

# What's new in Prosecco?

Changes are afoot across the whole of the Prosecco region in the north. **Alessandra Piubello** summarises shifts in styles and standards



Above: Mionetto's Prosecco Rosé

**T**he Prosecco appellation is being revolutionised from the inside out, projecting it towards a series of major innovations. In May 2020, a proposal was approved to change the denomination rules for Prosecco DOC, laying the foundations for the creation of Prosecco Rosé. Specifically, alongside Glera grapes used either alone or blended with other permitted varieties (Bianchetta Trevigiana, Chardonnay, Perera, Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Verdiso and Pinot Nero fermented off the skins), the rosé can contain up to 15% of Pinot Nero fermented on the skins. What's more, it will only be produced as a single vintage, containing a minimum of 85% vintage grapes, and can be made in a drier style such as brut nature or extra brut.

The first Prosecco rosés have already found made their way on to the shelves, so look out for them. But don't expect to see rosé Prosecco at the DOCG level – this is a new development at DOC level only.

## On the dry side

In another innovation, for Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco DOCG, changes to the regulations in 2019 now allow for a new style of extra brut – a classic example is Quindici16, Conegliano Valdobbiadene Extra Brut from Spagnol – as well as a category re-fermented in the bottle, known as *sui lieviti* (see main text, p44).

More broadly speaking, other changes across the region tend to focus on the brut nature style: one of the first producers to spot its potential was Valdo ([www.valdo.com](http://www.valdo.com)), where the style was introduced to the estate's Rive San Pietro di Barbozza three years ago. The result demonstrated its potential to improve over time, gaining complexity on the nose and palate, much to the delight of connoisseurs.

In the same vein, Merotto's very recent Integral, Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore 2019 is produced with residual

sugar of less than 3g/L. It has been designed to heighten the characteristics of the vintage and the minerality of the terroir, comprising the deep-rooted historic vineyards at Col San Martino. Similarly, Bortolomio opted for zero residual sugar for its new offering, Rive di Santo Stefano 70th Anniversary (see p44); it displays a dynamic, clean, vertical progression on the palate.

## In-bottle ageing

Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG's gradual shift towards the traditional method (and away from the Charmat method, or fermentation in tank) is nothing new. What is new is the tendency to increase the months the wine spends on lees. One such example is Valdo: after its recent Numero 10 Metodo Classico, Conegliano Valdobbiadene, aged for 10 months on the lees (following previous experiments with 36 and 48 months), it continues the trend with its new metodo classico, Pradase. Named after the Valdobbiadene vineyard with its old vines of Glera and other local grape varieties, it spends 24 months on the lees.

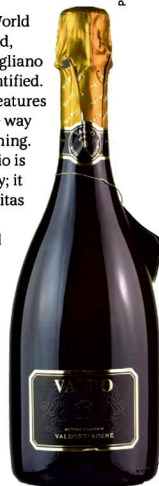
## Terroir focus

There is increasing interest in the Valdobbiadene terroir and landscape, awarded Unesco World Heritage status in 2019. Indeed, recently 19 sub-zones of Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG were identified. Analysis revealed distinctive features for every sub-zone, paving the way for development in terroir zoning.

The Prosecco DOC consorzio is also committed to biodiversity; it recently signed up to the Equalitas standard, aimed at ensuring environmental, economic and social sustainability.

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Right: Valdo's Numero 10 Metodo Classico Brut, Conegliano Valdobbiadene



Photograph: uk.mionetto.com