

AMARONE AND THE LAW



THE LAW:

The legislation that now controls Italian wine production came into force in 1963 with the creation of "Denominazione di Origine Controllata". This was structured on the French model and devised with the same rationale: "to classify and regulate the production of wines from geographic areas, not only to authenticate these wines but to help them develop commercial identities."

Under these laws, which are governed by the Minister of Agriculture, there are four separate classifications:

1. VdT: Vino da Tavola
2. IGT: Indicazione Geografica Tipica
3. DOC: Denominazione di Origine Controllata
4. DOCG: Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita

[Download the Italian Ministry's list of all DOC and DOCGs in Italian](#)

So what do these classifications mean ?

VdT: Simple table wines that carry neither a varietal name nor a vintage date.

IGT: This appellation, instituted in 1992, falls between Vino da Tavola and Denomination of Controlled Origin. The government's purpose is to upgrade a major portion (40%) of Italy's table wine production by placing these products on a par with the French Vin du Pays or German Landwein. The wine's label must declare its specific region and may cite varietal type and vintage. Growers or regional governments are required to apply for IGT status just as they do for a DOC or DOCG appellation.

DOC: Wines bearing this appellation are registered by the government. Their labels must state their zone of origin and the wines are required to meet certain production standards. Only approved methods of planting, cultivating and fertilizing can be employed, for example. Maximum yields are controlled, as are bottling specifications, alcohol content and aging. The products and their claims are subject to government review at any time.

DOCG: The most stringent of the categories, this appellation embraces all DOC assurances and further requires a producer to control and guarantee everything claimed on the wine's label: zone of origin, net contents, name of grower and bottler, place of bottling and product's alcohol strength. Affixed to the bottle is a government seal of approval, and the wine is subject to analysis at any time by government inspectors.

VALPOLICELLA:

The Veneto region has in the past suffered from a bad reputation, but producers have upped quality and vast improvements can now be seen easily.

Valpolicella was designated its DOC status on 21st August 1968 and the latest amendment took place on 14th September 2007.

The rules stipulate the zones which are covered by Valpolicella, the grapes to be used along with percentage quantities, the minimum alcohol percentage ie 14%. Also covered are the minimum length of appassimento, and the latest amendment: the use of Riserva. This can be used where the wine has been matured in barrel for a minimum of 48 months.

[Download the full Valpolicella DOC regulations in Italian](#)

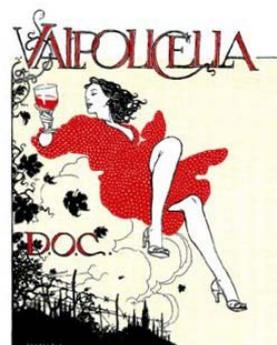
CONSORZIO PER LA TUTELA DEI VINI VALPOLICELLA



This association is part of the overall DOC rules as each DOC has its own Consorzio which protects, promotes and looks after the interests of the Region. Any producer working within the territory can join the organisation and the Consorzio gives advice on wine legislation. Founded in 1970, past and present presidents have been linked to the famous wines of this appellation: Carlo Speri, Stefano Cesari, Giuseppe Campagnola and Emilio Pasqua. There are at present over

1600 members, including farmers, grape producers, cooperatives and other associated businesses.

In promoting the wines of the region the Association uses a poster designed by Milo Manara. Born 12th September 1945 Manara is an Italian Comic Book creator who is renowned for his erotic approach to the medium, involving elegant beautiful women involved in fantastical and dream erotic scenarios. At home he does not enjoy the fame that he is accorded in neighbouring France. In addition he has designed a helmet for Valentino Rossi the Moto GP rider.



www.valpolicella.it

ELEVATION TO DOCG STATUS

Why is Valpolicella still a DOC and not a DOCG region, apparently the producers cannot agree on possible new stringent regulations covering yields and more importantly the extension of the Classico zone along with the Eastern zone designation, which is still thought in some minds as inferior, even though this is where Dal Forno is resident. Discussions are still on-going with the latest chapter involving proposed regulations surrounding the percentage of grapes destined for appassimento from specific vineyards: hillside sites (70% of production), flatland sites (35%) and intermediate sites (50%).

At present within the Veneto region only Recioto di Soave has long had the DOCG status, with Soave and Bardolino recent additions. Even now with Soave some producers have opted out due to perceived quality issues and the fact that for all DOCG wines only cork closures can be used, no synthetics nor stelvin.