

Ep 48 Wines of Prosecco with Flavio Geretto of Villa Sandi

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SPEAKERS

Janina Doyle, Flavio Geretto



Janina Doyle 00:07

Welcome to Eat Sleep Wine Repeat, a podcast for all you wine lovers, who, if you're like me just cannot get enough of the good stuff. I'm Janina Doyle, your host, Brand Ambassador, Wine Educator, and Sommelier. So stick with me as we dive deeper into this ever evolving wonderful world of wine. And wherever you are listening to this, cheers to you.



J Janina Doyle 00:31

Hello to all you wine lovers, and welcome back to another episode. Now today is all about Prosecco. And I have no idea why it's taken me so long to do an episode on this world famous, much loved sparkling wine. Now I thought if I'm going to talk to anyone, I should talk to somebody from one of the most important Prosecco producers in the Prosecco territory. So I'm joined today by Flavio Geretto, who is the global export director of Villa Sandi. So I'm really excited about that. We will not only be covering and tasting a selection of their wines, but we will be discussing the different classifications within the quite large Prosecco region, how they differ, the different soil types, what great foods go with different specific styles of Prosecco. And this is a really nice follow on episode after my last episode, which was on Rosé wine, because we are going to discuss the rather new category that is Rosé Prosecco DOC. Now, before I do that, do you know the grape variety of Prosecco? Well, I'm going to take us back a decade or so and tell you the story of the grape and the name change.

J Janina Doyle 01:53

So up until 2009, the grape was in fact called Prosecco. Now there's actually a town called Prosecco found in Trieste which is in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region and it is thought to be the birthplace of the Prosecco grape, hence the name. Now before 2009, the structure of the Prosecco territory was actually rather different. Now just to understand that and it's useful to know the terms there is a quality hierarchy based on geographical indications. At the highest level is DOCG, Denominazione di origine controllata e garantita. Then you have DOC, Denominazione di origine controllata and then IGT's which are Indicazione Geografica Tipica's. And at this point, there were lots of IGT's for instance, Prosecco de Veneto or Prosecco de Venecia and they had one DOC. So, they had already recognised this one DOC which was called Prosecco de Conegliano Valdobbiadene to be better. Now,

in 2009, they decided to promote all of these IGT's to just one region. Simply to call it Prosecco: Prosecco DOC, which is what we know it as today. And then they promoted Prosecco de Conegliano Valdobbiadene to the DOCG the top level quality of Italy. So, then of course, they needed to protect that region and also avoid any further confusion. And so, that is the point when the Prosecco grape got renamed Glera. Now for all of you who want to get a little bit wine geeky, there are in fact three major clones of Glera. I'm going to discuss that along with the other grape varieties that are allowed in the blend of Prosecco over on my Patreon channel, so patreon.com/EatSleepWineRepeat and they are lovely bite size episode for Patreon members. So please go and have a little look over there. We'll also be looking at the Rive's which are special hillside vineyards within the Conegliano Valdobbiadene region which is still a relatively new category and one of the top top categories really worth knowing about. So before going over to the chat with Flavio remember there is a transcript that will help you with some of the Italian names that are going to be mentioned. So you'll find that in the show notes. Without further ado, let's get to know Villa Sandi that little bit better.



Janina Doyle 04:30

Thank you Flavio for joining me I'm very very excited to be drinking this fizz so...



Flavio Geretto 04:35

A pleasure. Thank you for the invitation because it is always a pleasure to speak about the world of wine that is very big, not only about the winery that I represent, but in general it is always a big opportunity to share values and to share our opinion about this world that that is the best, the best way you can work now.



Janina Doyle 04:56

You know the thing I love talking about Prosecco is that for the average consumer, so many people are drinking it now regularly, but they have no idea the different categories, the different quality levels, the different styles, everything involved. So today, we're gonna run through a little bit, aren't we? We're gonna do a little bit of tasting and hopefully bring something new to the Prosecco drinkers that just tend to just pick up a bottle and not think about it. So I have already poured the Rosé, so I don't know, have you got some Rosé poured? Fabulous. Cheers, virtual Cheers to you. Now, we're going to talk about the Rosé in a second, but I have to ask you, how did you get into wine? It's always interesting. Did you have a special wine moment? You are Italian. Quite clearly you were drinking it from birth, right?

F

Flavio Geretto 05:45

Yes, yes, for sure. I can tell you that. First of all, I am very lucky because I was born in a family was in in the wine business for many generations, it was a small business because I was born in the provence of Venice but, it was the opportunity for me from where I was very young to go in the vineyards, to see the harvest and to fall in love with these particular world, that as I told you, it is a rich of stories of not only of wines but also stories of people, of gentlemen that can can create a history, okay. And as I told you from that, I decided that my my way, also in the professional point of view was to continue to work in this particular business. So I decided to study economics but graduating in marketing wine, and also I in the meanwhile, I made a sommelier studies, the WSET number two because I like the this world and from 2015 I am in Villa Sandi and now I am the Global export director of this company, that is a leading producer of Prosecco, a family run business, but one of the most important brands in the Prosecco region coming from the real area because you know that it is unusual now to, Prosecco is a very big brand, but we don't have a lot of families involved for many generations in the Prosecco business, and Moretti Polegato family is one of them.

J

Janina Doyle 07:20

How many generations have they been in charge? Because this beautiful, spectacular Villa that I say to everyone, you must Google it's it's beautiful, has been around since the 1600s, hasn't it? So there's a real history with Villa Sandi, but this family, how long have they been around for?

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Flavio Geretto 07:36

They are in the wine business for for many generations. Now we are in the third generation because the family, it was founded by the father of Mr Giancarlo Moretti Polegato, who is our president now. The third generation is already on board. We have Diva Moretti Polegato, our global brand ambassador but after coming back to the villa. The villa is dated at 1622 because it is the year in which it was built by the Sandi family. Sandhi was a very nobile family from Venice. Do you know that after the fall of the Roman Empire, there was the establishment of La Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia. It was a big state, inside of Italy that covered a big portion of Italy and also in the northeast of Italy. And lasted for a long time, because last week was 1600 years from the foundation of the Republic of Venice. So in Italy, after the Roman Empire, the single state that lasted more time, after the fall of the Roman Empire, as I told you, and the Moretti Polegato family bought this Villa, it was originally a summer residence, to completely refurbish to the old splendor and to make a celebration to this family because they could put and maintain the big tradition of viticulture in the, in the area of Prosecco, where Villa Sandi is now.

Because, you know, they used to have a very big property. But also there was a big number of vineyards to produce quality wines to use for the parties in Venice and also to give everyday wine for the workers because at that time, all the jobs that was in the countryside were made by hand, so they needed to be strong.

J Janina Doyle 09:30

And so, funny enough, I know that there are underground cellars in this villa right?

F Flavio Geretto 09:37

Yeah, so when they found this villa they could find an underground cellar that was dated one part when the villa was built, and one part was dated to the First World War, of 1916 and 1918 because the villa was at the headquarter of one of the headquarter of the Asburgic army.

J Janina Doyle 09:57

Okay.

F Flavio Geretto 09:58

So they used the Villa and some grottoes in order to arrive to the Piave river without, avoiding the bombs. You know there is a big history about this, also for the British people because there were a lot of a British soldiers that came and fight during the First World War, this part of Italy. In fact, there is about a 10 kilometre from the villa, there is also a very famous British cemetery. So it is, there is a lot of story behind also, the villa is behind the Piave river that is very historical because of during the First World War was the border between Italy and Austria. And after the, when Italy could win also that part of the land behind the river could come back Italian. But from a wine point of view our president when they could see the underground cellar, they decided to start with the production of a metodo classico, traditional method that is made up of Glera. That is the grape of Prosecco but with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. So we have a 1,500,000 storage of bottles, in storage or in our cellar. It is 1.5 kilometre that connect the villa with the winery. So it is something very, very unique in our region.

J Janina Doyle 11:18

Amazing. Yeah, for sure. And so how many bottles of traditional method sparkling wine are you actually making?

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Flavio Geretto 11:27

We are, we are selling about a 100,000 bottle every year but the storage is bigger because we store about one million and a half bottles because we have different maturations. So, you have from 24 to 72 months of maturation per bottle.

J

Janina Doyle 11:46

Very interesting. Now obviously we need to point out we're talking about traditional method. And in Prosecco, the Prosecco territory, Prosecco DOC, Prosecco DOCG, they are made with the charmat method, which I'm sure we'll probably touch on in a second. But it is good to point out for those people that think that anything that comes from you know, the Prosecco territory is the the fresher style, there our traditional method made wines also to possibly try. But let's talk about this Rosé. As I said to you didn't I really wanted to talk about Rosé because it's only since last year, that Prosecco DOC Rosé has been allowed to be exported out of Italy, right? We are drinking the Il Fresco Prosecco Millesimato 2020. Ahh I should probably point out, I was gonna say how fresh this wine is. One of the most amazing things about you guys, Villa Sandi, is that you don't actually bottle everything straight after harvest, you produce to order effectively. Do you want to talk a little bit about that? Because I think that really sets you apart slightly with the real freshness that you guys can offer.

F

Flavio Geretto 12:52

Yes, first of all, I would like to point out that every grape, every wine has its own identity. So, as I told you before, the identity of Prosecco, when you have a quality Prosecco, the freshness must be the distinctive element. So, you know that the the concept of of time in every wine is is very important. But so, if you have a red wine, the excellence is when the maturation is is very long for more time. Also in Tradition methodo, you need many months in order to have the excellence. For Glera and Prosecco is completely the opposite. So we need to preserve this freshness, our stock is as fresh as possible, because when the wine is fresher, you can perceive all the most important characteristic of the parts. In fact, we have this unique, also the name of the wine is Il fresco. And we have these very unique methodo, 100% of our production, to chill the must after the pressing. So we don't do the bottling after the harvest but the most important thing is that we don't produce the wine after the harvest because if you store the wine after the harvest waiting for the second fermentation to become a sparkling wine, you lose the freshness because the maturation that the wine will have in the tank we change the potential freshness of the Glera you have inside. So we decide to use this method to chill the must after the

pressing. It means that when the skins are pressed, it is only a soft pressing. We have a machine that puts the temperature from 15-18 degree that is the harvest temperature, to zero degree in half an hour so in this way it can fill a lot of tanks of grape juice.

J Janina Doyle 14:43
Right so no fermentation at all. Okay.

F Flavio Geretto 14:46
No we don't have fermentation and we stop the fermentation. For this we have a big storage of grape juice, and only when we decide to produce the sparkling wine we heat the temperature so the fermentation starts in a natural way because the yeast's inside the must start the fermentation but we add immediately also the yeast to make the second fermentation. And as you know, the second fermentation is from the wine to the sparkling wine because the yeast eat the sugar, there is a liberation of co2, but it happen in a closed tank. The name is autoclave, and so this co2 will go to the inside of the wine, making the wine sparkling, okay, so in this way we can have different styles, depending on the quantity of sugar that we have in one litre of wine, but the very good news is that we have a wine that is fresh every time we produce the wine. The wine is always fresh like if we started production after the harvest. In this way we could maintain the most important characteristic of the Prosecco. That is the freshness. And in these wine, that is the prosecco rosé we could maintain our philosophy but we can add a lot more because I can tell you that to the prosecco rosé DOC now is on fire.

J Janina Doyle 16:13
I... yes, I can imagine.

F Flavio Geretto 16:15
It's on fire because it is something brand new, we could change the protocol of the DOC Consortium. And we started to sell this wine in November 2018. So 2020 is the second harvest. So there is a lot of curiosity behind this wine. Because it is the second harvest, because rosé like a category is on fire as well. But I think that also the Prosecco aim is very big, and to ever a rosé version that I want to remind you, that it is made with glera that is the grape of Prosecco, with a quantity of a Pinot Noir that must be produced inside the Prosecco region from 10 to 15%. So it means that the Glera can be from 85 to 90% and the Pinot Noir inside from 15 to 10%.



Janina Doyle 17:08

And how are you making it rosé? Are you adding in the Pinot Noir at the end?



Flavio Geretto 17:14

Yes yes, we do like this because for Pinot Noir, the maturation that the wine can have is positive. It is not negative like in Glera because in this way the fruits can come out in a very good way. So what we do, we fill the the autoclave with the quantity of the Prosecco we need. For example this wine 2020 is 90% of glera and the 10% of Pinot Noir. So we will fill 90% of the capacity of the autoclave with Glera. We add the yeasts and immediately later together with the Glera we put the 10% of Pinot Noir. So this second fermentation will start immediately and we will obtain immediately this particular wine and so all the wine will become sparkling together.



Janina Doyle 18:03

Okay, that's how it's done ladies and gentlemen. Just like that and it is delicious. We've already commented on fresh so I feel like I can't use that word anymore. It's already been stolen but for me yeah loads of watermelon, loads of summer fruits and it really is floral which is no surprise, Prosecco in general, the Glera grape gives you these kind of acacia flowers and melon and pear notes but of course because this is a rosé you get more of that, of course, the red fruit is really delicate. I'd like to point out for everybody. Of course it's the very famous Provence colour it's the ballet slipper, the onion skin, the very pale salmon pink colour so it looks beautiful. It's what everybody wants to see in their glass and yep super tasty. I've had a look in the UK it looks like this rosé I've seen it Bellavitashop.co.uk they sell most of the Villa Sandi wines.



Flavio Geretto 18:57

Yes yes yes the Bellavita for selling online and we are in Selfridges for the shops.



Janina Doyle 19:03

Ah Selfridges as well okay fabulous.



Flavio Geretto 19:05

It was the first choice like Prosecco rosé in Selfridges and it will be the most important Prosecco rosé in Italy shop because you know that in London there is, do you know Italy is

a chain of restaurants with a shop inside that you can find all over the world. They are speaking about Italy because the name is E A T A L Y so it is Eat Italy.

J Janina Doyle 19:36
Someone's playing on words there.

F Flavio Geretto 19:39
Yes, yes, yes, yes. But they are in New York, they are in Rome, they are in Paris and the 28th of April there will be a big opening in London as well. And the only Prosecco rosé they will have is this so.... And in many restaurants of London we have in London about more than 100 restaurants with the villa Sandi. And we are with the new opening placing a lot of by the glass with this Prosecco rosé.

J Janina Doyle 20:07
Yeah. Rosé in general is really food friendly and then the Prosecco is so, so good with food, what would you like to pair with this specific wine?

F Flavio Geretto 20:19
This specific wine for sure during the good season, so, spring and summer, it is a very, very good like an Apéritif. And if you have an Apéritif for example, in a pool or in a good square, I can expect that that that you can use also some fruits for example, strawberries pineapple and something like this that can it can go very well with this wine but for sure it is also as as you told before, a food friendly prosecco because it is a structure that is a very pleasant acidity that make it very good for tempura, for example, or this can be very good with a Thai cuisine or with the Chinese cuisine.

J Janina Doyle 21:04
I would like this with a maybe a bit of sashimi.

F Flavio Geretto 21:08
Sashimi is perfect.

J Janina Doyle 21:09
Sorry, it's not the sort of thing you have in your fridge typically. But that is what I'm really wanting right now.

F Flavio Geretto 21:17
Yes, I think that sashimi is very popular because I can tell you for example, I have my oldest son is 15 and he loves sashimi. He loves the sashimi. And he want every time to go, please let's go to the Japanese restaurant. The new generation like also to go outside the normal Italian cuisine that is very good. And it is our favourite for sure.

J Janina Doyle 21:41
You guys have got very good taste. What can I say very good taste? Yeah. Right. So hopefully, people are going to go out and search this specific rosé the Il Fresco Prosecco Millesimato 2020, Millesimato, that's for anybody who doesn't realise that is what means vintage in Italian, and this is about £15.

F Flavio Geretto 22:02
And also, you were speaking about the colour that is a nuance colour etc. It is the protocol that give us are the guidelines. You can't produce a pink colour Prosecco, the colour of Prosecco is of this nuance because it is the protocol that decided that what it must be, the provincial we can say colour of the Prosecco DOC rosé.

J Janina Doyle 22:27
Ah so every rosé in general will be very similar to this if people are getting a Prosecco rosé, they should expect this this kind of colour?

F Flavio Geretto 22:34
There is a range but they are similar. There can be some differences. Some are more deeper, some are clear, but for sure not pink colour.

J Janina Doyle 22:42
Okay. And also Prosecco rosé needs to be aged a little bit longer right before being released like 60 days, minimum 60 days.



Flavio Geretto 22:50

Yes 60 days. And normally, the prosecco takes a minimum one month, but I can tell you that for Villa Sandi, there is no chance because we used to produce our Prosecco with the minimum 75 days of fermentation in tank and for the DOCG and Cartizze we can arrive also more than three months, three months and a half.



Janina Doyle 23:12

You guys are taking it seriously. This is serious Prosecco. Shall we talk about DOC and DOCG. And the differences within the Prosecco regions, perhaps you can explain a little bit more for someone who maybe doesn't understand the the hierarchy of Prosecco.



Flavio Geretto 23:29

Okay, perfect. Thank you for the for this question. I will try to give you the most important differences because there are many but I can tell you that in general, the prosecco territory is very wide because it is around 33,000 hectares. And it covers two regions of Italy, the regions of the northeast of Italy. We are speaking about Veneto and Friuli region, okay. And Veneto is the region where the capital city is Venice. So if you have the idea of the boot that is Italy, in the northeast, there the Arctic sea, you have Venice, so the region of Prosecco goes from that area. Inside this area, we have a province, the province of Treviso, okay. That is around 50 kilometres northwest from Venice and in this province is the very original production area of Prosecco. It is where Villa Sandi, that is in Crocetta del Montello, has our headquarter okay. And inside the province of Treviso, if you produce the DOC you can write in the wine Treviso DOC because a winery and grapes come from this subzone, but the good thing is that inside this provence Treviso, we have also the two DOCG areas that are Valdobbiadene Conegliano or simply Valdobbiadene and Asolo. So the difference if you have the label in front of you. It is very important because in Prosecco if you can read very well the label that you can understand immediately the difference because the DOCG area both Asolo and Valdobbiadene, we can say that Valdobbiadene is the capital city of Prosecco. It is not very easy to pronounce because of Valdobbiadene, many times in the UK people say Valdobbiadene but it is the town where there is the best expression of the Prosecco and I can tell you that in terms of extension, the Valdobbiadene Conegliano DOCG is around 8000 hectares. Asolo is around 1800 hectares.



Janina Doyle 25:40

Yes, there's very little of it around in, certainly in the UK and I imagine that makes sense

anyway, how small it is. An eighth the size of Valdobbiadene, Okay.

F

Flavio Geretto 25:51

In fact, if you consider the DOC Valdobbiadene and Asolo are very small, the production is lower, because in the DOC you can have normally 18 tonnes per hectare, in the two DOCG you can have 13.5 tonnes per hectare of production okay. And the difference that a consumer can perceive immediately is that if you have a DOCG wine, it means in the label the word Prosecco will be always followed by the name Superiore, because if a prosecco is a DOCG is superior, okay, if we consider Villa Sandi in general you can see that the bottle of DOCG Prosecco have also the Villa, the Villa Sandi engraved in the bottle. All our bottles are only for Villa Sandi so personalised bottle. But if you have in front of you the prosecco and the Asolo and the Valdobbiadene you can see that the two DOCG have the engraved Villa Sandi name and Villa on the glass, okay.

J

Janina Doyle 26:53

They are beautiful bottles actually. But yeah, I hadn't realised that the imprint of Villa Sandy on the the DOCG bottles so...

F

Flavio Geretto 27:00

Because you know that our claim is Villa Sandi, the iconic premium Prosecco, because it was something that we would like to do in order to give evidence that we are in the premium category because you know, prosecco is very big, like a name but it is overcrowded like a category. So you need to stand out from a crowd and to make people to understand that they are drinking something very different. So if you want to, we can drink the Millesimato and the Asolo?

J

Janina Doyle 27:31

Whilst you were talking, I already poured. I've literally got, I've literally got both of them in my hand right now, ready to analyse and dissect. So to point out to people who sadly cannot watch me with both glasses in my hand. Sorry bad luck for you guys. As we pointed out there's the two DOCGS. So, Flavio has very kindly sent me a bottle of each. One from Valdobbiadene. This one happens to be a vintage 2020 and then the Asolo which is actually non vintage, am I, I am looking at the bottle, I'm correct, it's non vintage right the Asolo?

F Flavio Geretto 28:05
No, it is non vintage but it is a bio-diversity wine, if you see the back label.

J Janina Doyle 28:10
Yes, Villa Sunday for bio-diversity. Yeah, protection of soil, air and water. So what does that?

F Flavio Geretto 28:16
Yea, no, it is our philosophy because we have a very big effort in order to respect the nature and all the activities that we do we do under the name 'Villa Sandi for life' that you can see we have the symbol on all the labels, on all the back labels. So you have after the name Brut, you can see the symbol Villa Sandi for life. But the most important expression of this, is the certification. Biodiversity because it is a philosophy to try to have the very low impact to the environment with what we do. So it is not to say no we don't use anything, but it is to try to help the nature to do its own job. So in this way we don't need to use chemicals. For example we have in all of our vineyards some Insect Hotels, that are sort of five star hotel for insects okay.

J Janina Doyle 29:13
I love that. Is this five star hotel for insects named?

F Flavio Geretto 29:18
Insect Hotel is the name because for the first certification was in Germany and so maintain this. And here we give a room, an house to different kinds of inserts in order to invite them to do their job in the nature. So one eats another one, they fly around, etc. So it is a very big opportunity. And they're also proof of how healthy is our vineyard because you know that all the insects, you can give them an house, but if the environment is not natural, they will go out naturally. So after some weeks or some months, they will not live there anymore. So, it is only that you can do with them but maintaining a very natural environment. For example, we did a lot of studies with the University of Padua in order to have a very strong roots in our in our plants, because you know that also the vineyard is like us. So, if we have a healthy life, if we do sport and we eat in the proper way okay we don't need the medicines and the it is the same for the plants. So if they are strong they can live in a natural way, they will not need a lot of chemicals okay. So the proof of this biodiversity, it is what we try to have in all our vineyards. This wine the Asolo is a

certificate biodiversity but all our vineyards are made in this. I can tell you that the Villa Sandi is also the only private producer who owns vineyards in all the denominations because we have 200 hectares of property. We have winegrower, winegrowers that give us a lot of grapes and we come from around 1900 hectares because the Moretti Polegato family owns also other brands of Prosecco but the Villa Sandi is the most prestigious one because it is the one dedicated to mainly to restaurants etc. We have also La Gioiosa for the off trade that you can find also in supermarkets in the UK market but for Villa Sandi the majority of the grapes that we use come from our vineyard property. So it is very important this. Coming back to the different, because I am drinking the wine in the meanwhile, between the Valdobbiadene and the Asolo.

J

Janina Doyle 31:47

I, do you know what, for me. Of course, let's let's point this out so people really understand this. They're both very fresh. But you know so the Valdobbiadene for me has this really lemon peel nature, very floral. This is actually exactly what I tend to expect from a high quality Prosecco. It's even got a slight almond skin note, a slight nuttiness, but the Asolo is more mineral, it's actually a little bit more chalky and much more even a bit more melon, well, these are my tasting notes it'll be interesting for you to tell me what you smell and taste and maybe the difference in the soils or climate aspect and why they're so different.

F

Flavio Geretto 32:35

Yes, the two soils are very different okay. But I can tell you that in the Valdobbiadene, what the the element that I like a lot is that the elegance of the wine. The wine is very very elegant, there is a more complexity if we consider the DOCG because the lower production give us a give a space also to tropical fruits that can be you tell melon but for example, pineapple is very, very evident. In my opinion, you can perceive also some elements of peach, but what I like particularly is the taste in the mouth, because of these pleasant acidity that we could have in the Prosecco Rosé, now is a creaminess. Creaminess in the in the mouth and the so, this makes this wine also very good to use during the meal, but for sure, better for Apéritif for fish, for this kind of use because all prosecco is very good for Apéritif. If you come to Treviso people drink only Prosecco so also with a T-bone. You will have a Prosecco so please when you will come to visit us...

J

Janina Doyle 33:52

It has some acidity. So I'm going to tell you a story quickly. I have been to Treviso and I've been in between Conegliano and Valdobbiadene. And I recommend to anyone, my gosh, the hills, the landscape, rolling hills, it's just sensational. I mean, this is a UNESCO World

Heritage site as well isn't it. But still wine is made. There is actually ironically for people just to point out there is still Prosecco, but I don't think any of that actually comes to the UK. But there are, you know, wines, the Veneto wines, obviously, that you can and I managed to have, I'm just saying there was red wine around for me, I know I'm probably going against the grain and you're probably very upset with me, but I actually did have a steak when I was there, and I did actually have a very delicious red wine which I was very surprised about because I didn't think that that would be offered, it existed. But now I know that I've actually been very naughty and I should have stuck with Prosecco. So I'm sorry about that.



Flavio Geretto 34:53

No, I can tell you that in the Asolo region, in particular the Asolo denomination that are also very good red wines. Also Villa Sandi produce, for example, Corpore that is a Merlot 100% and it is a red wine with a maturation in wood because the terroir is very rich and that's why coming back to the Asolo prosecco superiore, we have this minerality, we have this richness, we have also the colour that is a deeper yellow in consideration of the of the Valdobbiadene and so, I can tell you that in my opinion, Valdobbiadene is more elegance, it is a very elegant, if we consider a women very elegant women is with the jewels etc. is the Valdobbiadene. The Asolo is a little bit more casual. So a women very well dressed but with a little bit more stronger character, okay, because I define Asolo a food friendly Prosecco. In fact, if you want to pair with food, in my opinion, Asolo is perfect. And speaking about the UK, I always say that, in my opinion, the Asolo Prosecco superiore is the perfect pairing with the Friday Fish and Chips.



Janina Doyle 36:05

Okay. Okay. You don't need to tell us twice? We're sorted. Tick! I'll get that sorted. That's what we're having tonight or tomorrow. Done.



Flavio Geretto 36:13

Today's today's Friday.



Janina Doyle 36:14

Exactly. And it's a Friday night and what happens on Friday night? Party time. So yes, if I have to order fish and chips. I shall. Okay, good. Thank you. I'm following your instruction. What would you pair them with the Valdobbiadene?

- F** Flavio Geretto 36:27
Valdobbiadene is perfect with with fish, in my opinion, every kind of fish but in particular with seafood because it is a wine that this creaminess, okay, can I help you a lot to pair very well with the structure of the fish if you want. You can use also with the particular first courses from Italy, made with pasta with, for example, also a risotto with a prosecco for example, but also with vegetables, or mushroom can be very well. So...
- J** Janina Doyle 37:01
White asparagus right is a perfect pairing?
- F** Flavio Geretto 37:03
White asparagus also. In my opinion, but actually I think that white asparagus can be the right pairing for another kind of Valdobbiadene that is Cartizze.
- J** Janina Doyle 37:15
Well, Okay, we need to talk about Cartizze in a second. So I'm going to put that on pause. I'm just gonna say drinking the Valdobbiadene again, I want some prawn dimsum. I guess I'm sticking on the Asian front. I mean, to be honest for me Asian food and Prosecco always always a winner. Always full stop, any anyone who wants anything Asian, prosecco will do, no matter what. It's a simple choice. But yeah, I want some prawn dimsum with that and I still haven't quite decided what I want with my Asolo. I'm gonna, I might get back to you in a second. Do you want to begin the story of the amazing Grand Cru site? I suppose unofficially Grand Cru, the Cartizze Hill, the one hill.
- F** Flavio Geretto 37:58
Oh, yes. Yeah, with big pleasure because you know that the Cartizze is the best expression of the wine produced in the Prosecco region because, Cartizze first of all, is the name of an area in the town of Valdobbiadene. As I told you before, Valdobbiadene - capital city. Five small villages in Valdobbiadene are part of Cartizze. Cartizze is a hill of only 106 hectares. So you'll see the top extension of Prosecco. 33,000 hectares. Cartizze is only 106. And the big story is that there are 142 owners so it means that the average property is less than one hectare.
- J** Janina Doyle 38:43

You have like 1.5 right?

F Flavio Geretto 38:45
Yea we have 1.5.

J Janina Doyle 38:48
You are winning, yes, winning the race.

F Flavio Geretto 38:53
No, we are winning and also the name is La Rivetta. La Rivetta that is a small channel of water. Because you know it is in this area you have a some water coming from the ocean and going down but very very small. And that the name takes from this. So the characteristic of Cartizze, first of all, is that the name of Cartizze is big in Italy and in the bottle of Cartizze so you don't have the name of Prosecco. The word Prosecco is missing, you have only the name of Valdobbiadene Superiore.

J Janina Doyle 39:26
Yeah, so basically it's for people in the know. You gotta know. You gotta know how good Cartizze is to get it right?

F Flavio Geretto 39:32
Because, so basically, they don't know it is a Prosecco because I remember during a food show. I did a food show five years ago. I was there and I say, Do you want to try some Cartizze? No, please give me a Prosecco. The answer was.

J Janina Doyle 39:45
Oh how funny. You're like, Look, this is literally the best Prosecco you're gonna have. I'm sure once he understood he he had a sip didn't he.

F Flavio Geretto 39:54
In fact, and also if you see the bottle is completely different because we wanted to celebrate the difference of this wine in consideration of the others. Here the production is

very very small. For the low it is 12 tonnes per hectare but it is very difficult to arrive to this. It is on the hills, very steep. We don't change the lines but we change the plants when they die, so we have a very old plants in our wine estate. The oldest is 85 years old.

J Janina Doyle 40:24
It's not bad, doing all right, fantastic.

F Flavio Geretto 40:27
Okay, so and from this you carry, it's a quality wine, in particular, our La Rivetta, that we are very proud to say that it was the first Cartizze Brut style. That means with a very small quantity of sugar, only 10 gram per litre.

J Janina Doyle 40:42
Oh yeah. Am I right in thinking that Cartizze in general tends to be extra dry, to have that extra little bit of sweetness, am I right?

F Flavio Geretto 40:49
No it was dry, more than extra dry with Yes, Yes, Yes, with 27 gram per litre because normally was a wine for celebration for Christmas. Perfect wine to pair with the Panettone. You know Panettone, typical cake from from Italy for Christmas.

J Janina Doyle 41:08
I know this cake very, very well. Very well. We're very well acquainted.

F Flavio Geretto 41:14
I think you know very well Italy, and Veneto also.

J Janina Doyle 41:17
I actually I adore that region, I spent a decent amount of time and I have to say, I'm sorry for anyone who lives in Venice, but I spent four days in Valdobbiadene and I just fell in love. It was actually a very, very important, a special wine moment for me. And then we went to Venice afterwards. And I just hated it. It was just too many people. It was too much madness. And after spending four days in the hills, I just I just needed to get back. I wanted

to come back to Valdobbiadene. So yeah, yeah, I know Veneto quite well.

F Flavio Geretto 41:47
Janina, Next time you come to Valdobbiadene you will be our guest.

J Janina Doyle 41:52
Oh yes. I'm coming to that beautiful beautiful villa.

F Flavio Geretto 41:56
Beautiful villa but in Valdobbiadene where we have our wine estate we have also Locanda, the name is Locanda Sandi with the restaurant and several rooms, in the in the middle of the vineyard. So it is a very good place.

J Janina Doyle 42:09
You do not ask me twice. In fact and where is it, you have a gym in the vineyards right?

F Flavio Geretto 42:13
The gym in the vineyard is in front of the villa. In front of the villa we have the gym because we wanted to give it to all the people living in our town the opportunity to create some exercises and also to, every 100 metre they have also some example of what they can do in order to stay in shape okay? But the Locanda is in Valdobbiadene because the Villa is in, the town is Crocetta del Montello and it is from Valdobbiadene around 10 kilometres. And the entrance of Valdobbiadene you have the Villa Sandi wine estate Valdobbiadene wherever you have, we have our Locanda Sandi with the restaurants and the cellar rooms and there is also a wine shop with an enoteca where you can have an Apéritif before lunch or dinner with a fantastic landscape you can sleep there, you can enjoy with a bicycle.

J Janina Doyle 43:11
Don't sell it too much otherwise as soon as everyone can fly again you're just gonna have a queue. You'll have a queue out the door, everyone is just gonna be there waiting. Oh dear, but can you tell me a little bit more about Cartizze, just because it is so special. Now you've already said that you know once you've gone from DOC to DOCG and now to

Cartizze that the yields are much lower. You have to produce much lower yield which obviously helps the quality.

F

Flavio Geretto 43:36

Yes, it is particularly good for the quality of the wine because this hill is protected by some mountains okay. So you don't have never hard wind, you don't have a lot of hard rain okay and you have a small wind during all the day. So, if you go there you can understand that what happens, you have a very good diurnal of diurnal between night and day okay, but also during the day so this gives to the wine, a particular character, okay, in which you have all the characteristic of the wine that we tasted before. So these tropical elements, these peach, pear and these very creaminess in the in the mouth, but also very, very deep flowers that you can enjoy seeing also the the landscape of Cartizze because I can tell you that the central area of the UNESCO site is Cartizze. So you have to consider that it is a sort of small a hill inside a big area.

J

Janina Doyle 43:45

I've heard that to buy a hectare of land in Cartizze is like the most expensive place of land you can buy in the whole of Italy.

F

Flavio Geretto 44:48

It is very difficult. First of all to find because if you have a hectare of cartizze or a portion of land you don't sell because the grapes are very very expensive so because also Cartizze not all the owners are producers okay. Yeah but if it happens, it is very very expensive. In fact, Giancarlo, our president could buy the Cartizze in 2010 okay because first of all that there were some inheritance and they were four brothers, they were fighting I saw they they wanted to sell and he took the opportunity to buy immediately this, but also I can tell you that La Rivetta in Cartizze is something very unique because if you will come you will see that you have a fantastic landscape around you and you can see down. But there is also there one room where it is possible to sleep. Only one room.

J

Janina Doyle 45:42

Ohhh one room. That's all I need. That's all any. I just need one.

F

Flavio Geretto 45:46

And also it is it is also the most awarded wine because it is the only wine produced in the

Prosecco region with 11 times Tre Bicchieri in the Gambero Rosso guide okay. So it is the only one and also in the Decanter we have good rates in all the most important but at the end, it is something very special. It is the one of the few prosecco that you can find in the luxury wine list all over the world.

J Janina Doyle 46:13

And when you mentioned all that just to let everyone know it's about £30 a bottle for the Cartizze, Vigna La Rivetta. I sadly do have a bottle but I didn't open it up for this because I wasn't sure if we were gonna have enough time. So now I'm desperate. I'm gonna have to open it up over the weekend, so I can't tell people what it tastes like guys, but I'm gonna leave you in suspense so my Instagram in a little while after this podcast is released. I will shall also give you my tasting notes on the very, very delicious Cartizze. Yeah, it's it's special. Now you said white asparagus is a perfect pairing with the Cartizze.

F Flavio Geretto 46:45

Yes yes yes, My opinion yes, because you know Cartizze compare also these very strong tastes okay. And I know that well asparagus is very popular in UK because you produce a lot. Different from Italy where the most important production is for white asparagus. And the white asparagus is better with the Valdobbiadene Prosecco superiore because it is a little, the taste is good, but the structure is a little bit lower than white asparagus.

J Janina Doyle 46:53

Okay, good to know. Now I realise, just one question before we'd slowly finish off. If you had to categorise the soil types, the Cartizze hill versus say Valdobbiadene and then Asolo. Those three different areas, do they have just very specific soil types?

F Flavio Geretto 47:35

The Cartizze is its a morainic soil and what is important about Cartizze is that there is not a lack of water. In fact if you go to Cartizze you will not find water spots because it is a very generous land. The characteristic of this land is that when you have the rain, the water permeates because it is like a small sponge, okay, go downstairs but stay at the soil level when you have the roots, and the roots can use this water for many days. So, this create a very rich wine because we have everything. In fact if you're going to Cartizze also the the height of the plants, is not very low because we don't have problem with water. If you go for example, in some parts in Bordeaux, for example, they are very small, very small distance from the land because there is lack of water. In Prosecco you don't have

and also because the plants are very old. So if you needed to establish just one plant or you needed to continue also in the old way. The pick up of the grapes is made only by hand okay. And coming back to the soil of Valdobbiadene for sure we have a mixture of morainic and the clay soil in the Valdobbiadene region. In the DOC it is a mainly clay soil, okay in Asolo we have a soil that is mineral because we have also richness of stone, because it is next to the Piave River, in particular our wine estate. So it makes this also different characteristics, all the different prosecco we have. I can tell you that the different Prosecco comes also from another thing, from the quantity of a wind and water you have in the different part of prosecco because as I told you, the Prosecco land is very wide. So from one part to another part that can be very important difference.

J

Janina Doyle 47:59

Okay, super interesting. I love that, tick. Now I fully understand. Now just to finish of I want everybody who is listening to hear from you, so they can enjoy Prosecco to its fullest. What temperature should they be drinking their Proseccos at and do you have a favourite wine glass that they should be putting it in to get the most out of it?

F

Flavio Geretto 49:54

For me, the the best temperature is at 10 -12 Celsius degree because it is important to serve chilled. Okay. Yeah, I suggest always to have also an ice bucket to put the bottle with the ice and maintain the temperature that you can have. The glass, I know that in UK the flute is still very popular but honestly is not my favourite because I like a little bit wider, because in this way you can perceive, also the nose is more perceivable and also now we have a wider glasses in which you can perceive the perlage as well because when you have a glass of bubbly, okay, it is important to see also the perlage because it is part of the why and if you can see the perlage and the perlage is very refined, you can understand that that you are drinking a very quality Prosecco. The perlarge is one of the most important proof of the quality. If you have a small bubbles, it means that perhaps you are drinking a very quality Prosecco if the bubbles are very big it means that the second fermentation was very quick. So you, at the end of the day, it is not the best Prosecco that you can drink but you know that the secret of prosecco is that it is a democratic wine, that you can drink in every occasion. In every opportunity, for example the Cartizze, I like the best moment of the day that I like to enjoy the Cartizze is alone, after dinner.

J

Janina Doyle 51:32

Alone. Don't disturb me. Leave me alone. This is an important moment, right?



Flavio Geretto 51:36

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, you can enjoy for sure after dinner with your friends, if we had dinner together, but sometimes when I am at home, and I want to relax a little bit. I do like this. But it is food friendly also Cartizze, but in my opinion, after dinner can be the best.



Janina Doyle 51:57

Okay, that's very good to know. There we go. So people have got some tips when they're going to treat themselves with a beautiful bottle of Villa Sandi Cartizze so people can see in the show notes all the information where they're gonna be able to get that bottle from and of course if you follow me on Instagram, then you're going to be able to see the actual bottle, Cartizze, which I will make sure I put up. Flavio, thank you so much for just taking us through the little journey, the hierarchy, the different flavours, Asolo versus Valdobbiadene, so people can understand because they are the same price. I think we didn't comment on that. They're around £16 from the Bella Vista shop. So now people can choose do they want the more mineral honeyed, a bit more intense style, which is Asolo or do they want a little bit more elegant, fruitier style which is Valdobbiadene. So people will now know. So yeah, now I think you've made everyone Prosecco professionals.



Flavio Geretto 52:52

I hope, I hope it was my pleasure to speak about our wines and I thank you for the opportunity because you know that it is always a good time to speak about premium Prosecco.



Janina Doyle 53:04

Absolutely. And you know what, it's always a good time to drink premium Prosecco. Cheers Flavio. Thank you, Cheers to you.



Janina Doyle 53:17

Now the Charmat method got mentioned during this podcast and that is the method in how Prosecco is made, but we didn't go into detail. To explain it a little bit more. Firstly, you may actually hear it called several things: Tank method, Methodo Italiana, Cuve close, Marinotti method, and of course, the Charmat method. Now, the history behind this is it was actually invented and patented in 1895 by an Italian winemaker from Asti. So that's up in the Piemonte region. His name was Federico Martinotti. Hence the Marinotti method. And you're going to find within the Prosecco region, and a lot of Italy, they will

often call it the Marinotti method because he originally came up with the first design. Now it was pretty well adapted for commercial use, but it was actually using wooden tanks. Then it was in 1907, that a French winemaker called Eugene Charmat. Hence Charmat method. He refined, shall we say, and added some improvements and patented that. So he created the autoclaves that we use today, which is made from stainless steel. Now if we look at the Charmat method compared to the Méthode champenoise, so the traditional method they do in Champagne, they both go through two fermentations. So in Prosecco, you take your base wine, your already made wine, and you put it in an autoclave for a second fermentation. So an autoclave is basically a large closed pressure tank. So it's going to keep the bubbles in because a byproduct of fermentation is carbon dioxide. So if it's trapped in a tank or trapped in a bottle, of course those bubbles are going to dissolve into the wine. That's what we want. That gives us the fizz. So this second fermentation happens in a big, large closed tank, it's then pumped off of the lees and it's cooled and filtered whilst under pressure, and then it is bottled while still under pressure. Now the idea of the Charmat method compared to the méthode champenoise, is it's all about the fruit, fresher flavours, and less of the autolytic characters that come from lees ageing. So your biscuity notes that you might find in Champagne. Now the wonderful advantage of the Charmat method is the labour costs are much less. Because you are filtering under pressure, you don't have to do the riddling which is the turning of the bottles to slowly coax the lees and the yeast to the neck of the bottle as you turn that bottle upside down, so you can extract it for, then the process of disgorgement, which is a special way of freezing that yeast in the neck of the bottle and then popping it out. But none of that is necessary with the Charmat method. So it makes things faster and of course, cheaper. This method is also used for Lambrusco or Asti in Italy. And also German Sekt often uses the Charmat method.



Janina Doyle 56:12

Right well, it's wine quote time and I wanted to bring you one that would allow you to reflect on your life choices and your health possibilities. Granted actually this is not really a wine quote, but what I'm sure you've seen on a T shirt or on a coaster, and it's so factually states:



Janina Doyle 56:29

I shall leave you all to ponder on the profoundness of that statement. Right thank you everyone for listening. I hope that's got you right in the mood for a lovely glass of Prosecco. Guys, you know what I'm going to say if you haven't liked, shared, subscribed, left me a comment, do it. Do it now. I will love you forever. You're all amazing. Thank you for your support as always, and until the next episode, Saluti and cheers to you.



Janina Doyle 56:29

"A banana is 105 calories. A glass of Prosecco is 80. Choose wisely."