

21 DAYS TO WINE: DAY 5

Effervescence in Wine Tasting

WINE: Adriano Adami Garbèl Prosecco Brut DOC NV

SCENTS: Yellow Delicious apples, Bartlett pears, Canned pears

SUPPLIES: A white napkin or piece of white paper (to observe)

21 DAYS TO WINE

CONSISTENCY

Along with color, what you see in consistency directly corresponds to how the wine will smell and taste and feel. So, what does consistency mean in the context of wine tasting?

CONSISTENCY REFERS TO HOW LIQUIDS HOLD THEMSELVES TOGETHER.

Think of when you use the word normally. I see it a lot in cooking and baking for sauces or cookie dough. It's a way of describing how liquids hold themselves together – density, viscosity, and even the texture: roughness or smoothness, and effervescence, which we are focusing on today.

VISUAL EVALUATION OF WINE

First we look at the color. Then look at how compact or clear it is, how it moves in the glass, is it still or bubbly? And if it's bubbly **how big are the bubbles and how long do they last?**

HOW ARE SPARKLING WINES MADE?

Going back to chemistry, the two main byproducts of fermentation are alcohol and carbon dioxide. For still wines the fermentation takes place in large, open-top or vented containers so that the CO₂ can escape. If you put a lid on it, pressure starts to build.

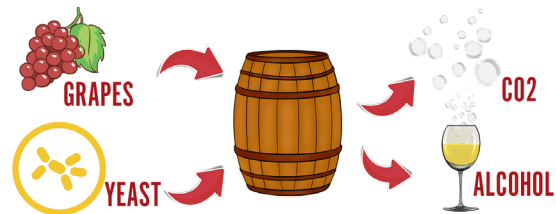
If you stop there this is called the **CHARMAT** method, and it is used for less expensive sparkling wines like Prosecco, the wine we are using for this lesson. This process creates **small to medium-sized bubbles that burst and disappear fairly quickly after you open the bottle.**

CLASSIC METHOD

In the case of Champenoise-style wines, like Champagne, Cava, Italian Metodo Classico, and Crémant, the wine is bottled with enough yeast and sugar to restart fermentation

causing even more pressure, often times for more than a year. Higher pressure in a smaller container causes tightly clustered, smaller bubbles. When you finally do open the bottle they **last much longer**, as they crowd to the surface and release CO₂.

The byproducts of Alcoholic Fermentation are Alcohol and Carbon Dioxide.



WHAT TO EXPECT IN SPARKLING WINE

Alcoholic fermentation happens when yeast feeds on sugar. As a very general rule, you can expect something lower in pressure, like Prosecco, to be slightly sweeter and silkier than Champagne, which is very dry and crisp.

Also in general, smaller, tighter bubbles indicate extra yeast and extra fermentation like the Champenoise method, and all the aromas that come along with it, like toasted bread, buttery biscuits, nuts and spices.

There are plenty of exceptions to this rule.

Winemakers stop fermentation early or add sugar and wine back into the bottle (*liqueur d'expédition*), so that when you evaluate a sparkling wine for sweetness, your nose and mouth will definitely come into play.

HOW DO I KNOW HOW SWEET OR DRY IT IS?

The label often indicates dryness with words like *brut* or *off dry*. For Champagne and sparkling wines coming from Europe, there is a standard sweetness scale for wine labeling. It is based on a measurement of residual sugar per liter. Residual sugar refers to the quantity of sugar remaining in the wine after alcoholic fermentation.

This standard in the labeling of sweetness levels is similar throughout the world.

Sweetness Levels in Sparkling Wine

- *Extra Brut* (0-6 grams/liter) = *Bone dry*.
- *Brut* (0-12 grams/liter) = *Very dry to dry*.
- *Extra Sec /Extra Dry* (12-20 grams/liter) = *Dry to off-dry*.
- *Sec/Dry* (17-35 grams/liter) = *Medium to medium-sweet*.
- *Demi-Sec* (35-50 grams/liter) = *Sweet*.
- *Doux* (50+ Grams/liter) = *Extremely sweet*.

PROSECCO

PRONUNCIATION: Pro-Seck-Oh

Prosecco is the name of a sparkling Italian wine and an appellation, a wine growing and producing region in northeast Italy. Prosecco must be made from at least 85% Prosecco (Glera) grapes and almost exclusively in the Charmat method.

The remaining 15% allows for a number of other grapes including Chardonnay, Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Pinot Nero, and local varieties Verdiso, Bianchetta Trevigiana, Perera, and Glera Lunga.

Prosecco is classified as either a DOC or a DOCG. Prosecco DOC must be grown and produced within the delineated areas comprising nine provinces in Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. This wine in this lesson is classified as a Treviso DOC, named for the village of Treviso.

The DOCG designates superior quality standards and includes the following classifications:

- Prosecco Conegliano Valdobbiadene Superiore
- Asolo Prosecco Superiore
- Superiore di Cartizze

Superiore quality standards refer to both growing and production, for example, hand-harvesting, as the areas are steep and terraced, hence the higher quality. Drainage in this northern, rainy region can be tricky for grape growing. These Proseccos are also more likely to fall into drier categories of the European sugar scale for sparkling wine, like Brut and Extra Brut, and occasionally Brut Nature.

The next time someone tries to tell you that Prosecco is sweet, you can hit them back with some facts and crack open a bottle of Prosecco Conegliano Valdobbiadene Superiore Extra Brut for emphasis!

Prosecco Col Fondo (lit. ‘with the bottom’, a reference to the lees sediment that rest at the bottom of the bottle), more frequently labeled as Rifermentato in Bottiglia, means that the wine has undergone a second fermentation in the bottle, and has not been filtered or fined, like Champagne. It usually comes in a crown cap, has a cloudy appearance and a sour almost cider-like quality.

NOTES OF PROSECCO

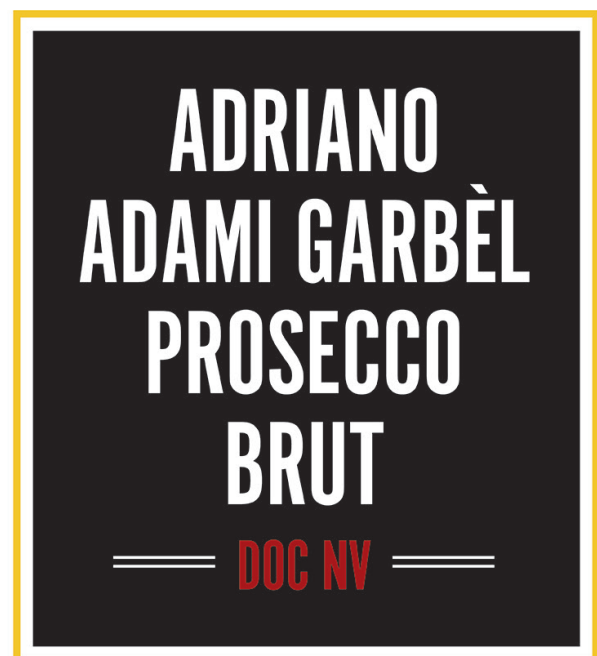
Prosecco is beloved for distinctive notes of:

Green apple

Pears

Lemon

Medium effervescence



TASTING NOTES

LOOK: Pale, straw yellow color with delicate, creamy effervescence

SMELL: Classic notes of pear and yellow apple

TASTE: Vibrant and crisp on the palate with medium, lingering finish reminiscent of the aromas

DISCUSS

This is a Prosecco Brut, which promises dry and balanced bubbles with up to 12 grams of residual sugar per liter. That translates to an element of silkiness on the palate and more intense fruity aromas and flavors. Try it as an aperitif, or more appropriately *aperitivo!* The slight fruitiness and glossiness combined with the clean sparkle makes it a perfect companion to salty snacks like peanuts or potato chips.

Cheers!
ANNIE

WINE NOTES

WINERY

Going on 100 years, Adami is a family-owned winery specialized in spumanti, or sparkling wines, specifically Prosecco Valdobbiadene DCG and Prosecco DOC Treviso.

WINEMAKING

This Prosecco DOC is made from GLERA grapes harvested from a combination of hillside and level vineyards known for chalky, clay-rich soil. The wine undergoes a second fermentation in pressurized steel tanks and is filtered prior to bottling.

READ MORE ABOUT SPARKLING WINE ON THE DIVINO BLOG:

divinonyc.com/blog/the-ultimate-guide-to-champagne-and-sparkling-wine/

my notes

