

VINEPAIR

The Differences Between Prosecco, Franciacorta, And Other Italian Bubbles, Explained

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Prosecco is a global superpower. Nearly 20 percent of all sparkling wine sold in 2017 was Prosecco, according to Nielsen data, and sales were up 21 percent over the previous year. And that's not the half of it. Industry experts like Vinexpo CEO Guillaume Deglise predict that Prosecco sales will continue to soar, increasing by more than 36 percent through 2020.

PROSECCO

Prosecco is the name of both a historic grape and an appellation in northern Italy's Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia provinces. (There's a town called Prosecco, too.)

Prosecco has some deep history in the region. The first recorded mention of "Prosecho" wine is in the 1593 diaries of English traveler Fynes Morison. In 1754, Aureliano Acanti references it in his book, "Il Rocolo Ditirambo," describing it as "...apple scented wine, which is indeed full of apple, pear and apricot aromas, with hints of warm grass."



For centuries, folks have made still wine using the local grape, known as Glera, to prevent producers outside the Prosecco DOC and DOCG regions from using the name on their labels. Today, Glera remains the main grape in Prosecco. Other varieties used in Prosecco include Perera, Bianchetta, Verdiso, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, and Pinot Noir.

Prosecco is characterized by approachable, crisp, green-apple flavors. According to sommelier Sarah Tracey of The Lush Life, 76 percent of Prosecco is made in the spumante style, 23 percent is frizzante, and only 1 percent is tranquillo (still). Prosecco can be made in either the Charmat method, which achieves effervescence via secondary fermentation in tanks, or metodo classico, the Italian term for the Champagne method for individual bottle fermentation.

Prosecco caliber is denoted on labels with the words Denomination of Controlled Origin (DOC), or the even higher-quality Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin (DOCG). **"In Prosecco, there is actually a pyramid of quality," Tracey says. "On the bottom is the basic Prosecco DOC. If you want to uplevel to a bit higher quality, look for Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore D.O.C.G. At the very top of the pyramid is Valdobbiadene Superiore di Cartize DOCG, if you really want to treat yourself!"**

