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To the Origins of Wine

Wine will never end to amaze us. Its bond with man and his history are so strong and well rooted, as to make it very difficult to know when the love for the beverage of Bacchus started in time. Authors of the past have left to us, with their writings, countless proofs both about wine and its origin or supposed birth. A clear sign that wine was, since the beginning of civilization, a fundamental part of the culture of man, protagonist and essential element of many aspects of life, both sacred and profane. There is no era, in fact, in the history of humanity in which wine has not been mentioned in documents of those times, always emphasizing the fundamental and central role for man and society. It is not the only beverage, of course, to have played such a fundamental role in the history of man - we could think, for example, about beer, tea and coffee - however it is undeniable wine played a special role.

In his long relationship with wine, man has tried to keep a memory and to pass to posterity the emotions and facts about places and grapes protagonists of wines poured in his glasses and cups. He has always tried - as much as he could - to understand when, where and how the beverage of Bacchus had its origin from. An evidently difficult research and frequently determined by chance and unexpected discoveries which allowed man to progressively and a reliably understand its origin. In every era, in fact, man has always tried to understand the mystery of the origin of wine, also by providing concrete facts, proved and reliable, as well as more or less founded stories and legends. The research about the origin of wine is still progressing now and, just like in the past, we are adding new elements to the complex case of its history, trying to define in a more and more reliable way the era of its birth.

Archeology, of course, is one of the main disciplines allowing us to *travel back on time* to the discovery of customs and social organizations of past times. The valuable contribution of archeology, in general terms, therefore not only referred to wine, allows us to better understand the evolution of man and how we

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get up to here. It allows us, as for wine and food, to understand the evolution of taste, production and cultivation techniques. Besides trying, of course, to define the birth of wine - or better to say - to find the most ancient evidences allowing us to understand the origins and the customs of human beings. In the course of time, thanks to archeology, we have in fact been successful and of course we will continue to do that - to discover the origin of wine in remote eras and places, every time allowing us to go back in time even of many thousands of years.

This is what has recently happened, thanks to the discovery of new archaeological finds of remote times and that, unequivocally, are associated to wine. In two archaeological sites in Georgia exactly at Gadachrili Gora and Shulaveris Gora, not so far from the capital city Tbilisi - have been found jars in which, unequivocally, was contained wine. The amazing thing is that it was a wine the way we think it today, that is exclusively produced by the fermentation of grape juice from vines belonging to *Vitis Vinifera Sativa* species, that is the wine vine, the same we still use today. Jars, or better to say, the evidence of wine contained in them, dates the discovery back to 5800-6000 BC and gives Georgia back the record of being the place where the wine took its origin from. It should be said, in fact, previous archaeological discoveries moved the origin of wine in Iran, with finds dated back to 5400-5000 BC and that beaten the record of Georgia.

This discovery has a huge meaning if we think it moves the origin of wine back in time of about one thousand years. This means that man, eight thousands year ago, cultivated vine in order to harvest grape in order to make wine. We do not know, of course, the use they made of wine at those times, it was certainly consumed as a beverage, however we do not know its role in social life and nutrition. The fact these jars - better to say, the eight fragments of them - contained wine allows us to understand that, since those times, wine was an integral part of the life of man. It should be said, for the sake of completeness, it is however

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not about the most ancient discovery about the use of fermented grape juice. This record, according to the present archaeological discoveries, belongs to China where have been discovered finds associated to the production of fermented beverages based on grape juice.

These discoveries are dated back to 7000 BC and proof the use of fermented grape juice added to honey, rice and hawthorn berries. It is something we could today defined as aromatized wine or a wine drink, therefore it is not exactly pure wine, that is exclusively produced by the fermentation of grape juice. I have always had a strong passion for history and archeology and a news like this is amazing to me. If we think about the history of wine and its role in culture and humanity, news like this one allows us to better understand what we pour in our glasses today and why we do that. It is amazing to know man has established such a strong bond with fermented grape juice in remote times, as to make it a beverage of high cultural and social importance, something survived up to our days. Man makes and consumes wine since 8000 years, something simply amazing. The magnificent and fundamental contribution given by archeology and that will continue to give is simply remarkable. I am sure they will be again successful in the future - by chance or not, it does not matter - and tell us about the origin of wine, by traveling back in time to the discovery of the birth of this extraordinary and unique beverage. It is amazing to know it simply is about fermented grape juice and that since 8000 years, or more, is part of man and his history.

Antonello Biancalana

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WINE TASTING

Contrasts of Rossese and Uva di Troia

Liguria and Apulia compared in the glasses of our tasting by contrast of this month. Two grapes with a unique character and making wines of interesting personality

Liguria and Apulia are the protagonists of this month's tasting by contrast, by means of comparing two red berried varieties typical in the respective regions. Having coastlines for all of their land extension, the influence of sea climate is frequently evident in the wines produced in these two regions in different ways and expressions. Liguria and Apulia make quite different wines and with distant characteristics, both because of climate and grapes generally cultivated in their respective vineyards. In general terms, Apulia wines - both white and red - have an evidently more strong character than those made in Liguria, a characteristic particularly true for red wines. Sun and temperature play an evidently significant role: we should in fact notice that Apulia is one of the regions in Italy having the greatest number of sunny days as well as high temperatures.

Rossese and Uva di Troia are the protagonists of this month's tasting by contrast. Two red berried varieties very different one from each other, with evident differences in every aspect of the sensorial evaluation. They are in fact this kind of differences to let us to better understand, thanks to the immediate evidence of contrasts, their respective qualities and wine making peculiarities. Structure in wines obtained from Rossese and Uva di Troia represents a substantial difference, of course not the only one as we will detect remarkable differences in other organoleptic aspects as well. One of these certainly is the olfactory profile in which the impact of aromas recalling fruits expresses different characteristics of intensity and quality. At the taste Rossese and Uva di Troia reveal distinct and different characteristics, in particular astringency and structure, last but not the least, the effect of alcohol.

Rossese

Rossese is a red berried variety found in the territory of Liguria and it is mainly known for being used for the production of *Denominazione d'Origine Controllata* wines of Rossese di Dolceacqua and Riviera Ligure di Ponente Rossese. This varietu is mainly associated to the village of Dolceacqua, in province of Imperia, not so far from Provence n France. Rossese has always been considered the main red berried grape of Liguria and its presence in this region is known since many centuries despite its origin is not completely clear. For a long time it was in fact believed Rossese was a grape originating from Greece, however it is a supposition having no concrete proofs. This theory was also supported by the typical cultivation method adopted for Rossese - *Alberello*, that is "bush" - a very common technique used in areas

with a hot climate, such as South Italy. This ancient cultivation method has in fact supported the idea of a possible introduction of Rossese in Liguria by Greek colonizers.

Indeed, the adoption of the *alberello* is a forced choice because of the steep and difficult land of Liguria, something also ensuring a good keeping of humidity at the base of vines thanks to the covering provided by the leaves. Today we can say, thanks to the research done on Rossese's DNA, this variety corresponds to Tibouren, a grape common in French Provence, therefore proving its Greek origin or, maybe, from the Middle East. If in France this grape is mainly used for the production of rosé wines, in Liguria Rossese is mainly used for the production of reds and with extremely interesting results. Rossese, in Liguria, is vinified both in inert containers and in wood containers, including the barrique. Its wines can evolve for some years in bottle, while giving results of interesting complexity, however they are mostly consumed in youth in order to better appreciate their organoleptic finesse.

Uva di Troia

Among the most representative and significant red varieties of Apulia, Uva di Troia has been successful - in particular in recent times - to prove its wine making value by giving wines of good quality. In the past, something also happened to other varieties of Apulia as well, Uva di Troia was frequently used to give color and structure to wines with a light body, a usage shared in past times with other grapes of South Italy as well. Uva di Troia is mainly found in the provinces of Foggia and Barletta-Andria-Trani and it is very likely the grape originates from this territory. This variety is in fact found in many Denominazione d'Origine Controllata wines of this land, including Castel del Monte and Cacc'e Mmitte di Lucera. In these wines Uva di Troia is blended to other varieties of Apulia, however it is also successfully used and with remarkable results in mono-varietal wines, proving to be quite versatile in the aging in cask and with good longevity over time.

There are many suppositions about the origin of Uva di Troia, however there is no certain proof for any of them. The most common hypothesis support the idea this variety comes from Greece, introduced in these lands in past times. One of the theories, although we should better talk about legend, believes it was Diomedes - a mythological hero of ancient Greece who participated to the Trojan War - to introduce this grape in the territory of Apulia. A more probable theory believes this grape takes its name from Troia, a village in the province of Foggia, not so far from Lucera, and where it is still found today. Another theory believes the grape comes from Kruja, in Albania, in the prefecture of Durrës, known in ancient times as Croia then adapted to the dialect of Apulia in *Troia*. The hypothesis about the origin of the Apulian grape could also be supported by the alternative names used to call Uva di Troia, including Uva di Canosa, Vitigno di Barletta and Nero di Troia, all being villages and towns of Apulia. Wines produced with Uva di Troia are characterized by intense and deep colors - this explains why this grapes was used in blends - pretty high in alcohol and a quite low crispness,

as well as appreciable astringency.

The Tasting

In our tasting for contrast we will evaluate, as usual, wines respectively and exclusively produced with the grapes subject of our study, Rossese and Uva di Troia. Choosing wines exclusively produced with these grapes could not be simple as in the disciplinary where their use is allowed can also be used other grapes as well. As for Rossese, our choice will be made for Rossese di Dolceacqua, area in which are certainly produced the best wines from this variety. The wine produced with Uva di Troia we will choose for our tasting belongs to an important Denominazione d'Origine Controllata area of Apulia: Castel del Monte Nero di Troia, not to be confused with the Riserva style which is a DOCG wine instead. We will make sure both wines are vinified in inert containers, such as steel tanks, in order to ensure the best organoleptic expression possible and belonging to the last produced vintage, having no more than two years of aging. The two wines will be served in tasting glasses at the temperature of 17 °C (63 °F).

After having poured the wines in the glasses, we can start the tasting by contrast from the appearance, that is color, nuances and transparency. The first wine we will examine is Rossese di Dolceacqua, by observing the color at the base of the glass and holding it tilted over a white surface. The wine from Liguria shows a brilliant ruby red color and if we put an object between the glass and white surface, we will notice a moderate transparency. Nuances, observed at the edge of the glass towards the opening, reveal a ruby red color, sometimes having a light hue. Let's now pass to the evaluation of the appearance of Castel di Monte Nero di Troia, also in this case by holding the glass tilted over a white surface. The Apulian wine shows an evidently more intense and deep color than Rossese and transparency, by putting an object behind the glass, is evidently lower. Nuances of the wine produced with Uva di Troia, observed at the edge of the glass, where the wine is thinner, shows an intense ruby red



The color of Castel del Monte Nero di Troia

color.

Rossese and Uva di Troia make wines with quite different olfactory profiles. Aromas expressed by Rossese are generally fresh and direct, whereas in Uva di Troia are mainly perceived more complex and fuller aromas. Wines produced with the red grape from Liguria are generally appreciated for the aromas of red fruits in which are perceived cherry, raspberry, strawberry and blueberry. In Rossese wines we also have, of course, aromas recalling flowers and, on this regard, we can usually perceive aromas of violet and cyclamen. The olfactory profile of Uva di Troia are quite different and here we perceive fuller aromas with a *darker* character. Wines produced with the red from Apulia generally express aromas recalling black cherry, plum, blackberry and blueberry, usually being complex and mature. As for the expression of flower aromas in Uva di Troia, in its wines we mainly perceive violet.

Let's proceed with our tasting by evaluating the olfactory profiles of both wines, starting from Rossese di Dolceacqua. By holding the glass in vertical position and without swirling, let's do the first smell in order to evaluate the opening of wine, that is the initial aromas emerging from the glass. We can perceive pleasing and intense aromas of cherry, raspberry and strawberry to which follow cyclamen. After having swirled the glass, in order to favor the development of the other aromas, the olfactory profile of Rossese di Dolceacqua is completed by blueberry, plum, black currant and, sometimes, rose. Let's now pass to the glass of Castel del Monte Nero di Troia and evaluate the opening of the wine. From the glass we will perceive fuller aromas of black cherry, plum and blackberry followed by violet. After having swirled the glass, the olfactory profile of Castel del Monte Nero di Troia is completed by blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, frequently a pleasing touch of carob.

Let's now proceed with the evaluation of the gustatory profile in both wines by starting, just like the previous phases, from Rossese di Dolceacqua. Take a sip of this wine and evaluate its attack, that is the preliminary gustatory sensations perceived in the mouth. We will perceive a pleasing astringency, not so intense however balanced with the other sensations, a moderate roundness and a non particularly intense crispness. Alcohol is well perceptible and in the mouth we can perceive flavors of cherry, raspberry and strawberry. Let's take now a sip of Castel del Monte Nero di Troia and evaluate its attack. Here roundness is clearly more evident and astringency more aggressive, acidity is not so perceptible also because of the effect of alcohol giving an evident warm sensation. Correspondence to the nose is very good: we can in fact perceive intense flavors of black cherry, blackberry and plum.

The last phase of our tasting by contrast is about the final sensations left in the mouth by both wines after having swallowed them. The finish of Rossese di Dolceacqua is persistent, leaving in the mouth pleasing flavors of cherry, strawberry and raspberry, with a good clean sensation and sometimes a slightly bitter touch, very agreeable. In the mouth can also be perceived the good balance between roundness and astringency of tannins. The finish of Castel del Monte Nero di Troia too is persistent, however in this case the sensation of roundness and body is stronger than

in the wine from Liguria. It will be clearly perceived flavors of black cherry, plum and blackberry, as well as a pleasing astringency, however balanced by alcohol and roundness. Let's finish our tasting by taking a last sip of both wines, Rossese di Dolceacqua first and then Castel del Monte Nero di Troia: differences are evident on every aspect.

Wines of the Month



Rosa Rosae 2016 Guerrieri Rizzardi (Veneto, Italy)

& Corvina (80%), Rondinella (10%), Marcobona (10%)

Price: € 10.00

Score ♦♦♦ ★

Intense onion skin pink and nuances of onion skin pink, transparent.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of cherry, raspberry and strawberry followed by aromas of cyclamen, rose, plum and peach.

Crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable.

Persistent finish with flavors of cherry, raspberry and strawberry.

3 months in steel tanks.

Pasta with fish, Fried fish, Fish soups, Sauteed white meat



Fiano di Avellino 2016 Villa Raiano (Campania, Italy)

Fiano

Price: € 15.00 Score ♦♦♦♦

Pale straw yellow and nuances of greenish yellow, very transparent.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of apple, plum and citrus fruits followed by aromas of pear, peach, hazelnut, hawthorn, broom, pineapple and mineral.

Crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable.

- Persistent finish with flavors of apple, plum and peach.
- Aged in steel tanks.

fried fish, Pasta and risotto with fish and crustaceans, Sauteed fish, Sauteed white meat



Taurasi 2012 Villa Raiano (Campania, Italy)

Aglianico

Price: \in 15.00 Score $\diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit$

The Intense ruby red and nuances of garnet red, little transparency.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of plum, black cherry and blackberry followed by aromas of violet, blueberry, vanilla, chocolate, mace, tobacco and menthol.

Tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

Persistent finish with flavors of black cherry, plum and blackberry.

- Game, Roasted meat, Stewed and braised meat, Hard cheese
- 🚹 Game, Roasted meat, Stewed and braised meat, Hard cheese



Marsala Superiore Garibaldi Dolce Baglio Baiata Alagna (Sicily, Italy)

Grillo, Catarratto, Inzolia

Price: € 10.00 Score ♦♦♦ ★

o Intense mahogany and nuances of mahogany, little transparency.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of rancho, dried fig and citrus fruit peel followed by aromas of caramel, almond, date, leather and nail polish.

Sweet and round attack, however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

- Persistent finish with flavors of dried fig, date and caramel.
- At least 2 years in cask.
- Dried fruit tarts, Confectionery



Marsala Vergine Baglio Baiata Alagna (Sicily, Italy)

Grillo, Catarratto

Price: € 13.00 Score ♦♦♦♦

Brilliant amber yellow and nuances of amber yellow, transparent.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of rancho, hazelnut and dried fig followed by aromas of citrus fruit peel, vanilla, leather, licorice, honey and nail polish.

Crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing roundness.

- Persistent finish with flavors of dried fig, hazelnut and honey.
- At least 5 years in cask.
- Aperitifs, Hard and piquant cheese



Franciacorta Rosé Extra Brut Millesimato 2010 La Montina (Lombardy, Italy)

Pinot Nero (85%), Chardonnay (15%)

Price: € 28.00 Score ♦♦♦♦

- Brilliant salmon pink and nuances of salmon pink, transparent, fine and persistent perlage.
- Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of cherry, raspberry and bread crust followed by aromas of strawberry, tangerine, apple, yeast, blueberry, cyclamen and hazelnut.
- Effervescent and crisp attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable.
- Persistent finish with flavors of cherry, raspberry and tangerine.

- Refermented in bottle on its lees for at least 30 months.
- Stuffed pasta with meat, Roasted white meat, Roasted fish, Mushroom soups



Franciacorta Pas Dosé Riserva Baiana 2008 La Montina (Lombardy, Italy)

Chardonnay (55%), Pinot Nero (45%)

Price: € 40.00 Score ♦♦♦♦ ★

Pale golden yellow and nuances of straw yellow, very transparent, fine and persistent perlage.

Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of apple, banana and bread crust followed by aromas of plum, hawthorn, praline, orange, croissant, yeast, raspberry, butter and honey.

Effervescent and crisp attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable.

- Persistent finish with flavors of plum, apple and praline.
- Refermented in bottle on its lees for at least 70 months.
- ncasted white meat, Roasted fish, Stuffed pasta, Stewed meat



Alto Adige Sauvignon Blanc Castel Giovanelli 2013 Kellerei Kaltern - Caldaro (Alto Adige, Italy)

Sauvignon Blanc

Price: € 25.00 Score ♦♦♦♦ ★

Brilliant straw yellow and nuances of greenish yellow, very transparent.

Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of gooseberry, elder flower and nettle followed by aromas of

peach, pineapple, mango, pear, apple, broom, tomato leaf, grape-fruit and mineral.

Crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, agreeable.

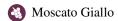
Persistent finish with flavors of gooseberry, peach and mango.

Fermented in cask, 10 months in cask.

Mushroom soups, Vegetable soups, Pasta with fish, Stewed fish, Broiled crustaceans



Alto Adige Moscato Giallo Passito Serenade 2013 Kellerei Kaltern - Caldaro (Alto Adige, Italy)



Price: € 38.00 - 375ml Score ♦♦♦♦

Pale amber yellow and nuances of golden yellow, transparent.

Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of grape, white rose and passion fruit followed by aromas of lychee, candied fruits, mango, apricot, date, quince, sage, almond, citrus fruit peel, honey, lavender and hints of vanilla.

Sweet and round attack, however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

Persistent finish with flavors of grape, passion fruit and mango.

Made from dried grapes. Aged for 24 months in cask.

Confectionery, Dried fruit tarts, Hard and piquant cheese





Il Rogito 2015 Cantine del Notaio (Basilicata, Italy)

Aglianico

Price: € 12.70 Score ♦♦♦♦

Intense cherry pink and nuances of cherry pink, moderate transparency.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined, starts with hints of black cherry, blackberry and strawberry followed by aromas of raspberry, cyclamen, blueberry, rose, plum and hints of vanilla.

Crisp attack and however balanced by alcohol, good body, intense flavors, pleasing roundness.

Persistent finish with flavors of black cherry, blackberry and blueberry.

12 months in cask.

Stuffed pasta, Roasted fish, Fish soups, Roasted white meat, Legume soups

Score ♦♦♦♦



AGLIANICO DEL VULTURE

Aglianico del Vulture La Firma 2012 Cantine del Notaio (Basilicata, Italy)

Aglianico

Price: € 31.20 Score ♦♦♦♦ ♦

Intense ruby red and nuances of garnet red, little transparency.

Intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant, starts with hints of black cherry, blackberry and violet followed by aromas of plum, blueberry, vanilla, raspberry, tobacco, chocolate, cinnamon and menthol.

Tannic attack and however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors, pleasing crispness.

Persistent finish with flavors of black cherry, blackberry and plum.

12 months in cask, 12 months in bottle.

🚯 Game, Roasted meat, Braised and stewed meat, Hard cheese

EVENTS

News

In this column are published news and information about events concerning the world of wine and food. Whoever is interested in publishing this kind of information can send us a mail to the address Events@DiWineTaste.com.

NOT JUST WINE

Aquavitae

Review of Grappa, Distillates and Brandy



Acquavite di Prugne Nannoni (Tuscany)

Pitted President Plums

Price: € 38.00 - 500ml

Limpid, colorless and crystalline.

Intense, clean, pleasing and refined with aromas of plum, cherry macerated in alcohol, honey and almond, with almost imperceptible alcohol pungency.

Intense flavors with perceptible alcohol pungency which tends to dissolve rapidly, pleasing roundness, balanced sweet-

Very persistent finish with long flavors of plum and cherry macerated in alcohol.

Distilled in a batch steam operated alembic still.

Wine Guide Parade

September 2017

The best 15 wines reviewed in our Guide and voted by DiWine-Taste readers

Rank	Wine, Producer	Votes
1	Farfalla Zero Dosage, Ballabio	8660
2	Montefalco Rosso Vigna Flaminia-Maremmana	7227
	2015, Arnaldo Caprai	
3	Montefalco Rosso 2015, Arnaldo Caprai	6510
4	Anima Umbra Grechetto 2016, Arnaldo Caprai	6401
5	Romagna Sangiovese Superiore Le Grillaie 2016,	6210
	Celli	
6	Portofino Çimixà L'Antico 2016, Bisson	6037
7	Portofino Ciliegiolo 2015, Bisson	5935
8	Aglianico del Vulture 2014, D'Angelo	5917
9	Montefalco Sagrantino Valdimaggio 2012, Arnaldo	5844
	Caprai	
10	Portofino Çimixà Villa Fieschi 2011, Bisson	5834
11	Canneto 2013, D'Angelo	5774
12	Anima Umbra Rosso 2015, Arnaldo Caprai	4664
13	Montefalco Rosso Riserva 2013, Arnaldo Caprai	4605
14	Romagna Albana Secco I Croppi 2016, Celli	3524
15	Chardonnay 2016, Arnaldo Caprai	2509