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Franciacorta and the Pinot Blanc – The Experience of Mirabella



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Franciacorta is one of the most reputed areas for sparkling wines in Italy.

The regulation for the production of Franciacorta DOCG Wines authorizes the usage of four grapes: Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc and Erbatmat.

Today we will focus on Pinot Blanc and we will analyse the Erbatmat variety later on, in a specific future article.

Despite the usage being authorized since the beginning of the denomination, Pinot Blanc is not much used by winemakers.

The reason of this “lack of appeal” is mainly due to the difficulties of growing of this variety. Because of its thin skin it is easily attacked by diseases like botrytis and acid rot. But Pinot Blanc has a great advantage: it’s a variety that keeps a high rate of acidity, a characteristic that, in the past, was not so relevant, but now, is becoming more and more important.



In fact, the climate change is giving winemakers new, huge problems. Global warming is forcing them to anticipate the harvest's period with the consequence of lack of phenolic maturation on the grape. Also, the acidity is compromised by the increase of the temperature. So, to try to compensate (at least partially) the maturation problems, more and more producers are now looking at Pinot Blanc with new eyes and they are thinking to add a percentage of Pinot Blanc to their Franciacorta to increase the global acidity. So they are planting (or thinking to plant) new hectares of this variety.

In the past, in Franciacorta there were few producers that gave importance to his variety. One of them was Mirabella that since the beginning of its history reserved a primary position to Pinot Blanc.

Mirabella was established in '70 by Teresio Schiavi, father of Alberto and Alessandro that now are managing the company. Teresio, in his recherche of a personal style of Franciacorta wines, decided to focus on Pinot Blanc and Mirabella became the producer known for the usage of this variety.



We had the chance to taste two sparkling wines made with 100% Pinot Blanc; a kind of “signature” of Mirabella: Demetra.

VSQ Demetra Pinot Bianco Brut Nature s.a.

This product cannot wear the Franciacorta label due to the regulation that allows a maximum percentage of Pinot Blanc of 50%. Despite the vintage not being mentioned on the label, the grapes have been harvested in 2018 and the disgorgement happened in 2022.

24 months on yeasts. 10% of the wine has been vinified using used oak barrels.

With a greenish yellow colour, it is characterized in the mouth by the pleasant creaminess of the bubbles and the great balance, between the acidity and sapidity, give a decisive persistence. The hints of yellow-fleshed fruit combined with those of flowers and citrus bring together smell and taste. A wine with great enjoyment.

The second sample was the same wine but more aged.

Reference vintage 2015, disgorgement 2018.

The passage of time leads to more mature notes of yellow and tropical fruit. The bubbles are creamy and the acidity is integrated and balanced. The long persistence closes with a soft finish. A delicate wine in its scents and elegant on the palate.

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