for aging; alcohol content is high but not excessive, heralding balanced wines and leaving room for a wealth of aromas. It is precisely the work done by enologists and vintners in the grape-growing period, plus the careful grape selection made during the harvest, that will determine the success of the 2010 vintage, the child of a rather difficult season. But, as often happens in singular years weather-wise, the grapes arriving in the cellar this year are really good. In brief, in 2010 the Black Rooster's output was lower but its quality was not. This will be a vintage akin to the excellent ones that Chianti Classico has already enjoyed in the first decade of the new millennium.

Total production (tentative): 265,000 hl (7,000,559 gallons)





Harvest Report: 2007 Chianti Classico

The 2007 harvest was on average about one week early in comparison with the 2006. That did not represent a substantial shift in the harvest date, despite the considerable advance in the revival of vegetation, which was favored by temperatures that were above average. This left the field open for a variety of initial predictions.

Although there was little or no real winter, which made growers fear an excessively dry growing season, rainfall in June and August revived the vines. In the meantime, conditions in the spring-summer period permitted viticulturists to obtain grapes of excellent quality with various excellent elements: grape clusters were perfectly formed from the standpoint of wholesomeness and the balance of all their components. They had high sugar levels, which form the bases of wines with excellent structures.

During vinification, the musts developed along regular lines, even for those who fermented their wines with a natural process using native yeasts, especially in cases of elevated sugar content. It is precisely the regularity of the kinetic fermenting elements and the subsequent rising temperatures that permitted exaltation of the extraction of the aromatic component from the skins. This made the young wines extremely fruity at racking.

Secondary (malolactic) fermentation - fundamental for wines of medium-long aging like Chianti Classico - occurred with extreme regularity in most vinifications, at the end of alcoholic fermentation and with no particular problems, since it is also aided by moderate malic acid content in the musts.

After racking, the young wines of the 2007 vintage entered the next phase, maturation in various types of wood, yielding excellent alcohol content on average and a good level of total acidity. These are two characteristics which, along with good total polyphenol content, led to a great Chianti Classico vintage, destined for longevity.

Total production: 280,000 hl (7,396,817 gallons)





Marco Pallanti, President of the Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico

"We inaugurate 2011 in the country that has long expressed its esteem and affection for us, as shown by the 27% of Chianti Classico wine it purchased in 2010, again making the United States the primary export market for our denomination," said Marco Pallanti, President of the Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico. *"This is why every trip here is a sort of 'homecoming,' finding old friends again, meeting with new aficionados, listening to impressions, criticisms and suggestions from people able to talk about our wine as if it were their own, precisely because they know and appreciate the history of where it comes from and the evolutions that through the years have made it a leader on the world wine scene. Indeed, the American public was among the first to be aware of the definite opting for quality that Black Rooster producers undertook some decades ago. Ours is an evolution that began with the richness of the territory and enhanced and consecrated it in a wine that is inimitable because it is born in only one place in the world and unique because its producers have learned to interpret this richness in the finest of ways."*

Marco Pallanti has served as President of the Chianti Classico Wine Consortium since 2006. With his selection, he assumed an extremely delicate task, the continuation along the path taken by the Consortium since 2005, when the Consorzio Vino Chianti Classico and the Consorzio del Marchio Storico were reunited. The merger was carried out in order to confront the challenge of global competition by reaffirming the personality and quality of Chianti Classico wine. Dr. Pallanti is in his fifties, a Florentine, an enologist, a university professor and an art lover, who represents the new managerial class. In recent years he has worked hard to enhance the image of Chianti Classico throughout the world. Dr. Pallanti's selection occurred with the unanimous consent among the different interest groups represented on the Consortium's Board of Directors, all of whom endorsed a strategic approach based on the necessity of further growth, both of qualitative content of the product and the guarantees offered to the consumers to guide them in confronting an increasingly competitive and complex market.

Dr. Pallanti's education and professional training have endowed him with a strong personality and stimulated his passion for the quality wine sector. In his youth, he pursued his studies but also practiced sports, winning championships in canoeing and rugby. Dr. Pallanti graduated in agriculture in Florence and completed his training in enology at the University of Bordeaux-Mantes and Suze la Rousse. In 1982 he began working at the Castello di Ama wine estate as agronomist and enologist. He also served as the estate's director. In 1996, he married Lorenza Sebasti, the daughter of one of the founding partners of the property, and they have three children: Arturo Maria, Norma and Gemma. His wife manages the estate's public relations and follows the marketing sector. Chief among the numerous awards he has received is the title of "Best Enologist of the Year," bestowed on him in 2003 by the prestigious Guida Vini d'Italia, published by Gambero Rosso. Over the years, he has won many awards and seen his wines repeatedly ranked in first place in competitions at the national and international levels.

Dr. Pallanti has another great passion in addition to wine: contemporary art. For this reason, he along with his wife, Lorenza, launched the "Castello di Ama per l'Arte Contemporanea" program in 2000. Works by ten artists with international reputations were installed on the estate on a permanent basis: Michelangelo Pistoletto, Giulio Paolini, Daniel Buren, Kendell Geers, Anish Kapoor, Chen Zen, Carlos Garaicoa, Nedko Solakov, Cristina Iglesias and Louise Bourgeois. In 2005, Castello di Ama received the "Enterprise and Culture" award for the best investments in the arts.

Giuseppe Liberatore, Vice President of Federdoc



Born in Monteroduni (Isernia, Molise Province) on June 9, 1955, Giuseppe Liberatore received his degree in Agrarian Sciences from Portici University (Naples) on July 31, 1980. He earned the highest grades in a postgraduate course in enology and viticulture at Turin University. From 1985 to 1987, he worked with Federcantine executives in Rome. In 1987, he was appointed Secretary-General of the Italian Inter-Professional Wine Valorization Board. From 1992 to 2001, he served as Director of the Consorzio del Marchio Storico – Chianti Classico (Black Rooster) and later as General Director of the Chianti Classico Wine and Chianti Classico DOP Olive Oil consortia. Since 1998 he has been Vice President of Federdoc (the Italian Confederation of Voluntary Consortia Protecting Italian Wine Denominations) and since 2006, President of the Italian Association of Geographical Indication Wine Consortia.







Sangiovese



Hills of Chianti Classico



Chianti Classico Cellar



Chianti Classico







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Consorzio del Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Overview

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano has often been described as “the wine of kings,” and in the 17th Century, Francesco Redi wrote “Montepulciano of every wine is king.” From as long ago as Roman times, a wine cup known as a kylix was found in an Etruscan tomb; the cup was decorated with Fufluns, the Etruscan version of Bacchus. And if the departed was really, really lucky, he got to drink an ancient version of Vino Nobile (“Noble Wine”) of Montepulciano.

Today, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano enjoys the DOCG. (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita) status shared by only 40 other wines in Italy. It was one of the first four wines, along with Brunello di Montalcino, to be so recognized in 1980. Vino Nobile is a blend of Sangiovese - known locally as Prugnolo Gentile - with small amounts of other red grape varieties, including up to a maximum of 30% from local grapes varieties (Colorino, Canaiolo and Mammolo). Most producers of Vino Nobile di Montepulciano create blends, but according to the DOCG. rules, they are also allowed to use 100% Sangiovese. Vino Nobile must undergo an aging period of at least two years, or three years for a riserva.

There is also a DOC (Denominazione di Origine Controllata) wine produced in Montepulciano called Rosso di Montepulciano, which can be released to the market after just one year following the harvest.

The whole territory covers about 41,250 acres, 3,017 of them planted with vineyards registered as Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and about 875 registered as Rosso di Montepulciano. For the 2010 vintage about 7.5 million bottles of Vino Nobile will be produced. US imports account for 14% of production (the second largest export market outside the European Union).

Some of Italy’s most famous dessert wines, such as Vin Santo di Montepulciano, Vin Santo di Montepulciano Riserva, and Vin Santo di Montepulciano Occhio di Pernice (Eye of the Partridge) are produced in Montepulciano. The first two Vin Santos are white wines made from Malvasia Bianca, Grechetto Bianco (locally known as Pulcinculo), and Trebbiano Toscano. Vin Santo di Montepulciano Occhio di Pernice, on the other hand, is red and must contain a minimum of 50% Sangiovese.

Italian pop star Elio, of the band Storie Tese, wrote: “Vino Nobile di Montepulciano is a great ‘syrup’ for the throat, for a singer like me. It’s a great strong wine, and when I drink it I am drinking centuries of history.”

As well as monitoring production, the Consorzio also promotes the Nobile, Rosso and Vin Santo DOCs. Every year the Consorzio’s marketing and communications department organizes a promotional world tour. Among the various activities carried out, the Consorzio del Vino Nobile is directly involved in research programs with different partners (private companies and universities) concerning an increase in the quality of the wines, as well as the protection of the landscape and the environment. Numerous wineries are organic, and even some that are not certified still follow the directives of the Tuscany region concerning production with low environmental impact.





A clonal selection project started with the cooperation of the University of Florence during the 1990s and already the research has given producers three new clones of Sangiovese. During the 1980s the Consortium began a zoning study with the aim of defining the vine suitability of the entire area, studying and evaluating the effect of the geopedological features and the morphology of the landscape and of its vineyards on the vegetative quality and productivity performance of the Vino Nobile vineyards. This work helps the different producers to make specific choices regarding agronomical techniques and to maximize their own “quality strategies.”

2010 Harvest Report: Vino Nobile di Montepulciano

The year opened with a cold, very rainy winter that continued into the spring: in March and April, there were 190mm of rain, and temperatures were very low. During the first half of May the minimum and maximum temperatures were a few degrees lower than average, which led to a delay of 7-10 days in the swelling of the buds. June was nice and warm with occasional showers, which encouraged an explosion of foliage and rapid flowering and growing of grapes. Normal conditions resumed in July with high temperatures and no rain. At the end of July and the middle of August, when veraison began, the weather suddenly changed to a mix of sunny and rainy days. Ripening continued regularly with a good accumulation of sugars and polyphenols, aided by the warm and dry weather that followed in mid-August and September.

At the end of September, when the Merlot harvest was being planned, the weather changed to heavy rain, which abruptly slowed down the ripening. Despite the worryingly unpredictable weather, this year was as cool as we can expect for traditional Sangiovese harvesting periods. The Sangiovese harvest took place between the last week of September and the first two weeks of October.

In conclusion, the quality of the grapes is definitely good to great, but it required a great deal of effort, with a considerable reduction in quantity. The wines of 2010, after the first analysis taken at the end of malolactic fermentation, are generally of good quality; alcohol content is not too high, and acidity and pH are within normal levels. The total polyphenol content is generally high, with well-balanced anthocyanins and tannins. The balance of the various components and the generous, elegant range of aromas indicate for now that the Vino Nobile di Montepulciano 2010 will age well.

Summary of phenological stages for 2010

Germination: mid-April

Flowering: first ten days of June

Veraison begins: end of July

Veraison ends: mid- August





Characteristics of the 2007 Vintage of Vino Nobile di Montepulciano

A recorded increase of 3-4 degrees C. in the maximum temperatures of late March and April meant budbreak took place about 15 days earlier than in a "normal" year. The situation continued throughout the flowering phase and was largely confirmed in the fruit-setting phase. The Sangiovese vines developed good foliage in all phases. Rain in May and June averted the problem of drought-related stress, and the grapes (comparable in quantity to 2006) did not suffer much from the higher temperature. In June, a decrease in temperatures caused a partial slowing of the foliage development, but balance was restored with above average temperatures recorded in July. The high temperatures and lack of rainfall caused early veraison, and a slight delay in ripening in August.

The 2007 vintage experienced average pathogen attacks, but plant diseases were kept well under control.

The perfectly ripe and healthy grapes were picked in good weather between the 15th of September the first week of October, not early as was expected due to the precocious results in the preceding months. The heat of 2007 definitely affected the Sangiovese grapes, making specific agronomical procedures necessary in the vineyard to avert problems of over-ripening and loss of aromas.

Summary of phenological stages

Budbreak: late March - early April

Flowering: 14th – 28th May

Veraison: 23rd July – 6th August

The 2007 wines

The development of technological parameters was within the norm, with excellent phenolic ripeness levels and a rather high sugar content and lower total acidity than in the previous year. The result following malolactic fermentation showed a substantial alcohol content, total acidity within the norm, and very high net dry extract, total polyphenols and color intensity. These characteristics were confirmed upon tasting the finished wine, which is concentrated and soft on the palate.





Federico Carletti,
Estate Owner, Azienda Agricola Poliziano
President, Consorzio del Vino Nobile di Montepulciano

Federico Carletti, Estate Owner, Azienda Agricola Poliziano, represents a symbol of the enological renaissance in Tuscany and one of the most solid production systems in the world of Italian wines. At the age of 55 he is the driving force behind the growth and success of the Poliziano vineyard-estate, founded by his father almost 50 years ago with the purchase of the first 22 hectares and the planting of the first Sangiovese vineyards.

Carletti is well-educated in the art and business of winemaking, having studied agriculture at the University of Florence for five years (1973-1978) and having spent close to three decades spearheading continuous improvements at the prized estate by replanting the estate-vineyards (1985 – 2009), constructing

Poliziano's new vinification cellar (1998), renovating Poliziano's new cellars (2005), and creating Poliziano's hospitality center (2007).

Carletti's winemaking philosophy and approach to life have been partially influenced by the philosopher, Rudolf Steiner, and by biodynamic agriculture. But most of all, it is the applied knowledge stemming from numerous trips and studies of the leading European winemaking areas (examples: Chianti, Bordeaux and Burgundy) from a spontaneous search for quality that has influenced his work: "My passion in creating a wine creates the energy that acts as the real catalyst for all activities at Poliziano," he said. Strongly rooted in Tuscany, Federico Carletti serves as President of the Consorzio Del Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, the region's association of wine-growers that is responsible for the regulations and instrumental in promoting and defending the area's wines.

"Today, more than ever, I believe that only quality and unique terroir can truly consolidate the personality and fortune of our Vino Nobile di Montepulciano. This remarkable region, boasting a two thousand year culture, must open itself to the outside world. This will be the true challenge for the coming years," said Carletti. "We must encourage visitors to Montepulciano by transforming their visit into a memorable experience at the estate. At Poliziano, wine aficionados and tourists can admire our cellars and taste local products together with our wines, while gaining a view of the entire production process. All this can be done while simultaneously admiring the scenery of one Renaissance period gem, that of Montepulciano."

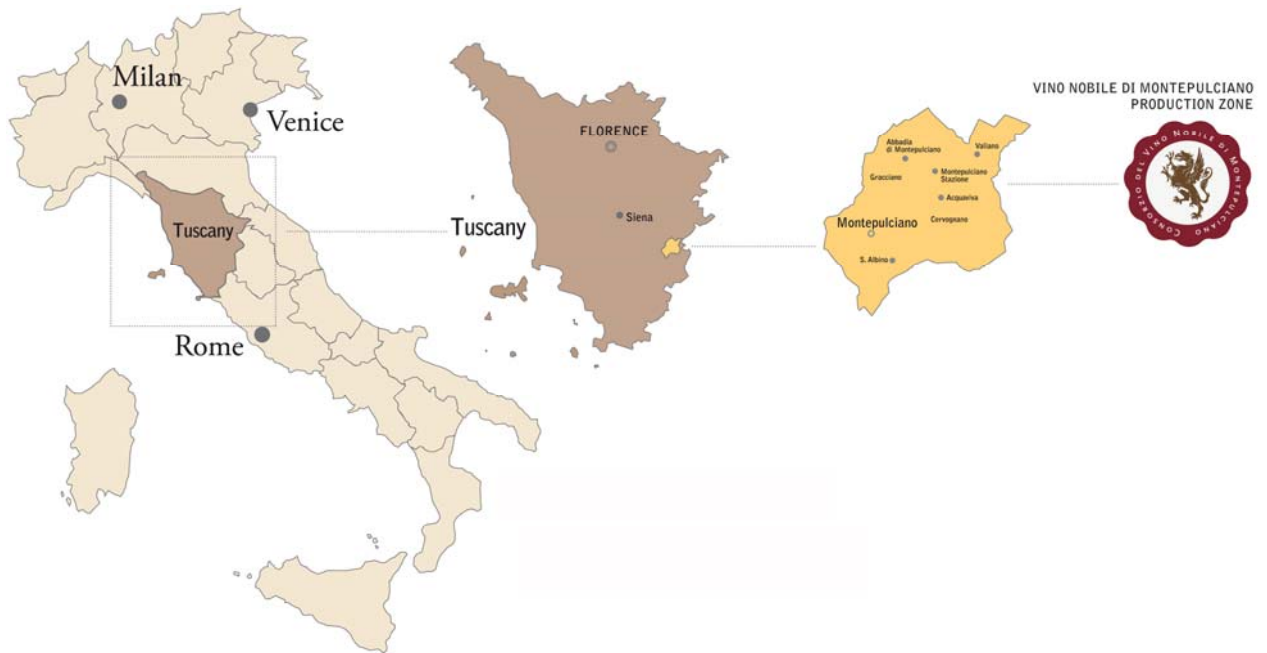
Federico Carletti has two children, to whom he has already begun transmitting his values: audacity in life and passion for the family estate, the region's unique terroir, and an appreciation for the renaissance era culture that overflows throughout the region.



Thomas Francioni, Events Manager,
Consorzio del Vino Nobile di Montepulciano

Thomas Francioni has served as Events Manager for the Consorzio del Vino Nobile di Montepulciano since 2007. He graduated in Agricultural Science and Technology from the University of Florence in 2001 with a specialized focus in Mediterranean viticulture and winemaking. He has worked in many aspects of the wine Industry, including viticulture research, viticulture, winemaking and marketing management.







Montepulciano Renaissance Art



Montepulciano Hillside



Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Vineyard





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Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Overview

Since 2009, the Prosecco produced in the zone between Conegliano and Valdobbiadene, the historic area where this wine's success story began, has become a DOCG, the highest level in the Italian quality system. With the attainment of the DOCG, the name of the wine has become Conegliano Valdobbiadene. The producers may add "Prosecco Superiore," if they choose to.

Prosecco has been made for over 300 years in the hills of Conegliano Valdobbiadene; its written history began in 1876 with the foundation of the first enological school in Italy, also located in the region. Prosecco is produced in an area 30 miles Northeast of Venice. It is made from Glera grapes, the new name for the Prosecco variety as of late 2009. Under the DOCG strictures, Prosecco must contain a minimum of 85% Glera, with a maximum of 15% other indigenous grapes (Bianchetta, Boschera and Glera Lunga) or international varieties such as Pinot and Chardonnay. Conegliano Valdobbiadene is an area with very steep slopes, and all of the cultivation and harvesting must be done by hand. The production methods are steeped in tradition and have a long history.

In 1962, 11 Prosecco producers founded the Consorzio per la Tutela del Conegliano Valdobbiadene, there are over 3,000 producers, with 85%, or 2,400 members, in the consortium. Of these members 156 are bottlers. Conegliano Valdobbiadene vineyards number 15,000 acres and there are a total of 166 Conegliano Valdobbiadene wineries. In 1969 Prosecco was awarded DOC (Denominazione di Controllata) status; forty years later, the wine has made the final leap into the stratosphere by obtaining the DOCG.

Because of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene zone's unique appearance, evolved from centuries of viticulture, it may soon be awarded UNESCO World Heritage status. In October 2010, the zone was officially included in the tentative list of Italian candidates to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is the first time that an Italian region has been included in this coveted list thanks to its value in terms of viticulture. For centuries, the hills of Conegliano Valdobbiadene have been lovingly planted with vines by the local inhabitants, who have thus preserved the environment and created a real culture-based landscape in which wine is still today "made by hand." These very hills are the element that makes Prosecco Superiore unique: a product that has enjoyed D.O.C.G. status since 2009 and represents the very best expression of this type of iconically Italian sparkling wine. UNESCO World Heritage recognition would, above all, allow the producers to communicate that Conegliano Valdobbiadene is the land of Prosecco Superiore because good wine can only come from a well-preserved environment. The area's insertion in the National Tentative List is one of the obligatory steps prior to presenting the official application dossier to join the prestigious List of World Heritage Sites.





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The two DOCG areas are Conegliano Valdobbiadene and Montello e Colli Asolani. Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore is produced in sparkling, still and semi-sparkling styles, the sparkling being the most well-known. This version is produced in Brut, Extra Dry and Dry styles, depending on its residual sugar content. In addition, within the sparkling style, one can also find the “Rive” category. Rive wines are made from grapes grown on the highest, steepest, most desirable hills; think of them as *crus* or “single-vineyard” wines. Rive is only produced in the *spumante* style. The Rive labels will show the name of the commune or hamlet where the vineyard is situated. At the top of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene quality pyramid is Cartizze, the sparkling wine from the historic “Superiore di Cartizze” subzone, a single hill comprising some 100 hectares of vineyards and situated between the villages of Santo Stefano, Saccol and San Pietro di Barbozza in the commune of Valdobbiadene.

When shopping for Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore, make sure it has the DOCG on the label, as well as the seal of the Italian state.

Sparkling Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore can be served with hors d’oeuvres; pasta and rice dishes; vegetables; fresh, creamy cheeses; white meats and fish. It is also ideal as an aperitif, or even outside the context of a meal.

Today the United States market represents 9.8% of Conegliano Valdobbiadene’s exports, behind Germany (33.3%) and Switzerland (19.4%) and ahead of the United Kingdom.

The best way to get to know Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore is to attend *Vino in Villa*, the international festival entirely dedicated to this wine, which takes place during the third weekend in May each year at the splendid castle of San Salvatore at Susegana (TV). In 2011 *Vino in Villa* will be held on 21st – 23rd May.





2010 Harvest Report: Consorzio per la Tutela del Conegliano Valdobbiadene

Grapes grown on hillsides yield a vintage that is of high quality and rich in nuances

It kept them on tenterhooks until the last moment, but the 2010 vintage has not let down the growers of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene zone. In a difficult vintage like 2010 what really made a difference was the hilly terrain, the denomination's distinctive element. In spite of the bad weather that characterized the end of the summer, all that was needed was a week of sunshine in September to allow the producers in Conegliano Valdobbiadene to pick high-quality fruit with excellent aromas, good sugar levels and just the right amount of acidity, indispensable elements for producing sparkling wines.

The result, then, was a very positive one, even though it did oblige the growers to work in a very careful and precise manner, in which it was crucial to plan the exact time of picking, vineyard by vineyard.

The 2010 vintage was notable, for its great variability, which led, according to the particular hillside site in question, to variations in quality and in harvesting periods. This diversity is one of the zone's great riches, exemplified by the Rive category, which was created this year along with the conferring of DOCG. status. The Rive wines come from vineyards lying in the same commune or hamlet, and the grapes for them are picked exclusively by hand. Quality from these sites should prove to be really outstanding.

Rive, in the local dialect, refers to high hillsides, whose slopes are so steep that they sometimes force growers to work under prohibitive conditions but where viticulture has rendered the landscape particularly attractive, creating an even closer bond between vines and man.





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Giancarlo Vettorello
Director of Consorzio Tutela Conegliano
Valdobbiadene

Giancarlo Vettorello, born at San Polo di Piave in 1960, graduated in winemaking from Conegliano's School of Enology. Following these studies, Giancarlo Vettorello began his career as the viticultural expert for a large cooperative group, at the same time working as a consultant on vine growing and winemaking. Apart from his duties as a technician, Giancarlo Vettorello carried out scientific research and produced several reports that were published in the principal wine trade journals, as well as working in collaboration with the Universities of Padua and Udine. For the last fifteen years he has been the Director of the Consorzio Tutela Conegliano Valdobbiadene (Consortium for the Safeguarding of Conegliano Valdobbiadene).



Elvira Maria Bortolomiol
Vice President, Bortolomiol SpA
Board Member, Consorzio Tutela Conegliano Valdobbiadene

Elvira Maria Bortolomiol became a full member of the Board of Directors of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene Protection Consortium in 2007 and has been its Vice President since 2008. Elvira is committed to the protection and promotion of the Denominazione (DOCG certification) of Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore both in Italy and abroad and is also Vice President of Bortolomiol SpA. Initially in charge of Business Development and Marketing, she has recently been focusing her energies and business skills on the new Special Projects Division.

Bortolomiol SpA was started in 1949 by Giuliano Bortolomiol, one of the 11 founding members of the Conegliano Valdobbiadene Protection Consortium and father to the all-female team that currently manages the company. One of the oldest wineries in the area, Bortolomiol continues to be a leader in the production of Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore.

After receiving her degree in Agrarian Studies Elvira took the opportunity to develop her skills working in both the United States and South America. It was during this period that she began to formulate her vision for the wine, genius loci (unique atmosphere) and the fine dining culture of her home, without ever forgetting the authentic values of a tradition which has for centuries linked Bortolomiol to the land and to the principles of innovation.

In recent years the Bortolomiol Winery has demonstrated a solid commitment to corporate social responsibility supporting numerous humanitarian projects including "Wine for Life" sponsored by the Community of Sant'Egidio and the New Partnership for Africa's Development of Research and Cooperation.





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CONEGLIANO VALDOBBIADENE PROSECCO SUPERIORE AREA DI PRODUZIONE





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Conegliano Valdobbiadene:
Delicious with Food



Conegliano Valdobbiadene Hills



Conegliano Valdobbiadene
Vineyards



Glera grapes

