Winemaking began 4,000 bc pre-historic people crushing wild grapes and the juice magically intoxicated them

Greeks colonized Southern Italy and called it “Oenotria”, land of the vine

Etruscans made wine in the hills of Central Italy, left tombs with images of importance of wine in their culture

Romans had the greatest influence. Brought winemaking advancements to all corners of its empire in homage to Bacchus.

By the 17th and 18th century other European nations improved winemaking in Italy by thinking of it as a science

19th Century brought advancements in storage, such as the cork and allowed Italian wines to be household names in other parts of Europe.

Piedmont and Tuscany were the most important with Nebbiolo and Sangiovese

Then new grapes were brought to Italy such as Cab and Merlot which introduced a new style of wine
The Beginning of the 20th century brought Phylloxera and Oidium which desimated the vines of Italy. Then followed War and Depression halted fine winemaking; many farmers moved to city to work in factories. Mechanized winemaking caused Italy to produce low cost bulk wines which were profitable but ruined the image of Italian wine. 1960’s MODERN RENAISSANCE the invention of the DOC system in 1963 Denominazione di Origine Controllata This brought back credibility to Italian wine.

The Vines

Italy has more different types of grapes than any other country allows for a diversity in styles. Italy is the Largest producer of wine in the world.
Classification

Fraud has always been a problem in Europe. Before wine was consumed locally so people knew the growers and wines. When wines became a commodity, changing labels or diluting began to become a problem.

This led to the Classification of Origin of Italian wines. In 1966 Vernaccia di San Gimignano became the first DOC.

By 1980 the first DOCG’s were created to show superior quality: Brunello di Montalcino, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, and Chianti Barolo and Barbaresco.

Today there are 24 DOCG’s.
Tenuta - a large estate or property
Vigna/Vigneto - a single demarcated vineyard with a particular name (like “Smith Vineyard”)
Feudo/Feudi - a fief or estate held on feudal tenure
Azienda Agricola - a crop producing farm, that grows all its own grapes
Azienda (Casa) Vinicola - same as azienda agricola but also buys grapes grown elsewhere
Ronchi - terrace
Ronco - hillside vineyard
Bricco/Bric - high, steep ridge vineyard (usually assumed to be of high quality)
Colli - hills
Poggio - mound or knoll
Sorì - vineyard site of the highest quality, usually facing south
Valle - valley, dale
Cantina - a cellar, winery or wine shop
Villa - town house
Castello - castle
Cascina - the house on a farm property where not only wine is produced
Produttore/Produttori - producer, grower
Viticoltore/Vignaiolo - vine grower
**DOCG**
Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita

Must have lower yields than DOC
Strict tests are done on chemical composition
expert tasters test for sensory qualities
once pass all tests they issue Pink Stickers to be put on the neck of the bottle

**DOC** Denominazione di Origine Controllata
more than 300 wines qualify
The origin of grapes to a particular region made in accordance to the laws and regulations of that governing body for that specific style of wine

**IGT** Indicazione Geografica Tipica
1992 the adoption of *law 164*
Wines of good quality that can have a higher price; but do not use the traditional grapes of that region.

**Vino da tavola**
Table wine
They are not bound to rules, many IGT were Vino da Tavola prior to 1992.
Classico
the historic center of a DOC or DOCG; Chianti Classico

Riserva
a DOC or DOCG of better quality; more aging

Superiore
Higher quality of a DOC or DOCG; based on more aging or higher alcohol

Nobile
balanced wine from a better vintage

Recioto
sweet wines, laid in sun to dry

Vecchio
old wine, aged DOC or DOCG

Vino Novello
New Wine, bottled in the past 12 months or younger

Spumante
Sparkling wine made in either Charmat or Traditional methode
Italian Whites

Friuli-Venezia

borders Veneto, adriatic Sea and Slovenia

Collio Goriziano/Collio DOC
borders Colli Orientali del Friuli

Advanced white wine Techniques
Cold Fermentation, Steel tanks
Not much use of Oak in this region

Most important white is Picoulit; ancient white grape

Other whites of note are Tocai, now known as Friuliano
Ramandolo; a sweet wine that is known as some of the best

Pinot Grigio

Used in Alto Aldige, Lombardy & Friuli-Venezia
A mutation of Pinot Noir, Grey color skin;
Fruity, Apple & Pear, Light bodied, crisp acidity
Roero Arneis

Surrounds Barolo
A hilly area in the center of Piedmont

Warm Bordeaux-like summers and cold Continental winters.
Piedmont sits at the foot of French Alps

Arneis is the white grape used in Roero
Became a DOCG in 2006

Arneis means “little rascal”, because it is difficult to grow.
Has a low acidity and can get overly ripe.
It has low yields and can oxidize easily.

Clay soils create aromatic wines and chalky soils make higher acidic wines.
Today use from different soil types to create a balanced wine.

They are dry and full bodied, pear, apricot, floral and crisp wines.
Can have an almond aroma.

Used to be used to soften tannins in Nebbiolos of Barolo, was called Barolo Bianco. This is rarely done today.
Pecorino

White Grape found in Marches and Abruzzo
Marches whites are known for Verdicchio. Just recently we’ve seen an increase in Pecorino

Abruzzo is known for red grape Montepuliciano d’Abruzzo and White Grape Trebbiano

Region is hilly and mountaneous along the Adriatic Sea

Pecorino is know as the “grape of the sheep” because it grew alongside where shepards would herd their sheep.

It almost went extinct and is now becoming much more popular

It has a high acidity and a good alcohol content which made it it desirable to blend with other whites.

It is a fresh and crisp wine; with floral and minerla aromas, with a ripened fruitiness
Red Italian Wines
the South

The south is made up of 6 regions.

All were heavily influenced by the Greeks and later the Romans.

The Arabs and Phoenicians may have been responsible for planting the 1st foreign vines.

The Spaniards were also responsible for planting many vineyards on the Islands of Sicily and Sardinia.

Most notable region, **Campania** with the Taurasi DOCG powerful wine made with Anglianco.

A similar and less expensive is the Anglianco di Vulture made in **Basilicata**.

**Apulia/Puglia** are known for Primitivo, Negroamora and Uva di Troia.

**Calabria** uses the native grape Gaglioppo.

And **Sardinia** makes incredible Cannonau & Carignano.
Sicily

The largest Island on the Mediterranean, has the most vineyards than any other Italian wine region.

Known for Marsala wine, is now becoming the most experimental, especially in the IGT Sicilia

Nero d’Avola (Calabrese), Nerello Mascalese and Perricone (Pignatello) Reds

Inzolia and Grecanico among the white

Cerasuolo di Vittoria

became DOCG in 2005

made with Nero d’avola and Frappato grapes

These wines are not rich and powerful
They are fragrant, light and very unique

The wines get their name because of the cherry color of the wine;
which is a result of the regulation of limited contact with the must
They are sweet tannins, plummy flavors and spicy, they have this inherent cherry quality and red fruitiness.
The Renaissance

The Area around Florence is responsible for the Italian wine renaissance.

Chianti with Sangiovese grape at the Helm

Latium near Rome make incredible whites with Malvasia and in near by areas Trebbiano is used

In Umbria, Sangiovese is predominant; however in Montfalco the native grape Sagrantino

In Tuscany we see more outside varieteties such as Cab, Merlot & Chard. However their is still a focus on native grapes like the Vernaccia di San Gimignano.

Abruzzi with Montepuliacno di Abruzzo and Verdicchio

Lacrima di Morro d’Alba

Lacrima is an indigenous grape to Marche. Marche is also known for Montepulciano & Sangiovese grapes.

Lacrima comes from the town close to Morro d’alba

It is a wine to be drunk young

They will ferment it twice by adding must from dried grapes

Has Violet and bilberry aromas
It has a fruitiness with a dark floral character

Sparkling wines are made of this grape and some are sweet
Best served below room temp

Goes well with Lasagna and other tomato-meat pasta dishes
Long History dating back to 8th century BC, Etruscans

7th Century sent wines to Gaul and the to South
4th Century BC Greeks Spoke about Tuscan wine

During middle ages after the fall of Rome, winemaking was mostly in monastaries

By 13th century merchant class arose with Florence being the biggest consumer of wine, many farmers began to produce grapes for wine production

First mention of Brunello was in 14th century

Napoleonic wars changed ownership structure
Bettino Ricasoli took ownership;
travelled throughout Europe studying wine
Realized that the best grapes for Tuscany were: Sangiovese, Canailo and Malvasia which are still used today

In 1848 Revolution occurred and many gave up winemaking and left Italy for the New world.
Chianti
Wine production is ancient 1300-1400 was recognized as an important region
By 1700’s Chianti had become known around Europe
Chianti classico is designated to the Ancient area between Florence and Siena.
It is denoted on the bottle by the Gallo Nero
80% Sangiovese for Classico and 75% for othe Chianti
Can use Canialo, Trebbiano and Malvasia for blending

Soil types are clay (Galestro) in the North and stonier in the South
Arno River in North keeps temps cooler; in the South it is warmer
Chianti Riserva must be aged 27 months
Chianti Superior is produced between Florence and Siena but not Classico
Medium Body, firm tannins, high acidity floral, raspberry, red fruit and nutty

Chianti Sub-Zones
Colli Fiorentini near Florence
Chianti Rufina northeast near Rufina
Colli Senesi near Senia (includes Brunello and Vino Nobile)
Colline Pisane in west near Pisa
Montespertoli in fiorentini near Montespertoli
Montalbano in northwest (Carmignano)
**Brunello di Montalcino**

1870’s Ferruccio Biondi-Santi began to set out in his vineyards a clone of the Sangiovese variety known as Brunello. Resistant to attacks by phylloxera

Some of the most Ageworthy wines. 1888 great vintage still drinking in 1988

**Super Tuscan**

Prior to the 1970’s Chianti had suffered from mediocre wines. Many believed it had to do with DOC/G rules

Winemakers began experimenting with Cab and Merlot to add to Sangiovese

Marchese Piero Antinori created the 1st Cab/Sangio blend in 1971 and released in 1978 as Tignanello

This led to the creation of the IGT or Toscana Classification today this practise is seen all over Italy the benchmark for NEW ITALIAN WINES

These reds can be Bordeaux in style with more focus on red fruit
Veneto

Prosecco Prosecco grape, Dry Sparkling from North east

Soave DOCG made from Gargenega and Trebbiano is most famous white wine from Veneto.

Bardolino DOCG same grapes as Valpolicella, easier to drink, known for Vino Novello and rose (Chiaretto)

Valpolicella DOC “Land of many Cellars”

From the town near Verona (Romeo & Juliet)
12th century Greeks
19th century brought hault with disease, war and Risorgimento
Revive 1950’s

Made with Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara grapes
Valpolicella-Ripasso adding left over grapes of Amarone or Recoito
Sweet wine called Reciote de Valpolicella

Climate is cool mild continetal...Influence from Lake Garda amd Adriatic

Amarone is most popular
Grapes are left in sun to dry, Heavy concentrated wines that age very well, 1st made by the Greeks
Piemonte
Gavi, Moscato di Asti, Roero Arneis, Barbera, Dolcetto, Barolo, Barbaresco, Ghemme, Gattinara

Wine Making foes back to the ancient Greeks. Techniques were different from rest of Italy in that he
vines were low to ground
Piedmont wines are most similar to Burgundy no Blending
Piedmont has the most classified zones and does not have IGT

Piedmont was influential in Risorgimento,
Piedmontese Winemakers were tired of the high
Tariffs of the Austrian Government

Led by Giuseppi Girabaldi, they defeated Austria
His influence in wine was brining Bordeaux Mixture to rid Oidium...
copper sulphur and lime

Camilio Benson studied in France and brought
new techniques to winemaking
Barbera d'alba

Made with Barbera, most widely planted grape in Piedmont
Originated in Monferrato

Grows best in Warm Climate

Has deep color, Low tannins and high acid

1985 a decline in Barbera when a scandal involving the mixture of methanol in Barbera killed many

In past, Barbera was seen as a simple wine
Today more and more complex Barbera is being produced
Aromas of Red berries and Blackberries, cherries and blueberries
Wines aged in oak will have hints of vanilla
oak is usually toasted
These wines age well
Barolo King of wines and wine of kings
Wines produced of 100% Nebbiolo

Famous since Mid-ages
Prior to 19th century wines were sweet
Camillo Benso invited Louis Oudart to improve Barolo
Fermented the 1st Dry Barolo and became a favorite of the House of Savoy

Barolo Wars: Traditionalist vs Modernists
1980 status as DOCG

Region is a cool region and grape is late ripening
Global warming has helped improve Barolo
Soils are clay and marl which have more alkanity to tame acidity of Nebbiolo

Crus...Single Vineyards were created to show quality
Barolo = Cannubi, Sarmazza & Brunate
La Morra = Cerequi & Rocch
Serralunga d’Alba = Lazzarito & Vigna Rionda
Monforte d’Alba = Bussia, Ginestra & Santo Stefano di Perno

Fullbodied and Light Colored similar to Pinot Noir
Aromas of truffles, rose, dried herbs, chocolate, dried fruit, eucalyptus, leather, licorice, mint, mulberries, plum, spice, strawberries & tobacco
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**RATINGS**

- 98–100 • SUPERLATIVE
- 94–97 • CLASSIC
- 90–93 • EXCELLENT
- 87–89 • VERY GOOD
- 83–86 • GOOD
- 80–82 • ACCEPTABLE
- NV • NOT VINTAGE YEAR
- NR • NOT RATED

**MATURITY**

- Hold
- Can drink, not yet at peak
- Ready, at peak maturity
- Can drink, maybe past peak
- In decline, maybe undrinkable
- Not a declared vintage/no data