



Image: Consorzio di Tutela del Vino Conegliano Valdobbiadene

What does Prosecco mean to you? Do you like it or do you consider Prosecco ‘just Prosecco’? During many tastings and wine events, I’ve noticed consumers often have no idea of the different styles and typologies of Prosecco available, and why it has become so popular in recent years. Prosecco is, indeed, a very complete and diverse byname, or appellation, with many different wine profiles and winemaking traditions. So, what really is it?

Michele Longari, sommelier for the Greater Malvern Wine Society (GMWS) and Hay Wines, helps us to discover its rich heritage

prosecco *perfect*

1 *The appellations* Prosecco DOC

The Prosecco DOC production area is located in north-east Italy, more precisely in the territories of five Veneto provinces (Treviso, Venice, Vicenza, Padua, Belluno) and four provinces in Friuli Venezia Giulia (Gorizia, Pordenone, Trieste and Udine), one of the most stunning areas on the Italian peninsula. The province of Treviso lies at the heart of the Prosecco DOC area and consists of a flat region where, normally, it is possible to get high yields per hectare thanks to the use of agricultural machinery.

Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DCG

Prosecco DCG is only produced on the extremely steep hills of 15 communes lying between Conegliano and Valdobbiadene. This small area presents the best conditions in terms of soil minerality, sun exposure and ventilation. Normally, in this area, yields are very low, since everything must be done strictly by hand. Prosecco DCG is immediately recognisable thanks to its lively elegance. It is characterised

by fragrances that are richer in scents of citrus fruit and vegetal notes, normally accompanied by an attractive hint of crusty bread and great liveliness in the mouth. The very fine bubbles (‘perlage’) ensure a persistent flavour. Prosecco DCG offers a fascinating diversity, particularly thanks to all the available styles, typologies and... crus!

Why not try:

- Spagnol, Prosecco DOC Treviso Extra Dry (£11.99)
- Bastia Rebuli, Valdobbiadene DCG Prosecco Superiore Extra Dry (£14.99)



Styles and typologies

Prosecco DCG is generally produced in sparkling (Spumante) and semi-sparkling (Frizzante) versions. The sparkling version is iconic for the denomination; appealing and versatile, it has created its own distinctive style of drink.

Prosecco Spumante is produced in Brut, Extra Dry and Dry versions, depending on the residual sugar contained in the wine:

- Brut is the driest style with 0–12 g/l of residual sugar
- Extra Dry is exactly in the middle with 12–17 g/l
- Dry is the sweetest version with 17–32 g/l of residual sugar

Prosecco Frizzante is normally more delicate since it has less bubbles and, therefore, presents a creamier texture that is less aggressive on the palate.

Finally, some winemakers are also reviving the customary Prosecco Colfondo, re-fermented in the bottle but not disgorged, as the wines are left on their lees (the French would call it *sur-lie*). This yeasty residue leaves a fine sediment



on the bottom (*fondo* in Italian) that imparts more complexity and flavour. *Why not try:*



- Col del Sas, Valdobbiadene DOCG Prosecco Superiore Brut (£13.99)
- Spagnol, Valdobbiadene DOCG Prosecco Frizzante 'Lo Spago' (£10.99)
- Bastia Rebuli, Vino Frizzante Colfondo 'Capo degli Onesti' (£11.99)



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3 *The crus*

The Superiore di Cartize is the Grand Cru of the denomination and comprises a small area of 107 hectares of vines on the steepest hills in the commune of Valdobbiadene. It is the result of the perfect combination between a mild microclimate and very varied terrain. Cartize is widely considered as a sumptuous sparkling wine.

The Rive Proseccos represent the essence of the terroir. They are produced, in fact, exclusively from grapes that come from a single commune, or hamlet/village, thus highlighting the characteristics that a particular area confers on its wine. In the Conegliano Valdobbiadene zone, there are only 43 Rive, which offer an equal number of distinct territorial expressions.

Why not try:

- Bastia Rebuli, Valdobbiadene DOCG Superiore di Cartize Dry (£21.99)
- Spagnol, Valdobbiadene DOCG Rive di Soligetto Brut (£15.99)



All of these wines are available to purchase at Hay Wines, Ledbury:
 ► haywines.co.uk

If you want to learn more about this fantastic world, or just want to spend an evening tasting good wine, why not imbibe in one – or more – of these interesting local events and activities:

Tuesday 21 February, 7.30pm

The Greater Malvern Wine Society
 Decanter award winning wines tasting

Friday 24 February, 7.30pm

Hay Wines, Ledbury
 Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs of the world wine tasting

Tuesday 21 March, 7.30pm

The Greater Malvern Wine Society
 Wine Society wines tasting

Friday 31 March, 7.30pm

Hay Wines, Ledbury
 Wines of South America tasting

Friday 28th April, 7.30pm

Hay Wines, Ledbury
 Organic and natural food and wine tasting

Friday 26th May, 7.30pm

Hay Wines, Ledbury
 Sparkling wines tasting

For more information, visit:
 Hay Wines at ► haywines.co.uk/wine-tasting/
 and Greater Malvern Wine Society at ► sites.google.com/site/thegreatermalvernwinesociety/