

BEYOND BUBBLES

Exploring What Makes Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG
Superiore



The Present

Over the past few decades Prosecco has skyrocketed to international fame, becoming (by some counts) the world's most popular sparkling wine. Everyone knows Prosecco. *But most people have little or no idea what it really is.*



The Past: Ancient History



The Past: Modern History

CONEGLIANO - R. Scuola Enologica e Agraria



The modern history of Prosecco begins in **1876** when enologist **Giovanni Battista Cerletti** founded the Scuola Enologico in Conegliano (an outgrowth of the Enological Society of the Province of Treviso created in 1868).

Wine maker and enologist **Antonio Carpenè** (1838-1902) played a significant role in the creation and early administration of the school.

Carpenè's groundbreaking work, *La Vite e il Vino nella Provincia di Treviso* (1874), lists a staggering number of different (mostly indigenous) grape varieties being cultivated in the Province of Treviso as well as many different viticultural systems and trellising methods (including training vines up into trees).

- Over in Piedmont, in 1895 Federico Martinotti, director of the Experimental Institute of Enology in Asti (Italy's *second* oldest enology school) developed and patented the technique of conducting the second fermentation in large pressurized temperature-controlled receptacles.
- In 1910, Eugène Charmat adopted an existing contraption called the autoclave (which was developed by a colleague of Louis Pasteur named Charles Chamberland in 1879) for producing sparkling wine.

- The autoclave technology was adopted by the Enology School and refined for use in the production of sparkling wines in the Conegliano Valdobbiadene area around 1910. Shortly thereafter WW I broke out.
- It was not until the post-war economic resurgence of Italy in the mid-1950s and '60s that the autoclave became diffused throughout the area of Conegliano Valdobbiadene and the modern sparkling wine industry was born.

- Up to this point, most wine produced in Conegliano Valdobbiadene, both still and fizzy, was either consumed within the area or exported to the wine bars of Venice.
- The Bellini cocktail was christened by Harry Cipriani of Harry's Bar in Venice in 1948 and bubbly Prosecco became a symbol of post-war *Bella Vita* in Italy.

{NB: most Italians traditionally preferred their Prosecco unadulterated (and most still do!). The Spritz was created during the Austrian Habsburgs' occupation of Venice (1849 to 1861), and recently revived by young Americans—and young Italians—as a light colorful *aperitivo*.}

- The Bellini arrived in America in the 1970s and took the country by storm. This was how most Americans first tasted Prosecco.
- A *Consorzio Tutela* for Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene was created in 1962 and a DOC for Prosecco and Cartizze was granted in 1969, one of Italy's first. [The Italian DOC system was created in 1963.]
- International popularity of the wine grew, steadily accelerating, and has skyrocketed over the past decade to the tremendous popularity it enjoys today.
But there was a problem....

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2009

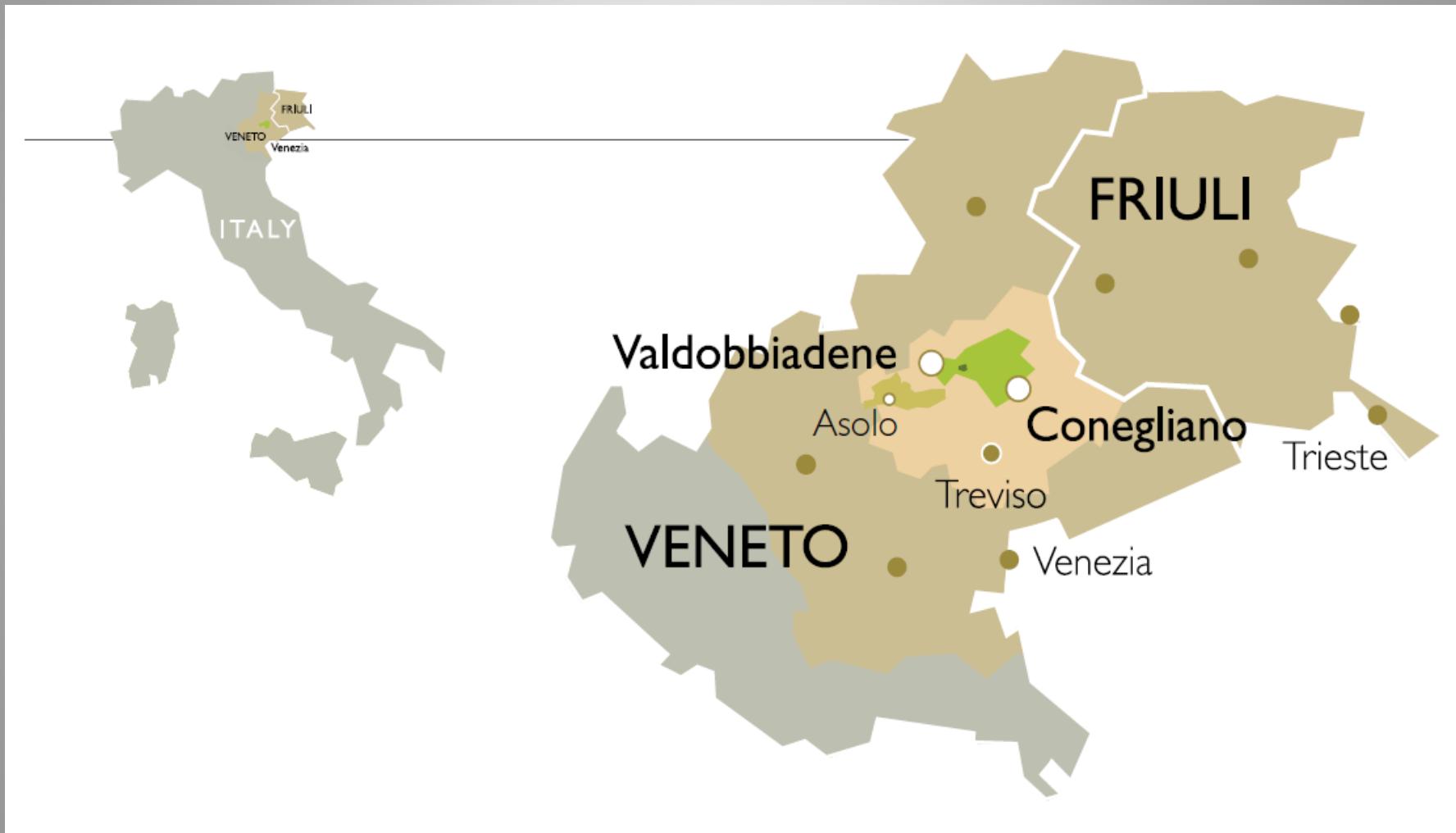
A decisive year for Prosecco.

- By this time the wine was well known throughout the world and still growing rapidly in popularity. But **the name was not officially recognized outside Italy and was not legally tied to its specific area of origin, leaving it wide open to counterfeit and abuse.**
- Another problem: the name “Prosecco” was used to indicate a wine, a grape variety *and* a production area, and **it is not possible to name a wine growing area after a grape variety.**

Three major things happened:

1. An entirely new appellation called Prosecco DOC was created covering a vast area spanning 2 regions and 556 townships.
2. The territory of Conegliano Valdobbiadene, birthplace of Prosecco, was upgraded to DOCG status.
3. The name of the principal grape variety—Prosecco—was changed to Glera (an historical synonym) so the name could be used for the growing area.

The World of Prosecco



THE WORLD OF PROSECCO



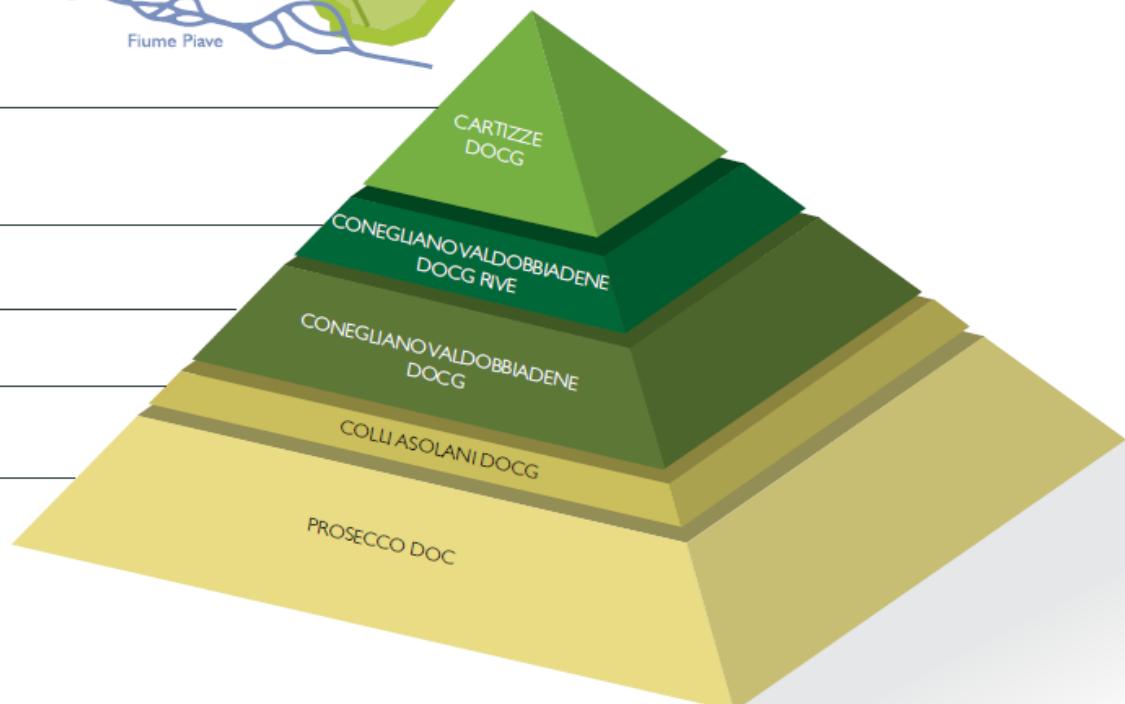
Valdobbiadene Superiore di
Cartizze DOCG
107 hectares

Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG
Prosecco Superiore Rive **43 "Rive"**

Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG
Prosecco Superiore **15 municipalities**

Colli Asolani DOCG Prosecco Superiore
17 municipalities

Prosecco DOC Treviso **95 municipalities**
Prosecco DOC **556 municipalities**



THE WORLD OF PROSECCO (2015 FIGURES)



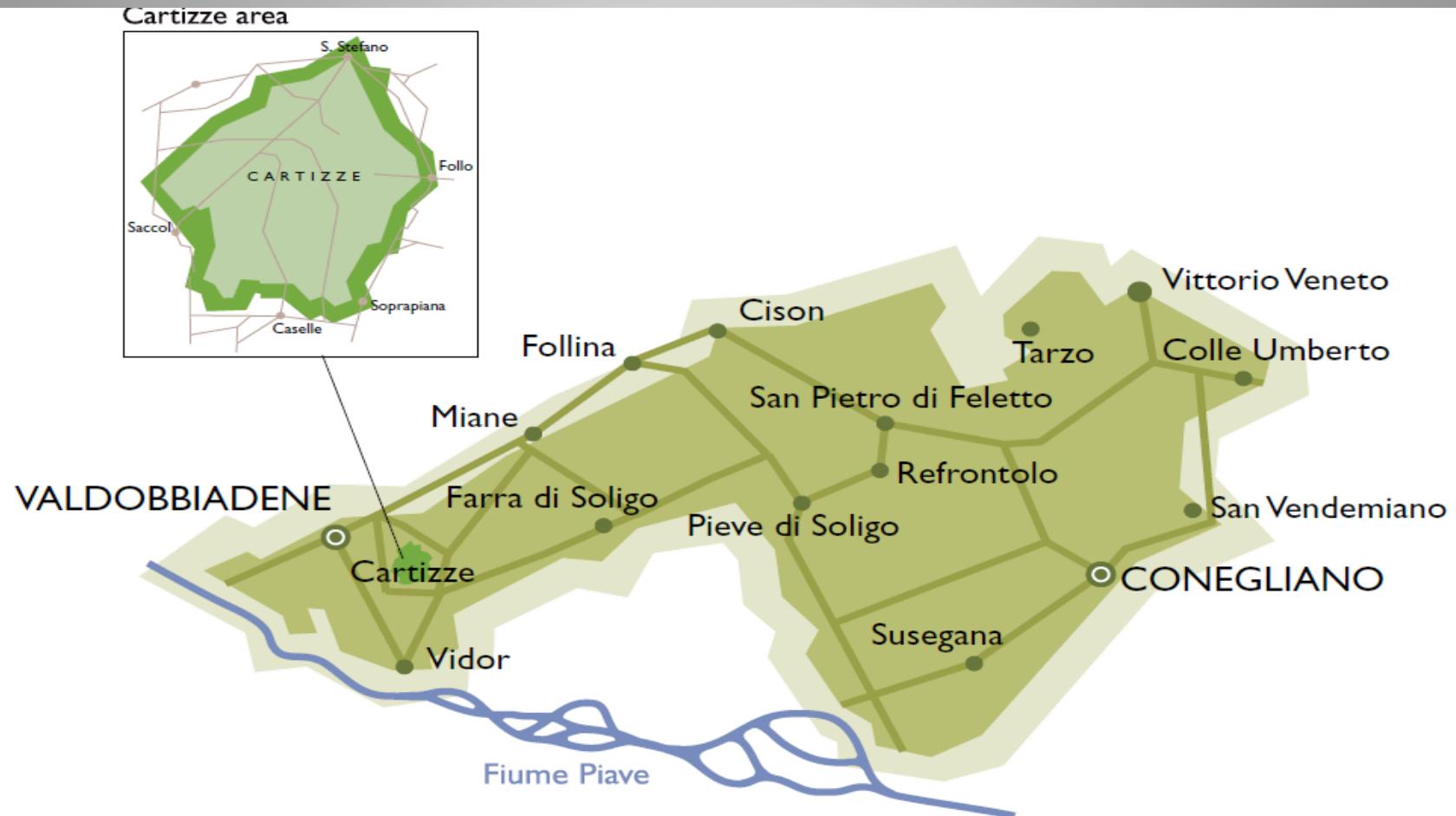
	Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG	Prosecco DOC
Production (in bottles)	83.698.000	355.000.000
Production area (ha)	7.191	20.000
Sparkling wine producers	183	356

Missing numbers:

- There are only 183 wineries in the DOCG area, but 3,423 registered grape farmers who supply them. This creates a close synergy and mutual interdependence between growers and bottlers.
- Work Hours per Hectare per year:
 - 150 hours per hectare per year in in the DOC
 - 600-800 Hours/hectare/year in ConVal DOCG
- Growing Area:

The available surface area in ConVal DOCG is strictly limited by the extreme topography, whereas the DOC territory is expandable. (3,000 hectares were added to the DOC appellation last year.)

The Conegliano Valdobbiadene Territory



- The Conegliano Valdobbiadene area consists of an east-west running chain of hills deriving from the collision of tectonic plates that created the Alps and caused the raising of areas formerly under water.
- Altitude ranges from about 50 to 550 meters above sea level, and the hills increase in both altitude and steepness from the eastern section to the west.
- Behind the hills (to the north) are the Dolomite Mountains, which create a rocky barrier for harsh northern temperatures, while in front is the Piave River valley and a flat plain to the Adriatic Sea, bringing sea breezes and a semi-marine climate.
- Rainfall, at about 50 inches/year, is fairly high. But due to the loose and/or shallow soil and slope, as well as nearly constant light breezes, this creates no problems.

- Vines are planted only on the south-facing side of the hill chain though, given the contours of the hills and deeply etched ravines, there is a great variation of expositions and micro-climates.
- Vines have been custom-tailored to the shape of the hills by hand over millennia in total symbiosis with nature. Many areas consist of steep earthen terraces where all vineyard work must be done exclusively by hand. Many sites are inaccessible to vehicles and grapes must often be transported out by hand.
- The meeting of Alpine and Mediterranean climates, along with the topography of the hills, creates a very interesting and complex growing region.

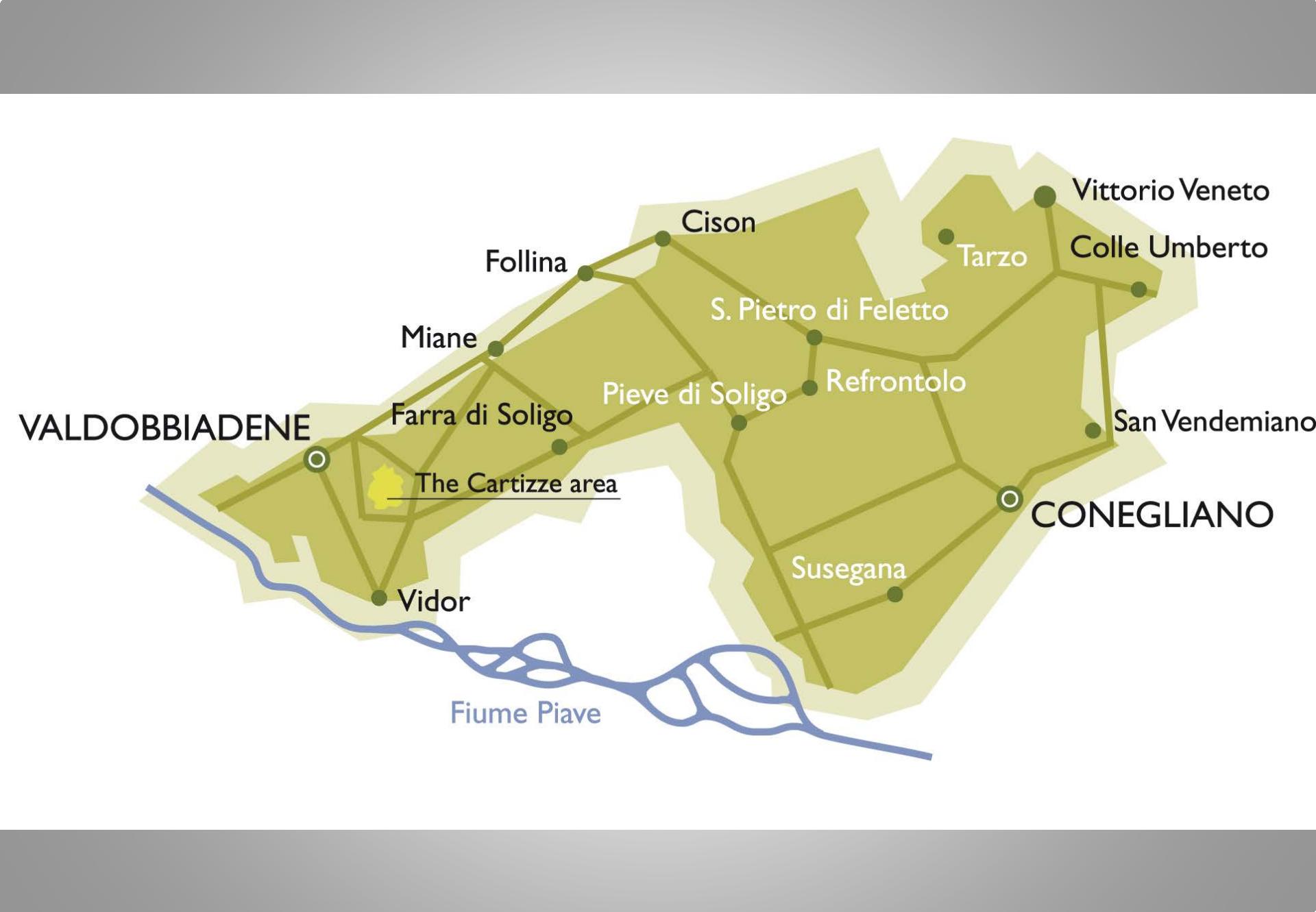


Consorzio di Tutela

CONFGLIANO VALDOBBIADENE
DOCG
PROSECCO SUPERIORE
DAL 1876

Mosaic of Microclimates





The eastern (Conegliano) section of the hills was re-molded millions of years ago by glacial activity of the Dolomites. Gently sloping hills with gradients of 40-50%. Predominantly **alluvial and morainic soils** are relatively deep and consist of small rocks, sand, and clay in different combinations. Some areas are particularly rich in iron oxides giving the earth a rust-red color.

Conegliano



The western section (Valdobbiadene) was much less affected by glacial activity and consists of very steep hills with extreme contours that have been further defined by erosion and ravines. The largely shallow soils of marine origin are composed primarily of **marls, sandstone, compressed clay, and conglomerates** with marine deposits.

Rive di Farra di Soligo (Valdobbiadene)



Vidor



The ConVal Prosecco DOCG Appellation

3 Types:

- 1. Spumante ('Foamy'). Minimum 3.5 bar of pressure. Accounts for 95% of current production.
- 2. Frizzante ('Fizzy'). 1 to 2.5 (max) bar of pressure
- 3. Tranquillo ('Still')

The Cartizze Sub-Zone

- Legendary site long known as the “Grand Cru” of Prosecco; actually a subzone of 107 hectares with 140 proprietors. An entire south-facing hillside amidst the hamlets of San Pietro di Barbozza, Santo Stefano and Saccòl in the township of Valdobbiadene. Very steep slope from 300 meters down to the valley floor. Many different facets & micro-terroirs: **ancient soils comprised of marls, moraines, and sandstone.** Floral, mineral, aromatic herbs.
- Part of its fame came from the fact that, due to exceptional exposition, buds tended to open here first and be picked last, resulting in exceptional ripeness = lots of residual sugar after fermentation. Even after the diffusion of the autoclave, wines from Cartizze are typically made in the dry (17-32 g/l) style.



The ConVal Prosecco DOCG Appellation

3 Categories of Residual Sugar:

- 1. Dry—17-32 grams of residual sugar
- 2. Extra-Dry—12-17 grams
- 3. Brut—0-12 grams of residual sugar

(The terms ‘extra-brut’ and ‘nature’ are not permitted.)

The ConVal Prosecco DOCG Appellation

‘Taking the foam’ (spumantizzazione)

Two basic ways to make it sparkle:

1. Autoclave (Charmat, Martinotti, “Italian Method”)
2. Second fermentation in bottle (“Rifermentato in Bottiglia”):
 - A. Traditional Method (Col Fondo, Sul lievito) without disgorgement.
 - B. Classic Method with disgorgement

The ConVal Prosecco DOCG Appellation

Grape Varieties:

Prosecco must consist of at least 85% Glera.

Up to 15% of other authorized grape varieties may be added. Four indigenous varieties:

Glera



Perera



Verdiso



Bianchetta



Four International varieties may also be used for Spumante only: Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Pinot Bianco and Pino Nero (vinified in white).

Labeling

- Prosecco DOCG may be labeled as “Conegliano Valdobbiadene” or “Conegliano” or “Valdobbiadene” Prosecco (according to provenance of grapes).
- The term ***“Superiore”*** applies ONLY to the Spumante version of ConVal DOCG.
- **Rifermentato in Bottiglia** (Re-Fermented in Bottle) is the term officially used to indicate a sparkling Prosecco that has undergone its second fermentation in bottle.
- **Millesimato** indicates a wine made from a single vintage (85% minimum), which is listed on the bottle.

Labeling

RIVE: In 2009 a system of single village (or hamlet) designations was created. The word ‘Rive’ on the label (followed by the name of the particular designation) indicates a Prosecco Superiore made entirely of grapes from one of the designated Rive. Rive must be vintage dated and hand-harvested, and the yield is lower (max 13,000 kilos per hectare instead of 13,500). There are currently 43 Rive.

VIII. THE WINES



1. Astoria: Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG Extra-Dry
2. Frasinelli: Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Docg Extra Dry Rive di Manzana 2015
3. Le Colture: Valdobbiadene Docg Superiore di Cartizze dry
4. Borgoluce: Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Docg Brut Rive di Collalto 2015
5. Vigne di Alice: Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG "Doro Nature" Millesimato
6. La Tordera: Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Docg Brut "Otoreval" Zero zuccheri Rive di Guia 2015
7. Valdellovo: Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Docg Frizzante rifermentato in bottiglia "Bade"

Please help spread the word about what makes
Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG special.

GRAZIE!



PROSECCO SUPERIORE
DAL 1876