

Grappa from Friuli

Introduction

The essence of and the idea behind this science cookbook is based on an instructive wine fair at Copenhagen Hospitality Collage, where flavorful wines from the Friuli region were introduced. Besides giving an insight into the various wines, the wine tasting aimed to present some of the best grappa of the region and its undervalued possibilities of use in cooking. Moreover, the grappa was presented to some of the school's principals, who were inspired to include it in teaching. After tasting the grappa as well as other distillates and experiencing their high sensory qualities, there was no doubt that they would be interesting elements to include in the science cookbook. During the tasting, an interest was also shown for the particular region from where the grappa is produced; the Friuli region in Italy.

The Region and its History

The birthplace of these grappa, the Friuli region, comprises its very own cultural and historical identity and is located in north-eastern Italy, bordering on Slovenia and Austria.

The region overlooks the Adriatic Sea and is surrounded by high mountains enclosing many different kinds of landscapes. These great varieties of landscapes matches the region's rich and diverse cultural heritage, which treasures a complex history and merger of civilizations. Until 1796, the territory was called Venetia - between Verona in the west and Pola in the east, and since then, it has to a great extent been influenced by both the Latin, German and Slavic cultures.

Today, the region may be divided into three parts, including Veneto and Friuli, which belong to Italy, and Istria, which

is part of Croatia. Before the Second World War, all parts belonged to Italy, which was created as a state in 1861. Due to its conferencing culture, Friuli may be characterised as a small universe of many different traditions: it is the 'land of contrasts'.

Food and Beverage

Despite the great influence from the neighboring cultures, which also finds expression in its cuisine, Friuli has its very own heritage to be proud of as well. The origins of this gastronomic culture may be characterized as both basic and down-to-earth, including excellent raw materials of high quality. Located between the Alps and the Mediterranean Sea, Friuli offers some of the most delicious and tasty vegetables, grains, meat, cheese, seafood and beverages made of grapes. More specific, the northern Friuli receive a significant amount of rain every year and this has nourished the growth of verdant meadows, which in turn support livestock, where ham and dairy products are mainstays.

In the Tagliamento River valley, corn and other cereal grains are grown, whereas, in the south with the Adriatic, a great variety of seafood, in particular eel, are to be found.

On a distance of 400 km between Verona and Pola, a multitude of grapes thrives that can be used for excellent wine making. This territory is also known as a lovely place, where the community meets and enjoys the local delicacies.





The History of Grappa and its Origin

Grappa is a unique Italian drink with a variety of forms that can be traced back the Middle Ages. Grappa was originally produced in the town, Bassano del Grappa, located in Italy's northern Veneto region, where from the characteristic drink gets its name. Traditionally, it is made from the so-called pomace, which are a by-product of the winemaking process, and started as a rough drink, made with what was available, potent enough to get the farmers in yearly days through the cold winter months. Subsequently, the drink has been refined and today, it is known around the world.

In terms of distilling, the Italian Friuli region stands out, as it in particular has a long tradition of distilling tasty grappa and with surprisingly good results of a very high quality.

The Bepi Tosolini Distillery

It was in 1943 that Bepi Tosolini began experimenting with refining grappa, in which connection he found a way to store his locally produced distillate in ash wood barrels. The result was a distillate that was crystal clear, in contrast to original distillates, which were turbid after being stored in oak barrels. Also the aroma of the grappa improved in a significant way.

This was the beginning of new era for the Italian drink and today, after more than 70 years of development and production, Bepi Tosolini distillery is the market leader of producing high quality grappa. The distillery is managed by the son Giovanni, who owns and operates the business together with his three children, Giuseppe, Bruno and Lisa.

During the last 15 years, the grappa has evolved and become a 'meditation drink', which has found its natural place alongside other premium distillates.

Grappa and Distillation

Grappa is produced by distilling 'vinaccia', which is the Italian version of the waste material from wine making, also called pomace.

The quality of the grappa is very dependent on the quality of raw material of the 'vinaccia', wherefore it is important that it is of a high quality, fresh as well as juicy, and must quickly go from the winemaking to the distillery.

In the early 80s, the Italian distillate industry made a revolutionary discovery: It discovered that distillation of grape must and skin made it possible to obtain a smooth Eau de vie, reminding of freshly harvested grapes, with an alcoholic percentage of approx. 40 %.

This was called MOST® by Bepi Tosolini and characterises a distillate made of the must from a variety of Italian grapes. This is made of only the most aromatic grapes, which are squeezed very gently. Under controlled temperature conditions, the must is fermented along with the grape skin for a few days and/or up to a week, depending on the grape composition. Hereafter, the grape must is ready for distillation.

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