All Italian Wines and their characteristics

A Comprehensive Overview

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Table of contents


NEBBIOLO
PINOT NOIR
CHARDONNAY
VERDICCHIO
PINOT BIANCO
PICOTENDRO
PINOT NOIR
PETIT ROUGE
MOSCATO
PETITE ARVINE
NEBBIOLO
BARBERA
DOLCETTO
MOSCATO
ARNEIS
CORTESE
VERMENTINO
PIGANO
ROSSESE
DOLCETTO
SANGIOVESE
SANGIOVESE
MERLOT
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
CABERNET BLANC
TREBBIANO
VERMENTINO
SANGIOVESE
SAGRANTINO
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
MERLOT
GRECHETTO
TREBBIANO
CANNONAU
CARIGNAN
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
VERMENTINO
MALVASIA
MOSCATO
PINOT GRIGIO
CHARDONNAY
GEWURSTRAMINER
PINOT NOIR
SCHIAVA
LAGREIN
PINOT GRIGIO
CHARDONNAY
SAUVIGNON BLANC
FRIULANO
MERLOT
CORVINA
MOLINARA
MERLOT
PROSECCO
GARGANEGA
LAMBRUSCO
SANGIOVESE
MALVASIA
TREBBIANO
VERDICCHIO
TREBBIANO
BIANCHELLO
PECORINO
LACRIMA
MONTEPULCIANIO
SANGIOVESE
TREBBIANO
MONTEPULSIANO
SANGIOVESE
AGLIANICO
PINOT GRIGIO
PRIMITIVO
NEGROAMARO
MALVASIA NERA
UVO DI TROIA
CHARDONNAY
GRECO
GAGLIOPPO
MAGLIOCCO
NERO D'AVOLA
CATARRATTO
GRILLO
INZOLIA
AGLIANICO
SYRAH
MOSCATO
AGLIANICO
FIANO
FALANGHINA
GRECO
MALVASIA
TREBBIANO
CESANESE
SANGIOVESE
MERLOT
Trentino
Friuli
Lombardia
Veneto
Valle d'Aosta
Piedmonte
Emilia Romagna
Liguria
Toscana
Marche
Umbria
Abruzzo
Lazio
Molise
Campania
Puglia
Basilicata
Sardegna
Calabria
Sicilia
Italia
Vino

Italian wines

Italy is one of the world's leading wine-growing countries and has a wine tradition that dates back thousands of years before Christ. The country's geographical and cultural diversity makes it a particularly interesting player in the international wine world. Viticulture and wine consumption are deeply rooted in Italian society and are an integral part of Italian identity and gastronomy. The combination of centuries-old winemaking traditions, regional differences and the influence of modern technology has earned Italy a central role in the global wine market.

The influence of the terroir

The concept of terroir, which refers to the interaction between climate, soil, topography and human influence, is crucial to Italian viticulture. Italy has an incredibly varied landscape, ranging from mountains and hills to coastal areas, resulting in a wide variety of microclimates. These differences in terroir have a direct impact on the grapes grown and the wines produced.

Climate: The Italian climate varies from cool and mountainous in the north to warm and Mediterranean in the south. This means that the grapes grow in very different conditions in different parts of the country, which contributes to the diversity of Italian wine styles. In cooler climates, such as the northern regions, the wines tend to have higher acidity and more sophistication, while wines from warmer areas are fuller and riper.

Soil: The soil structure is very important for the quality of the wine. In Italy, there are a variety of soils, including clay, limestone, sand and volcanic soils. Each soil type has a unique influence on grape cultivation and contributes to the specific flavour profiles of the wines. Volcanic soils, such as those found on the Aeolian Islands and in parts of Sicily, often give wines a mineral character.

Traditional and modern production methods

Italy is a country that strongly adheres to its traditions, but is also open to innovation. This also applies to wine production, where centuries-old techniques are used alongside the latest technologies to produce high-quality wines.

Traditional techniques: Many Italian wineries adhere to traditional production methods that have been passed down from generation to generation. This can also include the long ageing of wines in large, old oak barrels, as is the case with many wines from Piedmont and Tuscany. Some producers still use old fermentation techniques such as fermentation in open barrels or the use of amphorae, a technique that dates back to antiquity.

Modern techniques: At the same time, many Italian winegrowers rely on modern innovations to improve the quality of their wines. The use of stainless steel tanks for temperature-controlled fermentation is now common, especially for white wines. This helps to preserve the freshness and fruity flavours of the wines. Modern methods are also used to prevent oxidation, such as the use of inert gases during bottling.

Another important innovation is the emphasis on sustainability and organic viticulture. More and more Italian winegrowers are opting to cultivate their vineyards organically or biodynamically and to avoid

the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers. This is in line with the international trend towards natural and sustainable wine production.

Wine and gastronomy

Wine plays a central role in Italian food culture. It is not just seen as a drink in itself, but as an integral part of the meal. In many Italian families, wine is drunk daily with meals, and the choice of wine is often closely linked to the dish served. There is a long tradition of pairing local wines with regional dishes. In Tuscany, for example, Chianti is often served with beef or game dishes, while in Veneto, Prosecco is favoured with lighter starters.

Italian wines are often made to accompany food, which means they often have a higher acidity to balance the richness of Italian dishes. The balance between tannin, acidity and fruitiness in the wine contributes to the harmony between the wine and the food. Due to their versatility, Italian wines are suitable for a wide range of dishes, from simple pasta and pizza to refined meat and fish dishes.

Italian wine in the world

Italy has long been one of the world's leading wine producers. The export of Italian wines plays an important role in the country's economy. Italian wines are particularly popular in countries such as the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom. The success of Italian wine on the international market is mainly due to the variety of styles and the focus on quality. From affordable table wines to prestigious premium wines, Italy offers something for every taste and budget.

In addition, trends such as the popularity of Prosecco and the growing awareness of organic wines have increased the demand for Italian

wine worldwide. Prosecco has quickly established itself as one of the best-selling sparkling wines in the world, and consumers are increasingly opting for wines that are produced in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.

This book provides an overview of the more than 500 Italian wine varieties from all wine regions and lists the most important characteristics of each variety (grape, terroir, type, alcohol, colour, bouquet, complexity, ageing, acidity, tannin, sweetness, body, price, rating).

It also briefly explains the DOCG, DOC and IGT classifications and explains how to read the label on a wine bottle.

The Italian classification system

The first official Italian wine categorisation system was introduced in 1963. Since then, several amendments and additions have been made to the legislation, including a major change in 1992, and the most recent amendment in 2010 established four basic categories in line with the latest EU wine regulations (2008-09). The categories, from the lowest to the highest level, are:

Vini da tavola ("table wines")
Table wines (VdT) are at the lowest level. For VdT wines, the label must indicate the production batch, the volume of the container, the bottler's details, the place of bottling and vinification (if in different places), the alcohol content, the gassing (if any) and the note "contains sulphites" (only if the limit of 10 mg/l sulphur dioxide is exceeded). The colour is optional, while the grape variety is not required.

Vini IGT ("typical geographical indications for wines")
IGT wines comply with Regulation No. 823 of the European Community of 1987. The indication of the grape variety, the year of production and the production area is optional.

Vini DOC ("controlled designation of origin for wines")
In addition to the information for IGT wines, the production areas must be specified on the labels of DOC wines. These wines may not be made from grapes destined for IGT wines and must undergo chemical-physical and organoleptic analyses during the production phase. DOC recognition is reserved exclusively for wines produced in areas that have been recognised as IGT for at least five years. The sub-areas in which they are produced can optionally be indicated on

the label. Other characteristics of the wine can be indicated on the label (e.g. classic, high quality). The year of production must be indicated on the label.

Vini DOCG ("controlled and guaranteed designation of origin for wines")
DOCG wines are subject to stricter regulations than DOC wines. The DOCG designation is only used for wines that have been recognised as DOC wines for at least seven years and are of particular quality. During bottling, a chemical-physical and organoleptic analysis is obligatory for each batch and the individual bottles are labelled with a control band that is attached in such a way that it is damaged when the bottle is opened.


Vegan
Organic
2018
CASA BOSCOLI
PRIMITIVO
PUGLIA
INDICAZIONE GEOGRAFICA TIPICA
Product of Italy
75cl
CASA BOSCOLI
PRIMITIVO
PUGLIA
INDICAZIONE GEOGRAFICA TIPICA
Product of Italy
2018
Our organic and vegan wines showcase all the care and attention that is put into growing vines in a natural environment.
Rich and full-bodied with flavours of ripe cherries, blackberries and extra sweet spices on the finish. A lovely match to herbed mushroom or red meats.
Serve in a cool, dark place.
75cl
LG927440 1 21
LECCIONI
CHIANTI
2018
PRODOTTO IN ITALY
12.5%vol
750 ml
LECCIONI
CHIANTI
2018
FRESCOBALDI

The label

The label applied to a bottle can be considered as the identity card of the wine and must therefore contain precise information and illustrations specifically designed to help the consumer understand the true nature of the product to which it refers.

The following information must appear on each label:

1. the name of the designation of origin
It specifies the exact name of the designation of origin as indicated in the corresponding production regulations

2. specific traditional classifications D.O.C., D.O.C.G., or IGT

3. nominal volume of the wine
The nominal volume of the wine must be indicated in litres, centilitres or millilitres

4. vintage year
Since the 2010 harvest, the indication of the vintage year is mandatory for all D.O.C.G. and D.O.C. wines, with the exception of sparkling wines, semi-sparkling wines and liqueur wines

5. indication of the bottler
The name of the bottler must always be stated. In the case of sparkling wines, the name of the producer or distributor may replace that of the bottler. The name of the bottler (or that of the producer/distributor, where authorised) must appear together with the name of the commune in which the production site is located and the Member State (Italy)

6. indication of origin

The term "produced in" (or equivalent terms such as "wine from", "product of", etc.), followed by the name of the Member State, indicates the area where the grapes were harvested and vinified

7. indication of the batch

Numbering that identifies a series of bottles produced under almost identical circumstances and belonging to the same batch. It is usually preceded by the letter "L"

8. contains sulphites

Indicates that the product has been treated with allergens such as sulphur dioxide. This information is mandatory if the sulphite content exceeds 10 mg/litre

9. actual alcohol content

The alcohol content must be indicated in units or half units of the volume percentage (e.g. 10% vol., 10.5% vol.) and can be introduced by the expression "actual alcohol content" or "actual alcohol" or only by the abbreviation "alc".

10. environmental labelling

From 1 January 2023, in accordance with European Union regulations, it will be mandatory to provide appropriate instructions for the disposal of packaging on the label. The aim is to facilitate the collection, reuse and recycling of packaging. The information must refer to the bottle, the cap, the capsule and the wire basket. All information can also be provided via digital channels such as an app, QR code or website

11. indication of the ingredients

From 8 December 2023, the list of ingredients (grapes, additives,

processing aids, syrup and dosage) must be indicated on the label of wine products. This list can be dematerialised and made accessible via a QR code marked with the word "ingredients"

12. indication of the nutrition declaration

From 8 December 2023, the nutrition declaration (energy content and content of fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugars, protein and salt) must be indicated on the label of wine products. It is possible to indicate only the energy content of the product, expressed by the letter "E", as long as the remaining information is dematerialised via an appropriately labelled QR code.

All mandatory information must appear in the same field of vision (either on the front or back of the bottle), with the exception of the vintage, the batch number and information on the presence of sulphites, which may also appear separately outside this field of vision.

Look

nose

swirl

sip

Explanation of the wine characteristics

Grape: the grape variety from which the wine is made. The grape variety largely determines the character and flavour of the wine.

Terroir: the interplay of natural factors that shape the character of a wine. It includes not only the soil on which the vines grow, but also the climate, topography (location, altitude, slope) and human influences

Type: Red, white or rosé

Alcohol: The alcohol content of a wine is given in per cent by volume and influences the taste experience and body structure.

Colour: The colour of a wine can vary from light yellow (for white wines) to deep red (for red wines) and gives an indication of the grape variety and age.

Bouquet: The aromas of a wine include the scents that come from the grapes and the production process, while the bouquet refers to the secondary aromas after fermentation.

Complexity: This refers to the variety of aromas and flavours in the wine. A complex wine offers a variety of impressions when tasted.

Ageing: is generally referred to as maturation or storage. Maturation refers to the process by which a wine is further developed and refined after fermentation in the bottle or in barrels (barrique).

Acidity: Acidity is an important component that lends freshness and structure. It can influence the flavour and shelf life of a wine.

Tannins: Tannins come from the grape skins and seeds and give red wines their astringent quality. They contribute to the ageability and structure of the wine.

Sweetness: the perceived sugar content felt during tasting. It can take on different levels depending on how much residual sugar (not fully fermented sugar) remains in the wine after fermentation.

Body: The body describes the weight and fullness of a wine in the mouth, which is often determined by the alcohol content and the residual sweetness.

Price

Review: A review rates the wine based on taste, flavour, quality and value for money and can come from wine critics or consumers.

Abruzzo

Abruzzo is home to one of Italy's most famous indigenous red grape varieties: Montepulciano. Red wine production is entirely focussed on this variety and deserves the attention of both wine novices and connoisseurs. Red wines from Abruzzo are dark, flavoursome and full of fruit, paired with soft acidity (which is unusual for Italian wine) and strong tannins. A real stunner. For the white wines, the story is similar and is based on a single variety, Trebbiano, which differs slightly from the Trebbiano grown in other regions of Italy. Trebbiano d'Abruzzo, as it is better known, generally produces fresh, dry white wines with a slightly grassy flavour.

Abruzzo is a largely mountainous region in central Italy with an extensive coastline on the Adriatic Sea. The warm climate is tempered by two geographical features: the Apennines on the western border and the cooling effect of the Adriatic Sea to the east. In terms of location in Italy, Abruzzo lies pretty much in the centre of the boot!

The wines

COLLINE TERAMANE MONTEPULCIANO D'ABRUZZO DOCG: Grape: Montepulciano, **Terroir**: calcareous hills, **Type**: Red, **Alcohol**: 13-14 %, **Colour**: Deep ruby red, **Bouquet**: Red fruits, spices, tobacco and vanilla, **Complexity**: High, **Ageing**: At least 2 years of which 1 year on wood, **Acidity**: Medium to high, **Tannins**: Firm, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Full, **Price**: 15-25 €, **Rating**: 90+ points

TERRE TOLLESI (o TULLUM) DOCG: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: cool valleys with limestone soil, **Type**: red, white, **Alcohol**: 12.5-14 %, **Colour**: red: deep purple; white: straw yellow, **Bouquet**: red: cherries and plums; white: Citrusy and floral, **Complexity**: medium, well balanced, **Ageing**: red: 1-2 years; white: shorter on steel, **Acidity**: medium, **Tannins**: supple with red, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: medium, **Price**: €10-20, **Rating**: 85-95 points

CASAURIA DOCG: Grape: 100 % Montepulciano, **Terroir**: Pescara hills, limestone and clay, **Type**: Red, **Alcohol**: 13-14 %, **Colour**: Intense ruby red, **Bouquet**: Ripe cherries, spices and leather, **Complexity**: High, intense aromas and long finish, **Ageing**: At least 2 years, partly in oak barrels, **Acidity**: Medium to high, **Tannins**: Firm and robust, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Full, **Price**: 20-30 €, **Rating**: 90+ points

ABRUZZO DOC: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: Hilly, maritime influences, **Type**: Red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12-14 %, **Colour**: Deep ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Fruity, floral, hint of spices, **Complexity**: Medium, **Ageing**: A few months to 1 year, **Acidity**: Fresh, **Tannins**: Moderate, none with white, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Medium, **Price**: 8-15 €, **Rating**: 85-90 points

CERASUOLO D'ABRUZZO DOC - SOTTOZONA TERRE DI CHIETI: Grape: Montepulciano, **Terroir**: Coast and hills, **Type**: Rosé, **Alcohol**: 12-13 %, **Colour**: Bright cherry pink, **Bouquet**: Cherries, red fruits, flowers, **Complexity**: Medium, **Ageing**: Several months, **Acidity**: Refreshing, **Tannins**: Very light, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Light to medium, **Price**: 10-15 €, **Rating**: 86-89 points

CONTROGUERRA DOC: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, Passerina, **Terroir:** Abruzzo; hilly, different soils, **Type:** Red, white, sparkling, **Alcohol:** 11-13.5%, **Colour:** Ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet:** Red fruits, citrus, spices, **Complexity:** medium, **Ageing:** several months, **Acidity:** refreshing, **Tannins:** light to moderate, none with white, **Sweetness:** dry, **Body:** light to medium, **Price:** €8-€12, **Rating:** 85-88 points

MONTEPULCIANO D'ABRUZZO DOC: Grape: Montepulciano, **Terroir:** Hills, calcareous soils, **Type:** Red, **Alcohol:** 13-14.5%, **Colour:** Deep ruby red, **Bouquet:** Ripe cherries, plums, spices, **Complexity:** Medium to high, **Ageing:** 6-24 months, **Acidity:** Balanced, **Tannins:** Soft to firm, **Sweetness:** Dry, **Body:** Full, **Price:** €10-€20, **Rating:** 88-92 points

ORTONA DOC: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir:** Coastal area, **Type:** Red, White, **Alcohol:** 12-14%, **Colour:** Ruby red, light yellow, **Bouquet:** Ripe fruit, flowers, spices, **Complexity:** Medium, **Maturation:** 6-12 months, **Acidity:** Balanced, **Tannins:** Moderate, none with white, **Sweetness:** Dry, **Body:** Medium, **Price:** €8-€15, **Rating:** 85-90 points

TREBBIANO D'ABRUZZO DOC: Grape: Trebbiano, **Terroir:** Hilly, calcareous soils, **Type:** White, **Alcohol:** 11-13%, **Colour:** Pale straw yellow, **Bouquet:** Citrus, green apple, flowers, **Complexity:** Medium, **Maturation:** Several months, **Acidity:** Refreshing, **Tannins:** N/A, **Sweetness:** Dry, **Body:** Light to medium, **Price:** €7-€12, **Rating:** 85-88 points

VILLAMAGNA DOC: Grape: Montepulciano, **Terroir:** Clay and limestone soils, **Type:** Red, **Alcohol**: 13-15%, **Colour:** Intense ruby red, **Bouquet:** Black cherries, plums, spices, **Complexity:** High, **Ageing:** 12-24 months, **Acidity:** Balanced, **Tannins:** Firm, **Sweetness:** Dry, **Body:** Full, **Price:** €15-€25, **Rating:** 90-93 points

COLLI DEL SANGRO IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: hilly with clay and limestone soils, **Type**: red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: ruby red, straw yellow (white), **Bouquet**: Cherries, plums, floral notes, **Complexity**: medium, **Ageing**: steel tanks, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: medium, **Tannins**: soft to medium, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: light to medium, **Price**: €8-12, **Rating**: 86-88 points

COLLINE FRENTANE IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: Calcareous soils, **Type**: Red, White, Rosé, **Alcohol**: 12% - 13.5%, **Colour**: Deep red, Straw yellow (white), **Bouquet**: Red fruits, spices, citrus, **Complexity**: Medium, **Ageing**: Inox, sometimes short wood, **Acidity**: Fresh, medium, **Tannins**: Soft, none with white, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Light to medium, **Price**: 6-10 €, **Rating**: 85-87 points

COLLINE PESCARESI IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, Pecorino, **Terroir**: calcareous soils, **Type**: red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Cherries, spices, flowers, **Complexity**: medium, **Ageing**: steel tanks, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: medium, **Tannins**: medium, soft, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: medium, **Price**: €7-12, **Rating**: 86-88 points

COLLINE TEATINE IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: Clay and limestone, **Type**: Red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: Deep ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Red fruits, spices, floral notes, **Complexity**: Medium, **Ageing**: steel tanks, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: Medium, **Tannins**: Medium, rounded, none with white, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Medium to full, **Price**: €8-13, **Rated**: 87-89 points

DEL VASTESE (O HISTONIUM) IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: calcareous soils, **Type**: Red, White, Rosé, **Alcohol**: 12% - 13.5%, **Colour**: Ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Red berries, floral notes, **Complexity**: Medium, **Ageing**: steel tanks, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: Fresh, **Tannins**: Medium, supple, none with white, **Sweetness**: Dry, **Body**: Light to medium, **Price**: €6-10, **Rated**: 85-87 points

TERRE AQUILANE (O TERRE DE L'AQUILA) IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Sangiovese, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: L'Aquila, mountainous, calcareous soils, **Type**: Red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: Ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Red berries, flowers, spices, **Complexity**: medium, **Ageing**: stainless steel, sometimes short wood, **Acidity**: medium, **Tannins**: soft to medium, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: medium, **Price**: €7-11, **Rating**: 86-88 points

TERRE DI CHIETI IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Pecorino, Trebbiano, **Terroir**: Hills with clay and limestone, **Type**: Red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: Ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Cherries, peach, flowers, **Complexity**: Medium, **Ageing**: steel tanks, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: medium fresh, **Tannins**: medium, supple, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: medium, **Price**: €7-12, **Rating**: 86-89 points

COLLI APRUTINI IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, Pecorino, **Terroir**: Hills of Teramo, clay and limestone, **Type**: Red, White, Rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: Ruby red, Straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Red berries, peach, spices, **Complexity**: medium, **Ageing**: stainless steel, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: medium, **Tannins**: medium, soft, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: medium, **Price**: €8-13, **Rating**: 86-89 points

TERRE D'ABRUZZO (O TERRE ABRUZZESI) IGT: Grape: Montepulciano, Trebbiano, Pecorino, **Terroir**: Various hills and valleys, **Type**: Red, white, rosé, **Alcohol**: 12.5% - 14%, **Colour**: Ruby red, straw yellow, **Bouquet**: Red fruits, flowers, citrus, **Complexity**: medium, **Ageing**: steel tanks, sometimes wood, **Acidity**: medium fresh, **Tannins**: medium, soft, none with white, **Sweetness**: dry, **Body**: light to medium, **Price**: €7-12, **Rating**: 86-88 points