

TOCAI FRIULANO

D.O.C. COLLIO 2005



Venica & Venica is a family-owned Estate in the Dolegna district of Collio in the Friuli region in the north-eastern corner of Italy. The Venica family has owned the Estate since 1929, when the winery was founded by the grandfather of the current owners. During the 1930s, the Venica wines were already well known, and were sold in distant regions. At this time, Venica began to modify its vineyards, moving to hillside tiers to gain maximum sunshine for its vines. Until 1975, the father worked alone; he was then joined by his two sons, Gianni (agronomist) and Giorgio (cellarmaster). Throughout the 70s, there was replanting of the vineyards with an upgrading in quality; this was intensified in the past 15 years, during which time these two ambitious winemakers experimented widely, investing in new plantings and state-of-the-art equipment for the winery (airbag presses, stainless steel temperature-controlled vats and barriques). The goal was to maximize the natural characteristics of the wine: the fruit, the acidity and the bouquet. In their 30 hectares (74 acres), they produce 230,000 bottles yearly.

Winemakers: Giampaolo and Giorgio Venica

Grape Variety: 100% Tocai Friulano, not to be confused with the Hungarian Tocai or the Tokay d'Alsace. The density is 3,500 vines per hectare (1,435 per acre). Tocai Friulano is the most widespread varietal in Friuli. In the past it was consumed daily (1 to 2 liters per day per person), and was so popular that it was considered the wine of the masses. The vines are 10-13 years old.

Vinification, Maturing and Aging: There are two separate vinifications of the Tocai grapes here. About 40-60% of the grapes (the ratio changes from year to year according to the sugar and acidity content) follow the normal "white vinification": the grapes are softly pressed in a pneumatic press (Willmes), the must is decanted statically at 50°F (10°C), and afterwards the alcoholic fermentation is activated at 68°F (20°C), lasting for 7-10 days. The other portion of the grapes, after de-stemming, are cold macerated ("criomaceration") on the skins for 14-15 hours at 46°-50°F (8°-10°C). The pressing of the grapes and the alcoholic fermentation follow. Two different wines are obtained: one is light, fine, "elegant", the other is rough, typical and rich. The proper blending gives the desired style sought for by the Venica brothers. The wine is bottled in March (no malolactic fermentation) and the wine "grows" in the bottle with its tertiary perfumes for 5 years.

Alcoholic Content: 13 %

Total Acidity: 5 g/l

Serving Temperature: 10°-12° C (50°-53° F)

Serving Suggestions: Antipasti, fish, white meats