

## Why Collio is poised to regain its place among Italy's best white wines

'Collio has everything it takes to regain its rightful place at the top of Italian white wines', says Alessandra Piubello. She offers a sketch of this region on the border with Slovenia, a land of white wines itching to be rediscovered.



Alessandra Piubello

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Credit: Vito Arcomano/ Alamy

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It enjoys an ideal microclimate in terms of ventilation and temperature range, with warm weather influences arising from the Adriatic and the Alps protect from colder weather intruding from the north.

Summers are not too scorchingly hot, nor are winters too bitterly cold.

The area also has a particular soil type: a marly-arenaceous **flysch**, known locally as *ponca*. This alternation of sandstone and marl gives the wines their unmistakable characteristics: notable sapidity, structure, freshness and longevity.

## A land of white wines

The site of ferocious and bloody battles between the Italians and Austro-Hungarians during the First World War, today the peace and beauty of this unspoilt and authentic landscape is striking. There is no single-crop agriculture among these hills and the view stretches across rivers, mountains, pastures and woods.

The annual 'Collio Evolution' event – organised by the Collio producers' consortium – is a tasting focused on the grape variety **Friulano**, the denomination's native grape par excellence.

Collio is a land of white wines (**and increasingly skin contact/orange wines** as well), 89% of the production area is given over to white varieties.

Friulano is one of the standard bearers, but Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, Ribolla Gialla and Malvasia Bianca are also widely planted. What few reds there are tend to be based around Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot.

While the region was pivotal in the popular rebirth of Italian white wines more than half a century ago, a subsequent downturn saw the denomination being overtaken by others.

However, Collio has everything it takes to regain its rightful place at the top of Italian white wines. Below are five examples made from Friulano that show what the region has to offer.

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## Collio: Five to try



Muzic, Valeris Friulano, Collio, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy 2024

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An inviting nose with aromas of camomile, aromatic herbs and hints of white pepper. The sip is appropriately textured without losing momentum or flavour, leading to an intense and joyful finish. Young Fabijan and Elija Muzic manage this historic winery,...

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## Venica & Venica, Ronco delle Cime Friulano, Collio, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy 2024

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From the highest vineyard with a maximum altitude of 270 metres, this cru, which dates back to 1974, stands out for its incisiveness and territorial identity; a fresh, balanced and elegant wine. Founded in 1930, the winery is a Collio region highlight.

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## Alessio Komjanc, Friulano, Collio, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy 2024

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Pleasant hints of almond blossom, medicinal herbs and lively yellow fruit are the prelude to a fresh, agile, precise sip and sapid lengthening. In 2000, Alessio's four sons, Benjamin, Roberto, Patrik and Ivan, joined the company full-time, breathing new ener...

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## Drius, Friulano, Collio, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy 2024

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Captivating aromas with a bouquet of aromatic herbs, yellow plum and a touch of white pepper. The sip develops with rhythmic progression, combining sapidity, vigour, balance and length. Thirty two-year-old oenologist Denis Drius runs the winery, helpe...

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## Toros, Friulano, Collio, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy 2024

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The ripe fruit of the warm run-in to the harvest comes out in the richly aromatic nose, and follows through on the juicy, mid-weight palate, finishing with succulent flavours of peach and almonds. A classic of the generous house style of the long-established Toros...

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