

# The Vermouth of Turin: The Real Story of Vermouth di Torino



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## EU definition of Vermouth

Vermouth is an aromatized wine:

- to which alcohol has been added
- whose characteristic taste has been obtained by the use of appropriate substances of *Artemisia* species

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### EU definition of Aromatized Wine

- A flavored wine beverage produced from any type of EU wine (except for Retsina)
- Containing a minimum of 75% wine (by total volume)
- Measuring 14.5% to 22% ABV

### Aromatized wines are allowed to contain:

- Added alcohol
- Coloring agents
- Grape must or partially fermented grape must
- Sweeteners, herbs, spices, extracts, fruit, and/or flavorings



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(Ancient)  
History



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The practice of aromatizing wine has ancient origins...



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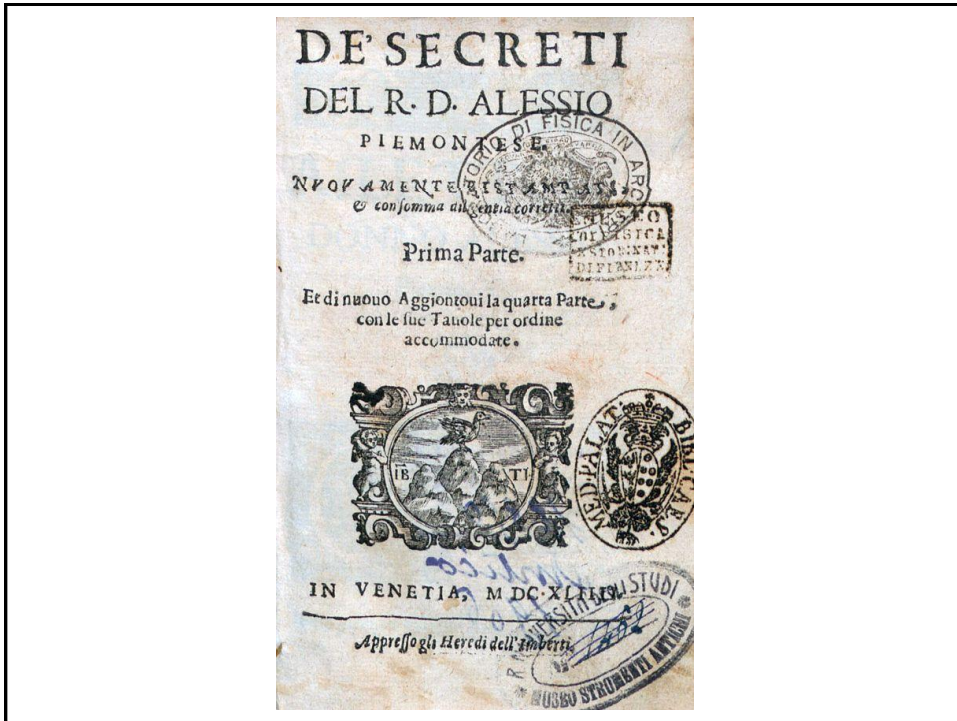
## The Renaissance: Girolamo Ruscelli aka Alessio Piemontese (1518-1566)

Physician, alchemist, humanist,  
inventor, cartographer, and  
founder of the "Academy of  
Secrets" (a secret scientific  
society)

By 1555, he published a manual  
of ancient curative recipes, *The  
Secrets of Alexis of Piedmont*,  
under his pseudonym  
*Alessio Piemontese*.

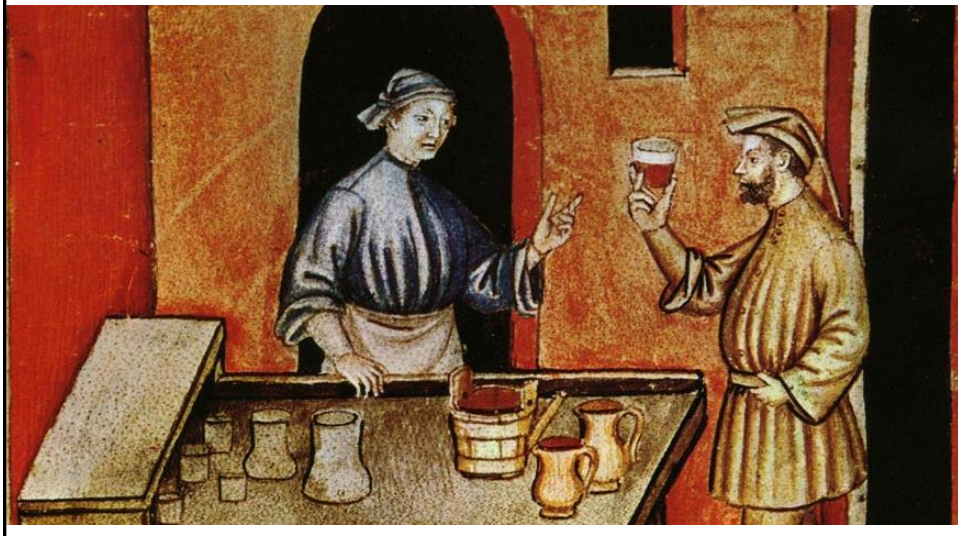


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By the late 1700s, aromatized wines were gaining recognition and popularity in Europe...



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1739—Piedmont, Italy (the Duchy of Savoy):  
(what is believed to be the first) “University for Confectioners and  
Brandy Producers” is established.

This entity regulated and certified  
distilled products and granted the  
“Royal Patent” to produce and  
distribute flavored spirits.

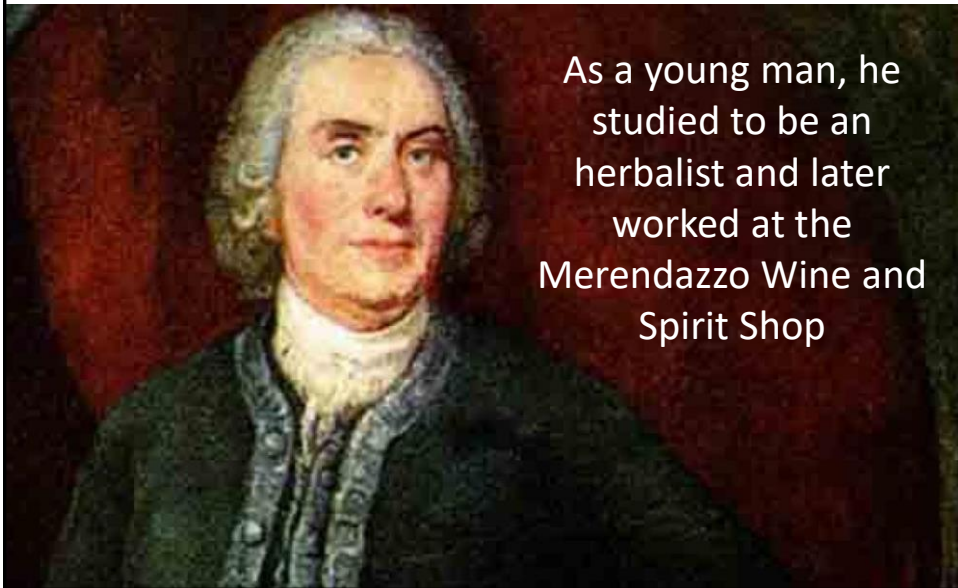
The first such license was granted  
to the House of Cinzano in 1757.



Charles Emmanuel III  
Duke of Savoy (1730 – 1773)

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## Antonio Benedetto Carpano (1765 – 1815)



As a young man, he  
studied to be an  
herbalist and later  
worked at the  
Merendazzo Wine and  
Spirit Shop

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It is here that he is credited with combining herbs and spices—including a measure of Artemisia—and thus creating the formula which would become the various types of vermouth.



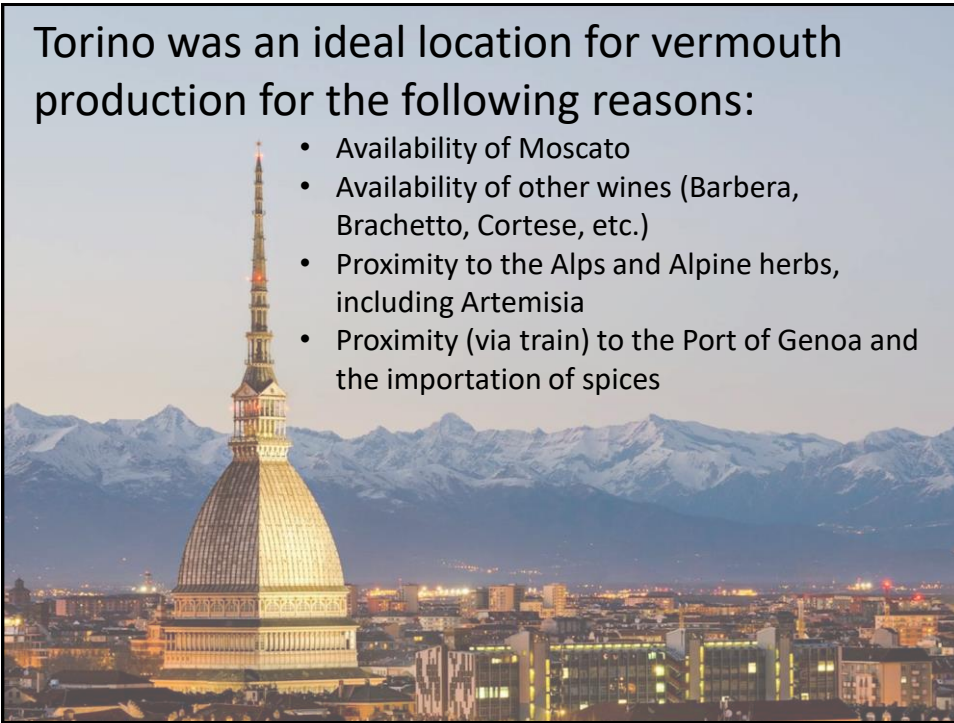
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Eventually, Carpano sent a crate of Vermouth to King Vittorio Amedeo III (the Duke of Savoy).

The king liked it so much that he adopted it as an official product of the royal household and demanded that the production of *rosolio* cease and be replaced with the production of vermouth.



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Other producers soon followed suit...including:

- Cinzano...founded in 1757, considered the innovators along with Carpano; first produced vermouth at a later date (sometimes reported as 1816)
- Cora—1835
- Gancia—1850
- Ballor—1856
- Anselmo—1857
- Martini & Rossi—1863
- Grassotti—1872
- Chazalettes—1876
- Martinazzi—1877
- Ferreto—1889
- Giulio Cocchi—1891



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Popularity boomed again with the 1884 Italian Expedition in Turin

There were more than 3 million visitors, and 8 categories of exhibiting firms from fine arts to manufacturing, mining and food....but the hit of the show was VERMOUTH!



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## French, Spanish, and Italian Vermouth: A timeline



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### Vermouth Timeline



1786: Antonio Carpano, working at Turin's Merendazzo Spirit and Wine Shop, crafts what is believed to be the first commercially successful product marketed as Vermouth (Vermouth di Torino).

This oft-imitated style of vermouth comes to be known as *Italian vermouth*, *sweet vermouth*, or *red vermouth*.

1786

1813

1881

1891

1900

18

## Vermouth Timeline



1813: Joseph Noilly—based in Lyon—creates a style of white vermouth that will come to be known as *dry vermouth* or *French vermouth*.

By 1855, Joseph Noilly's son (Louis) and his brother-in-law (Claudius Prat) are producing Noilly Prat dry vermouth on the coast in the village of Marseillan (in the South of France).

1786

1813

1881

1891

1900

19

## Vermouth Timeline

In 1815, Joseph Chavasse established Maison Dolin in Chambéry, France following a visit to Turin.



In 1881, Dolin begins producing a sweet(er) version of French vermouth.

This style of bright, herbal, clear blanc vermouth becomes known as *vermouth blanc*, and inspires the creation of Italian *vermouth bianco*.

1786

1813

1881

1891

1900

20

## Vermouth Timeline

1891: Giulio Cocchi launches a range of products including Barolo Chinato, Cocchi Americano, sparkling wines, and Cocchi Vermouth di Torino. Cocchi products become widely known and are distributed at a popular chain of Cocchi Bars throughout Italy (and later, the world).



1786



1813



1881



1891

1900

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## Vermouth Timeline

1900: Italian immigrants flow into Catalonia and begin making vermouth in the city of Reus.

Soon, there are more than 30 vermouth producers in Reus making all types and styles of vermouth. Spain currently accounts for a large part of Europe's vermouth consumption.



1786



1813



1881



1891



1900

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## The EU Rules: What is Vermouth di Torino?



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In 2014, Vermouth di Torino (Vermut di Torino) was registered as an EU Protected Geographical Indication (GI) and defined as:

- An aromatized wine produced in Piedmont
- Based on Italian wine
- Flavored primarily with Artemisia
- Other herbs, spices, and flavorings are allowed
  - Must contain herbs and flavorings grown in Piedmont (although others are allowed as well)
- Caramel is allowed (for color or flavor)
- Must be based on a minimum of 75% *grapevine product*, as measured by total volume of the finished product



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- Permitted colors:
  - Red: all types and shades
  - White/bianco: white to straw yellow to amber yellow
- Aromas:
  - Intense and complex, aromatic, balsamic, harmonic and sometimes floral or spicy
- Tastes:
  - Subtle, a balance between bitter, caused by the aromatic characteristic of wormwood, and sweet, which varies depending on the different types of sugar used
- Alcohol: 16% ABV to 22% ABV



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Allowed sweeteners include:

- White sugar or semi-white sugar
- Sugar syrup or sugar solution
- Grape must (including concentrated versions)
- Caramel or other types of “burned sugar”
- Honey

The following optional label terms are defined:

- Extra Dry: less than 30 g/L of sugar
- Dry: less than 50 g/L of sugar
- Sweet: more than 130 g/L sugar



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Vermouth di Torino (Vermut di Torino) *Superiore* has these additional standards:

- Minimum 17% ABV
- Wine from Piedmont must comprise a minimum of 50% of the finished product



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The following local, medicinal plants are listed on the *EU Product Specification* as vital to the success of Vermouth di Torino:

- *Artemisia absinthium* (common wormwood)
- *Artemisia pontica* (Roman wormwood)
- Yarrow
- Chamomile
- Hyssop
- Savory
- Marjoram
- Clary sage
- Thyme



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Spices that are noted as often used in the production of Vermouth di Torino include the following:

- Cinnamon
- Cardamom
- Cloves
- Coriander
- Nutmeg
- Vanilla
- Saffron



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**(A  
selection of)  
currently  
available  
brands of  
Vermouth di  
Torino**



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# Carpano



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# Cinzano



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# Cocchi Storico



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# Martini & Rossi



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# Alessio

(Tempus Fugit Spirits)



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# Scarpa

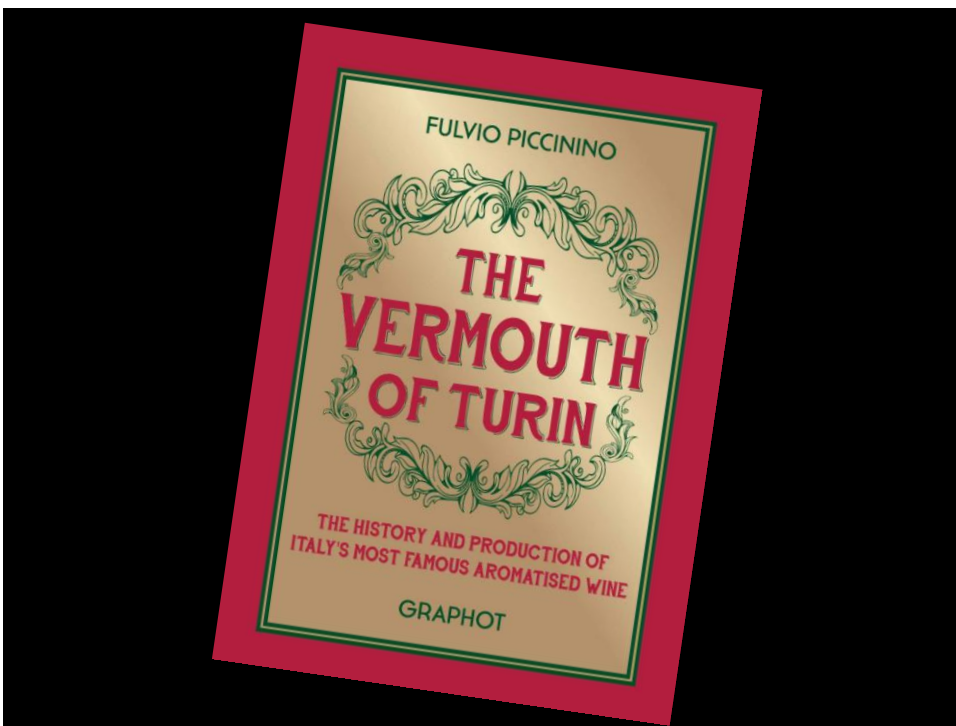


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# Gancia



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**Thank  
you  
for  
joining  
us!**

