

IS TRENTODOC THE NEW CHAMPAGNE?

WSET DIPLOMA, UNIT 7 THESIS

ABSTRACT

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MOTIVATION FOR CHOOSING THE SUBJECT

Trentodoc is a young traditional method sparkling wine appellation in the northernmost winegrowing region of Italy. With a mere 8 million bottles produced annually and only four producers dominating the region, it is certainly an underdog in the world of sparkling wine. Nevertheless, its terroir, the breathtaking landscape as well as the changing climate and, needless to say, the high quality of the wines, are attracting producers also from outside the region, while the press is watching carefully. This is also true for the authors' family estate: as a historic and successful producer of still wine in the nearby region of Alto Adige, the family has soon realized the potential and opportunities of Trentodoc and, with the ongoing, global increase in demand for sparkling wine, the decision was made: a solid piece of land in Trentodoc was needed to finally make a footprint also in the world of premium sparkling wine. Finally, in 2016 10ha of land were purchased on a high elevation in the commune of Seregnano, the heart of the Trentodoc.

OBJECTIVE OF THE THESIS

The objective of the thesis is to give an overview of this up and coming appellation and compare its viticulture and winemaking to the icon Champagne: How similar is the soil? What about climate? What are the major varieties and general vineyard practices in relation to yield and harvest? Is vinification done differently and is malolactic fermentation generally common for both? These are just a few examples of the questions that will be addressed in the thesis. Thus, the sales and marketing positions are briefly being compared to finally sum it all up in the conclusion: what are its strengths and weaknesses of Trentodoc when compared to Champagne? Overall, the thesis illustrates some of the ideas the authors' family had when considering the purchase of the vineyard.

METHODOLOGY

An extensive research into the regions of Trentodoc and Champagne in relation to viticulture, vinification and sales/marketing was carried out. Various wine literature was analyzed in order to find answers to the questions posed. Different sources were used such as *wine literature* by Castellari, L., Tini, V., Coloretti, F., Zambonelli, C. (2013), Duteurtre, B. (2014), Eichelmann, G. (2017), Pederzolli, N., Spagnolli, F. (2011), Pessey, C. (2002) and Robinson, J. (2015). Also, *articles in wine journals/magazines* and research papers were useful, this including *Il Corriere Vinicolo* n14, Palazzo Roccabruno (2013), AA.VV. (2011), Ministero dell' Agricoltura, Disciplina di produzione dei vini a denominazione di origine controllata "Trento" [2002]. Certainly, the *internet* was researched extensively including websites such

as The Drinks Business, Vinepair, Civiltà del Bere, Master of Wine, Champagne, Trentodoc and many more. Furthermore, a *Vinidea Conference* was attended for a day that talked about traditional method sparkling wine with a special focus on Champagne. Also, a couple of *interviews* were done and certainly the *study field trip* to Champagne back in 2016 helped to get a better understanding of the region.

CONTENT

The thesis starts with an introduction where the objective as well as motivation for choosing the subject are being highlighted. The body of the thesis is divided into three major chapters, with its various sub-chapters. Chapter 2 talks about the viticulture and compares viticultural practices in Champagne and Trentodoc. A special focus on location & climate provides insight to those major prerequisites for a successful viticulture. Certainly, the soil types of the two regions are being described along with its varieties and clones. Other important factors that are being discussed are vineyard management, harvest and finally viticultural challenges. Chapter 3 focuses on winemaking and the various stages from pressing to the final dosage and styles are being discussed profoundly. While there might be some differences in final dosage and styles, the winemaking of the two regions tends to be fairly similar. In chapter 4 the sales and marketing strategy for the two regions are being compared: after a brief overview of the global market of sparkling wine the fact and figures of Champagne vs. Trentodoc are being highlighted. The conclusion gives an overview of the findings and outlines if, where and, how the two regions differ, in order to finally find an answer to the question posed: is Trentodoc *really* the new Champagne?

CONCLUSION

Finally, the thesis concludes that Trentodoc will *not* be the new Champagne, however, it can carve a solid niche in the growing sparkling wine industry at prices that are between Prosecco and Champagne with stylistic characteristics that rival Champagne.