

WINES OF ITALY

- One vast vineyard.
- Some of the oldest in Europe.
- More varieties than any other country.
- Half the size of France but quantity is almost equal.
- Vines in all 20 provinces – tremendous variety at moderate price – some extremely fine.
- 60% reds – probably second only to Bordeaux and Burgundy.
- More like Burgundies – robust, full-bodied, deep red.
- Many of them undergo long ageing in cask = mature taste.

WINE LAWS OF ITALY

- Not as well-classified as in France.
- Names may be confusing – named after village or district or both, some neither, some denote dry/sweet/sparkling, etc., some denote all.
- Small growers have co-operatives: **Consorzio / Cantina Sociale**
- The co-operative seal on the label.
- The co-operatives produce half of Italy's all wines.
- In mid-1960s the Govt. framed stricter rules.
- Known as **DOC (Denominazione di Origine Controllata)**
- Specifies and controls:

- Geographical limits, grape varieties, yield, minimum alcohol content, minimum ageing, etc.

GRADATION OF WINES

Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG)

- Controlled and guaranteed naming of origin.

Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG)

- Only a few outstanding wines. Some examples:

Albana di Romagno (w), Barbaresco (r), Barolo (r), Brunello di Montalcino (r),

Chianti (r), Vino Nobile di Montepulciano (r)

Denominazione di Origine Controllata (DOC)

- Controlled naming of origin.
- Certifies:
 - Grapes grown in defined areas
 - Certain quality levels
 - Classico (special zone in an area)
 - Superiore (1% higher alcohol – longer ageing)

Vino Tipico

- Similar to Vin de Table of France.
- Established grape varieties.
- Not up to DOC quality standards.

Vino da Tavola

- 4th category in terms of quality.
- Unapproved grape variety.

WINE REGIONS OF ITALY

- Every province/region in Italy has its own identity – customs, traditions, culture, etc.
- The important regions are:

LOMBARDY

- Major wine-province – centre of very north of Italy (capital Milan).
- Better-known wines are:

Valtellina (hardy red), Franciacorta Pinot (white wine), Franciacorta Rosso (red wine), Lugana (delicate white)

TUSCANY

- Located in central Italy (capital Florence).
- Known for one of the most popular and famous Italian red wines – **Chianti** – from Sangiovese grapes.

- Marketed in a straw-wrapped flagon-shaped bottle (**fiasco**).

- nowadays in Bordeaux-type bottles also.

- Best is Chianti Classico Reserva – aged longer.
- Other quality wines are:

Brunello di Montalcino, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano , Tignanello ,
Solaia, Galestro

VENETO / VENETIA / VERONA

- Northeastern Italy (capital Venice).
- Best-known for reds: Valpolicella (fresh, light-bodied red), Bardolino (hardy red), Soave (one of the best Italian whites)

PIEDMONT

- Northeastern Italy (capital Turin).
- Italy's best and most varied wines.
- Some better ones are:

Barolo (r), Barbaresco (r), Gattinara (r), Boca (r), Fara (r), Barbera d'Alba (r)

- **Asti Spumante** – a delicate, sweet, sparkling white wine from Moscato (Muscat) grapes.

SICILY

- Large island off the toe of Italy.
- Famous for the fortified dessert wine Marsala – often used in kitchens.
- Also famous for **Etna** (r & w).

ITALIAN SPARKLING WINES

- Labelled Vino Spumante.
- Made from aromatic moscato grapes.
- Most use the Charmat process.
- Most are sweet.

- If dry – brut / brut reserva / brut nature
- Metodo Champenois / Fermentazione Naturale in Bottiglia (bottle-fermented)
- Crackling wine: **Vino Frizzante**
- **Asti Spumante** is the most popular Italian sparkling wine (delicate and sweet -Charmat process – from Piedmont).
- **Lacrima Christi** is another popular one (dry – methodo champenoise – from Campania).

SOME OTHER BETTER-KNOWN WINES

- **Est! Est!! Est!!!** – white wine from Laticum.
- **Falerno** – (red & white) – from Campania.
- **Capri** (more white, some red) – from Campania.

ITALIAN WINE TERMS

- **Abbotcato/Amabile** – semi-sweet
- **Seco/Asciutto** – dry
- **Dolce** – sweet
- **Rosso** – red
- **Bianco** – white
- **Roasato** – rosé

- **Annata** – vintage year
- **Vecchio** – old
- **Recioto** – wine made from partially dried grapes.
- **Reserva/Reserva Speciale** – aged for long and specific period.



IHM NOTES