I. 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.*
II. The Past: Ancient History

- Some people believe the wine ‘Prosecco’ is actually the same as the wine Pucinum that was praised by the Ancient Romans.
- The first known mention of the name is attributed to an English traveler named Fynes Moryson who visited the region in 1593:
- "Histria [the Istrian Peninsula comprised of Slovenia, Croatia and Italy] is divided into Forum Julii, and Histria [Trieste] proper. Here grows the wine Pucinum, now called Prosecho, much celebrated by Pliny".
• The name is thought to be of Slovenian origin, derived from *prosek*, a dialectical term for 'path cut through the woods'. The wine Prosecco was named after a former village in the Carso plateau that is now a suburb of Trieste in Friuli, where the grape probably came from or passed through.

• [A sweet passito wine called Prošek has been made in Croatia for over a thousand years. In 2013, the EU banned the use of the name because it considered it to be too similar to the much more popular Italian sparkling wine.]

First written reference of Prosecco is in a long prose poem about Venetian wine by Aureliano Acanti called *Il Roccolo Ditirambo* published in 1754:

'And now I would like to wet my mouth with that Prosecco with its apple bouquet'.
III. The Past: Modern History

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 Treviso Province created in 1868).

Wine maker and enologist Antonio Carpenè (1838-1902) played a significant role in the creation and operation 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).
The chief objective of the school (besides teaching the area’s young people a viable skill) was to improve and better organize what was then a rather haphazard rural winemaking industry.

Winemaking practices were fairly primitive and, given typically cold temperatures following harvest, it was not unusual for fermentation to stop prematurely and for wines to spontaneously re-ferment in bottle or cask when temperatures warmed in the spring.
• 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 economic resurgence of Italy following WW II in the mid-1950s and ‘60s that the autoclave became diffused throughout the area of Conegliano Valdobbiadene and the modern day wine industry was born.
• Up to this point, most wine produced in Conegliano Valdobbiadene, both still and fizzy, was either consumed in the area or exported to Venice and served in wine bars.

NB: most Italians preferred their Prosecco unadulterated; the Spritz was created during the Austrian Habsburgs’ occupation of Venice (1849 to 1861), and recently revived by young Italians—and young Americans—as a light colorful aperitivo.

• The Bellini cocktail (Prosecco and fresh peach nectar) 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.

• The Bellini arrived in America in the 1970s like a sort of Trojan Horse that took the country by storm. And it was in this way that most Americans first tasted Prosecco.

• A Consorzio Tutela for Prosecco of 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 and has skyrocketed over the past decade to the tremendous popularity it enjoys today. But there was a problem....
IV. 2009

- 2009 was a decisive year for Prosecco. By this time they wine was well known throughout the world and growing rapidly in popularity. But there was a problem: the name was not officially recognized outside Italy and was not legally tied to its specific area of origin, which left it wide open to counterfeit and abuse.

- Another problem was that 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.
2009: A Year of Decisive Change for Prosecco

Three major things happened:

1. An entirely new and appellation called Prosecco DOC was created spanning.
2. The classic Prosecco territory of Conegliano Valdobbiadene was upgraded to DOCG status.
3. The name of the principal grape variety—Prosecco—was changed to Glera (an historical synonym) so the well-known name could be given to the growing area.

V. The World of Prosecco
THE WORLD OF PROSECCO

THE WORLD OF PROSECCO (2015 FIGURES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG</th>
<th>Prosecco DOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production (in bottles)</td>
<td>83,698,000</td>
<td>355,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production area (ha)</td>
<td>7,191</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparkling wine producers</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 on 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 topography, whereas the DOC territory can be further expanded. (3,000 hectares were added to the DOC appellation last year.)

VI. 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 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 only earthen terraces.

Almost all vineyard work must be done exclusively by hand; many sites are inaccessible to any machinery and must be brought 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.
The eastern (Conegliano) section of the hills was remolded 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.

Rive di Ogliano (Conegliano)
The western section (Valdobbiadene) was for the most part unaffected by glacial activity and consists of very steep hills the contours of which have been 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
VII. 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 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:

Four International varieties permitted 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-Fermentated 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.

**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 (13,000 kilos per hectare max instead of 13,500). There are currently 43 Rive.
The tasting consists of 9 wines in two flights. The first flight, 1-4, consists of still wines representing each of the four principal indigenous grape varieties. The second flight, 5-9, consists of:

5. A wine sourced exclusively of grapes from carefully selected old vines of Valdobbiadene (blend of 3 indigenous varieties)
6. A wine made fro grapes of a single parcel in the Rive di Colbertaldo (Blend of 3 indigenous varieties)
7. A wine re-fermented in bottle in the traditional method (sediment left in) (Blend of 4 indigenous varieties)
8. A wine re-fermented in bottle in the classic method (100% Glera)
9. A wine from an extremely old vintage (100% Glera)

Note: only two of these wines are currently available in the US, though most of the wineries have US importers. Special thanks to the wineries for making these unusual wines available for the SWE 2016 conference.
1. “CANTO FERMO” Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG
Tranquillo 2015  Bortolomiol

• **100% Glera:** Alc 11.5%  acidity 6%  residual sugar 8%  12,000 KG/hectare
• from vineyards in the hills of S. Pietro, S. Stefano and S. Giovanni.

• Winemaking activity of the family dates back to 1760 starting with Bartolomeo Bortolomiol. When the young Giuliano Bortolomiol came home after WW II to a ravaged and impoverished territory, he decided to try to create a business selling their wine, and was among the first to help create the modern Prosecco industry. He was the founder of the Confraternità del Prosecco (1945) and one of the original founding members of the Consorzio (1962).

• Bortolomiol was one of the very first to make a Brut prosecco. The winery is managed today by his four energetic daughters.

• Pronounced aromas of white flowers, ripe apples. Fruity palate; green apple, white peach, strawberry licorice. Medium body. Mineral finish.

• Importer: Domenico & Valentino, New York
2. Verdiso Colli Trevigiani IGT Tranquillo 2015

Gregoletto

- **100% Verdiso**: Alv. 11.5% acidity 6.4 g/l
- From family-owned vineyards in the hills of Miane

- A very old family winery that traces its winemaking roots in the area back to 1600. Their real specialty is still wines and bottle-re-fermented wines in the traditional manner.

- Making spumante is a fairly recent development for Gregoletto: they do not own an autoclave and send their still wine out to be made sparkling.

- Name comes from Verde = green due to the bright green color of the ripe grapes.

- Pronounced acidity; sour, biting, dry. Tart green plum and sour melon flavors; slight salty slate finish. Feels almost tannic with firm backbone.

- Importer: Kermit Lynch, CA
GREGOLETTO AZIENDA AGRICOLA
Via San Martino, 83 - Premaor di Miane (TV)
Tel.: 0438 970463 info@gregoletto.com

STILL WINE
VERDISO DEI COLLI TREVISANI IGT
2016

Grapes: produced in family-owned vineyards located in the Colli Trevisani area (Treviso), characterized by a continental climate that is tempered by the proximity of the North Sea (Riviera di Po). The area is located between the Civetta and the Alps, on alluvial deposits of the river Tagliamento.

Yield: 15,000 kg/ha.

Wine-making: soft, slow, spontaneous pressing of destemmed grapes, rocky sorting of the must for 24 hours, fermentation at controlled temperature (18-20°C) in stainless steel vats, followed by a second fermentation in stainless steel tanks by the natural yeast.

Organoleptic features:
Color: pale straw yellow with greenish hints;
Flavor: soft, light, fruity, and slightly herbal.
Texture: harmonious and smooth texture, mildly alcoholic, structure and sensations well balanced, slightly spicy.
Alcohol content: 11.5% vol.

Serving (°C):
Food pairings: ideal with fish appetizers, it can be drunk throughout the meal. It is particularly recommended with seasoned fish dishes, herbs on pasta sauces.

Storage (°C): in medium-sized flat-bottomed Flamed glasses.

8/23/2016

- **100% Perera**: Alc 10.5% unfiltered 1,330 bottles produced

- Ancient variety, also known as Uva della Madonna. Name Perera probably comes from the pear-like shape of the clusters.
- Irregular growing patterns and highly subject to Peronospera (downy mildew).
- Native yeast fermentation in large casks of acacia wood (once widely used in the area), which may contribute subtle nuttiness.
- Subtle golden yellow hue. Aromas of ripe pear, yellow plum, white flowers. Soft full palate, ripe pear, brioche, citrus peel, hint salty. Long finish.

- Marchiori is a small family winery located in the area known as Torri di Credazzo located in Farra di Soligo. Currently headed by the young Umberto Marchiori, the winery follows many practices of organic and biodynamic viticultural and are paying special attention to nuances of their vineyard holdings and championing ‘lost’ indigenous varieties.
Perera

The Viñedo de los Viñedos: Age-old Varieties

A unique combination of the venerable Perera variety known, at far back as the 1270s, at the Vina de los Pereras due to the hard work it stands for. Characteristics point up to the "turrumigara" of the 12th December, this variety has always been noted a good for developing the full of Campero's Tarroja de la DO: CO because of its characteristics and fragrance and acidity.

APPELLATION
Perera, family company; 100% Perera variety, fresh with green grass notes.

Climate: cool and temperate with abrupt changes; 300 to 350 mm of rain in June and November and less in June and October; moderate temperature and humidity.

Soil: very well drained, granite; average soil depth of about 100-150 cm.

Varieties: Perera, family company.

Harvest: late, August.

Viticulture: traditional, with maximum respect for the natural environment, 100% yield of whole bunch.

Yield: 60-70 q/ha.

Marketing: sold directly to the winemakers.

WINE STYLE
Hardy: thin-skinned and intensely flavored, giving pure expression with much intensity.

Fermentation: family company; in separate batches according to origin and age in large wooden containers for the fruit.

Ageing: 6-12 months in new wood.

Alcohol: 15.5%.

INFO.

Temperature: 5-15°C.

Aroma: frankincense, spices and overtones of cloves, brown sugar, and carob overtones.

Drinkable: from 3 to 5 years.

Serve: with cheese and charcuterie, pasta and rice dishes, perfectly complemented with beef and lamb.

Preparation: serve with a generous splash of water, leaves and flowers, corresponding with braised and slow-cooked.

- **100% Bianchetta Trevigiana**  **Alc 10.5%,**
- 1st release 2016  1,330 bottles made

5. “Particella 68” Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG 2015 Brut Sorelle Bronca

- Alc 11%, acidity 5.8 g/l, Residual sugar 9 gms/l
- 90% Glera, 5% Perera, 5% Bianchetta.
- Name refers to a specific parcel located within the Rive di Colbertaldo in the town of Vidor
- Yield approx. 11,000 kg/hectare

- Enticingly fresh fruit/floral aroma: ripe Golden Delicious, fresh apple blossoms, baked pear, hint exotic papaya, guava. Beautifully balanced palate; full but nice firm acidity. Clean finish with lingering after taste.
- Importer: Polaner
**Variety:** 90% Glera (formerly known as Prosecco) from massal selection, 5% Bianchetta, 5% Perera

**Production district:** Prosecco DOCG region, Cartizze subregion.

**Harvest period:** All grapes harvested in September.

**Vine training system:** Guyot-trained vines in the traditional Prosecco hills.

**Total acidity:** 4.5 g/l

**Recommended glass:** Wide glass.

**Fermentation and aging:** Spontaneous fermentation in stainless steel tanks at controlled temperature (15°C). Aging in stainless steel for 3 months.

**Appearance:** Brilliant gold color with fine bubbles and a long-lasting perlage.

**Flavour:** Aromas of yellow fruits (apricots, green apples, pears) with a hint of tropical fruits.

**Production:**
- 12 Classica bottles
- Classica 0,75 L
- Magnum 1,5 L
- Jeroboam 3 L
- Mathusalem 6 L

**Edition:** 11.2011

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**Rive di Colbertaldo**
6. “Vecchie Viti” Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG 2015 Brut Ruggeri

- **90% Glera, 6% Verdiso, 2% Perera, 2% Bianchetta** (approx.)
- Sourced from old vines of numerous small farmers in San Pietro, S. Stefano, Cartizze, Guia and Saccol. About 5,000 bottles produced.
- Ruggeri Winery founded 1950 by Giustino Bisol. Currently headed by Paolo Bisol, along with daughter Isabella and son Giustino.
- Importer: Wines Unlimited
Vecchie Viti

Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG Brut

Dopo aver trascorso una stagione di riposo, l'acqua è stata lasciata in un ambiente fresco per eseguire una separazione naturale.

Il prosecco è un vino di grande rilevanza storica e culturale, nato dalle colline del Veneto. Il terroir di Valdobbiadene è ideale per la produzione di prosecco di alta qualità, grazie alla sua geologia unica e all'aria marittima che circonda la regione.

Il terroir di Valdobbiadene è caratterizzato da un clima temperato con temperature estive calde e inverni freschi, ideali per la crescita delle uve di Prosecco. Il terreno è costituito da fango e sabbia, che offrono un substrato perfetto per la radicazione delle uve.

La vendemmia viene eseguita a mano per garantire la qualità del materiale da lavorare. Le uve vengono poi trasportate in frigoriferi per evitare contattori e conservare la freschezza. Il processo di fermentazione avviene in vasche in acciaio inox, garantendo una produzione di vino pulito e sano.

La tutela del terroir è garantita dalla DOCG Prosecco, la più importante delle denominazioni di origine controllate in Italia. Questa dichiarazione certifica la qualità del vino e ne garantisce la provenienza, garantendo un prodotto di elevata qualità e riconoscimento internazionale.

In conclusione, il prosecco di Valdobbiadene è un vino che rafforza la tradizione dell'agricoltura e della vinificazione in Veneto, offrendo un prodotto di elevata qualità che esprime la personalità del suo terroir.
7. Prosecco DOC “Col Fondo” 2014  Cá dei Zago

- Winery founded in 1924. Only bottle re-fermented wines since 1958. Besides the “Col Fondo” they also make a classic method prosecco in very small quantities. Biodynamic practices.
- Very small production of handcrafted wines by young artisan producer, Cristian Zago, who farms the family’s 6 hectares himself. No added sugar.
- 10.5% ABV. Residual sugar: 0  Total sulfites: 45 mg/lt

- Primarily Glera from very old clones, with small amounts of Verdiso, Perera, and Bianchetta from massale selection. Cloudy in glass. Fine delicate perlage. Yeasty aroma. Perfume of fresh cut green and crab apples. Tart green apple palate, crumbly bread dough, Linzer torte; sapid finish. Rustic but elegant and refined at the same time. Well balanced, very and extremely enjoyable.
- Jenny & Francois Imports, NY
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 Saccol 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. For this reason, even after the diffusion of the autoclave wines from Cartizze were typically made in the dry (17-32) style.
8. “Cartizze Private” Valdobbiadene Superiore di Cartizze DOCG 2012 Brut       Bisol

• Today, Bisol is a large company that races its winemaking roots in Valdobbiadene back to 1542.
• This is an unusual brut version of Cartizze; zero dosage: alc 12.8%; sugar, 4.9 g/l; acidity 5.5 g/l. 100% Glera.
• Matures 1 year on the fine lees. First commercial bottling 2011.  2657 bottles in 2012
• Distinct yellow gold color. Looks viscous and oily. Yeasty notes in the aroma; tropical fruits (banana, bred fruit, kiwi, mango), tree sap, wet stone. Full palate, almost creamy. Ripe fruit, buttery brioche, ripe peach, mineral slate. Long flavor arc. Lemon confit finish, slight bitterness in after taste.
9. “Primo Franco” Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore
DOCG 1992 Dry  Nino Franco

- 100% glera. 10.5% alc, 30 g/l sugar
- “Primo Franco” debuted in 1983 and was one of the first vintage-dated proseccos.
- The 1992 Primo Franco was made native yeast fermentation.
- Note: Primo stresses that this wine was not made with the intention to age it. But clearly disproves the notion that Prosecco must be drunk within a year or two.
- Importer: Terlato Wines
PRIMO FRANCO

APPELLATION
Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG

PRODUCTION AREA
Valdobbiadene and Conegliano

GRAPE
100% Glera

TYPE
Dry

CHARMAT METHOD
NATURAL SUGAR

15g/l

Serving Temperature: 6°-8°C.

TYPICAL NOTES

Intense bouquet of ripe fruit, apple, and pear with notes of almonds and toasted hazelnuts. The palate is typically sweet and fruity, balanced by an amusing acidity, leading with a pleasant finish.

MATCHES

Unusually good with savory snacks, crostini, and spicy foods. Traditionally served with pastas, fish, salad, dessert wines, and ice cream cakes or custards.

Valdobbiadene and Conegliano

GRAPES

100% Glera

ALCOHOL CONTENT

11.5%
IX. The Future

The future is always hard to predict—one could have scarcely imagined that the little bubbly wine from the hills of Conegliano Valdobbiadene would go on to conquer the world. But in many ways Prosecco is a victim of its own success: Most everyone who drinks wine knows it, but most have fairly well-defined ideas of what it is—and isn’t—without really having had a chance to discover the growing area and what it is capable of. The legislative changes of 2009 were absolutely necessary to protect and preserve Prosecco, but they created some difficulties too, especially for producers in Conegliano Valdobbiadene.
The biggest problem is the fact that most consumers are not aware there is more than one Prosecco, much less what the critical differences between them are. And most salespeople and even many wine professionals are not adequately equipped to explain it to them. Inevitably, the DOCG Prosecco with the impossible-to-pronounce name that usually costs a few dollars more suffers. But there may be a silver lining:

Because DOCG producers—with limited growing area, lower yields and extremely high cost of production—cannot compete with DOC on price (not to mention profit margins), more and more of them are seeking to explore the particularities of their diverse growing area and long viticultural tradition, and find new ways of expressing them in their wines. Only by focusing on what is truly unique to the ConVal area can they hope to survive and prosper in today’s marketplace.

It’s an exciting time in the hills of Conegliano Valdobbiadene and we all stand to benefit by their successful efforts.
Thanks for your attention!
Please help spread the word about what makes Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG special.