



WELCOME TO THE D.O.C.G.

NOW PROSECCO SUPERIORE IS EASILY IDENTIFIABLE: IT'S FROM CONEGLIANO-
VALDOBBIADENE

With the granting of D.O.C.G. status for Conegliano-Valdobbiadene, Prosecco enters into the select group of Italy's top forty wines. The 2009 vintage, in fact, sees the launch of the Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (D.O.C.G.), which will identify the original Prosecco: the one that has been produced for over three hundred years in the hills of the Conegliano-Valdobbiadene zone and has enjoyed D.O.C. recognition since 1969. In order to taste it, we will have to wait until 1st April 2010, the date when the first bottles will be released onto the market, but it is just as well to inform yourself now about the things that are new in the world of Prosecco, the protagonist of a real revolution designed to safeguard a product that is truly a part of Italian heritage.

PROSECCO: WHAT IS CHANGING

If the wine from Conegliano-Valdobbiadene, the historic production area for Prosecco, is becoming D.O.C.G. (a status also conferred on the neighbouring zone of the Colli Asolani), that from the nine Provinces currently identified as I.G.T. Prosecco will become D.O.C. and will, therefore, be subject to specific controls. Consequently, under the new law, the name Prosecco will become synonymous with a wine with denomination of origin, produced exclusively in the North-East of Italy according to precise regulations. This is an important achievement, not only in order to protect this wine's image, by eliminating phenomena from the market like the (in)famous Prosecco in cans but also – and above all – because it represents a further safeguard for the consumer. The path for reaching this goal has been a long and complex one and it has constituted a unique case in Italy. Indeed, Prosecco has gone from being the name of a grape variety to being a name identifying a wine with a specific denomination of origin. Thanks to the cooperation of all the various tiers of government and all the producers – first and foremost the 160 sparkling wine makers and the 3000 grape growers of Conegliano-Valdobbiadene, coordinated by their Consorzio - this task has been shared by the producers in the 9 Provinces of the Veneto and Friuli authorized to make Prosecco. From the 2009 vintage onwards, then, there will be two levels of Prosecco: D.O.C.G., the apex of the quality pyramid, represented by Conegliano-Valdobbiadene and the Montello e Colli Asolani zone, and D.O.C., represented by the Provinces of Treviso, Belluno, Venice, Padua, Vicenza, Udine, Pordenone, Trieste and Gorizia.

CONEGLIANO-VALDOBBIADENE, THE HOME OF PROSECCO SUPERIORE

With the change from D.O.C. to D.O.C.G., Prosecco produced in the area of Conegliano-Valdobbiadene takes on the rank of one of Italy's finest wines. There are in fact only 41 Italian wines that are entitled to the D.O.C.G., while there are over 360 D.O.C.s. For Conegliano-Valdobbiadene D.O.C.G. the production regulations that have been applied up until now will be maintained, but there will be no shortage of new features. The Spumante, the emblematic sparkling version of this wine, will acquire a new category: *Rive*, in other words the wine produced from selected vineyards. Rive wines will show on the label the name of the Commune or hamlet where the vineyard is situated and they will be made exclusively from grapes grown in the finest, high hillside sites. The Rive wines will, therefore, allow consumers to discover the denomination's many "crus". At the top of the quality pyramid will remain 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.

THE IDENTITY CARD OF THE CONEGLIANO-VALDOBBIADENE D.O.C.G.

- Just as it was 40 years ago, the production zone is limited to the hillsides of the 15 communes lying between the region's two production "capitals", Conegliano and Valdobbiadene;
- According to tradition, the wine is produced by blending a minimum of 85% of Glera grapes (the name which replaces that of the Prosecco variety) with a maximum of 15% of the local Verdiso, Bianchetta, Boschera and Glera Lunga varieties. The maximum yield per hectare for D.O.C.G. Conegliano-Valdobbiadene will remain at 13.5 tonnes/ha.
- The Spumante ("sparkling") style of Prosecco will also have a new version, Rive. A Rive wine will show the name of the commune or village of origin on the label, so as to highlight all those localities that are of special quality. In this case the place-name will be preceded by the traditional term "Rive" and may only be produced in the fully sparkling version. The maximum yield will be 13 tonnes/ha; grape harvesting has to be performed by hand, and the vintage must be shown on the label.

Representing the peak of quality of the D.O.C.G. remains the sparkling wine from the historic sub-zone of "Superiore di Cartizze", whose maximum grape yield remains 12 tonnes/ha and which may only be produced in the fully sparkling version.

CONEGLIANO-VALDOBBIADENE: HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT IN THE MARKETPLACE

But what will the consumer have to look for from the next 1st April? First of all, the words “Conegliano Valdobbiadene”: these may be used on the label alone or along with the name “Prosecco” for the semi-sparkling and still versions, and “Prosecco Superiore” for the fully sparkling one.

Every bottle will also feature the identifying logo of the denomination and the Italian State’s strip, or in other words the mark on which every bottle will be numbered, and thus be recognizable and traceable at all times: a further guarantee of quality for the consumer that only D.O.C.G. wines can offer.

And up until the 1st April? On the market, the consumer will find the wine that he or she has always purchased: D.O.C. Prosecco from Conegliano-Valdobbiadene.

