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OF PUGLIA



PUGLIA SVEVA®  
CONSORZIO DI TUTELA  
VINI DOC CASTEL DEL MONTE

# History of Vine and Wine

The age-old viticultural tradition of Apulia is supported with many documents and artifacts, some of which date back to the ancient Greeks. Nowadays they are kept in the Museum Jatta in Ruvo di Puglia. Even Pliny the Elder and Martial used to praise the qualities of Apulian wine, whose production – already widespread – increased more under the rule of **Frederick the II**, thanks to the introduction of new types of grapevines from the East.

Canne della Battaglia >



Vineyards in Castel del Monte



^ Monumental wine cellar Giulio Bucci (1874)

Over the centuries, the fame and exportations of the wine of Apulia grew so much that in 1596 in his *De Naturali Vinorum Historia*, Andrea Bacci wrote about the wines from the areas of Bari and Lecce and “that a great amount of them was exported to the land beyond the sea and to every place in the Venices”. In the second half of the Nineteenth century, Sosthène la Rochefoucauld of Bisaccia, duke of Doudeauville and Bisaccia in the north of the region and the Jatta family from Ruvo laid the foundations for a modern and quality agriculture.

After the phylloxera outbreak in France and Italy (the south was excluded at the beginning), viticulture in Apulia had a great boost with the planting of different varieties of vines suitable for the realization of alcoholic bases, becoming the main producer and exporter of must.

Thanks to the creation of schools and institutions, which support the scientific rigour in viticulture, Apulia fully enhances the potentiality of its territory and types of grapevines.

From the second half of the Seventies, there was a big progress, which had been strengthened in the last decades of the past century, depending on the region’s three main varieties of red grapes: the **Nero di Troia in the north and Bari area**, the Primitivo in Manduria and Salento and Negramaro in Salento and Brindisi area, and also on men that with their great determination and wisdom changed the Apulian oenology with modern and innovative wines.



Alta Murgia

## Territory and Climate

The **karst** is a geological phenomenon affecting much of Puglia, but which finds its most visible expression in the Murgia, a topographic plateau of rectangular shape that dominates the central part of Puglia rising just south of the **Ofanto river**, the border of the Daunia, and declining 200 km further south in threshold Messapica, the natural border with Salento.

The Murgia karst phenomenon consists of limestones, calcarenites, sinkholes, caves, cavities and furrows, called blades or ravines, an integral part of this landscape which, however, shows the lack of homogeneity characters as it splits up into three geological divisions: the high Murgia (Alta Murgia), the low Murgia (Bassa Murgia) and the coastal Murgia. The most representative is the northern area, known as Alta Murgia, located between the **provinces of Bari and Barletta-Andria-Trani (BAT)**, which presents a landscape particularly harsh and lonely, almost lunar, without urban centres and characterized by sunny summers and cold winters, whose eroded rock formations alternate with barren lands, sinkholes and basins, the **typical blades**.



Typical dry-stone walls

Here the available water for plants is very limited, as well as the presence of organic matter, while the content of exchangeable calcium, magnesium and potassium is very high. However, **rainfalls are moderate**, scarce even in the summer, with average temperatures around **15-16 °C** and with very accentuated seasonal temperature ranges, typical of a type of Continental Mediterranean climate becoming more sub-continental as we get closer to the Adriatic coast.

This **environmental ecosystem** represents the last example of pseudo-Mediterranean steppe in peninsular Italy and one of the most important in the Mediterranean area. For this reason, in 2004, it was established the Alta Murgia National Park which is now the largest rural park in Italy and one of the the largest in Europe. In this impressive habitat is also possible to find the patient traces of human labor, that has created small spaces to live and work by clearing the lands of all the ubiquitous stones.

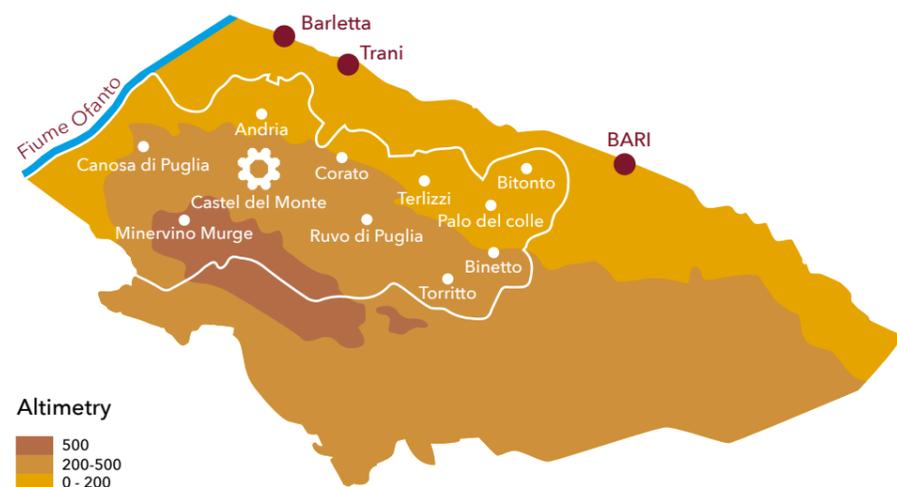
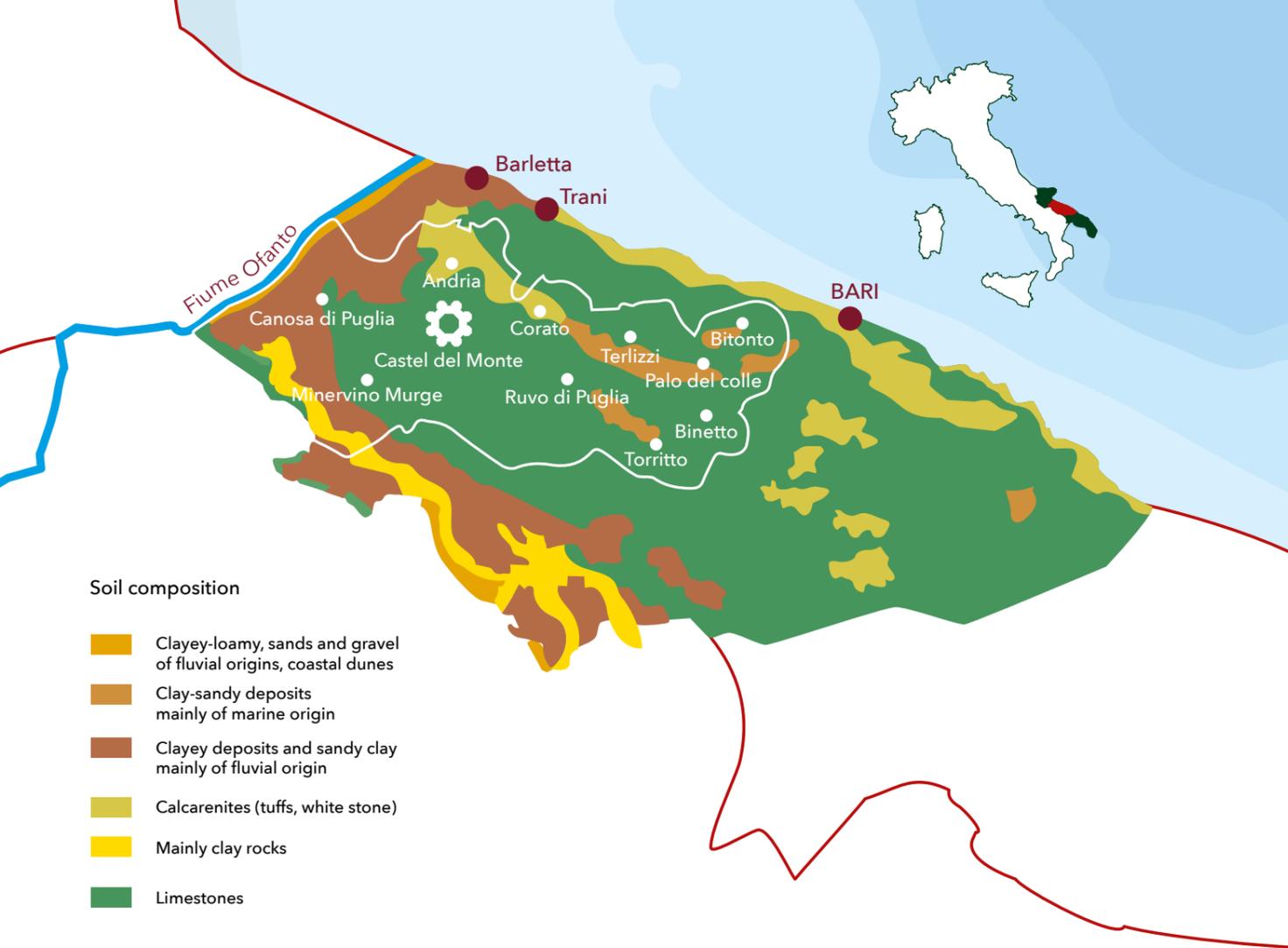
Dry-stone walls as boundaries, "casedde" and trulli to shelter from bad weather, "jazzi" as sheep shelter along ancient sheep tracks of transhumance and farmhouses (masserie) for accommodation of the peasants and to preserve the harvest: these are the still active evidence of centuries of human settlement that now have also become accommodation for tourists.



Jazzi



Alta Murgia National Park >



Finally, there are also the historical and architectural evidence of the Norman-Swabian domination, whose traces can still be found in the municipalities of this district and find their climax in the majestic **Castel del Monte**, commissioned in the 13th century in the heart of Alta Murgia by Frederick II of Swabia, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and one of the most extraordinary personalities of the entire Middle Ages, defined by his contemporaries "Stupor Mundi" as well as "Puer Apuliae", having chosen the region as his favorite residence. Set on one of the highest hills of the Alta Murgia, dominating the entire territory of the municipality of Ruvo di Puglia, Corato, Andria, Minervino and Canosa di Puglia, Castel del Monte is universally known for its **octagonal plan**, full of symbolic and esoteric references. In 1996 was declared **UNESCO World Heritage Site** (its image is also reproduced on one Euro cent coin in Italy). The Castle was chosen as the symbol of the territory's viticultural tradition, naming after the Controlled Designation of Origin, from 2011 also Guaranteed, which is the most important in the north and central areas of Apulia.



1. Ruvo di Puglia
2. Corato
3. Canosa di Puglia (Mausoleo di Boemondo)
4. Minervino Murge
5. Castel del Monte

# Vine Variety

The territory's main variety is **Nero di Troia** (or grapes of Troia), the **third black grape indigenous vine most widespread in the region** (around 2500 ha). It represents the viticulture in this part of Apulia. The legend tells Diomedes imported it in the city of Troia, not far from Foggia. He landed at the shores of Gargano, where he found his natural habitat. Ampelographic studies demonstrated that it genetically belongs to a variety from the Eastern part of the Adriatic Sea. Frederick II loved it for its rich flavour, which delighted also the palates of the Marquises d'Avalos, who bought the city of Troia in 1533 and increased the production of Nero di Troia in the whole area. The addition among the black grapes dates back to the 1875 Ministry of Agriculture ampelographic bulletin, written by Domenico Froio, director of the Experimental Winery of Barletta and San Severo, who defines it "Grape of Troia or Canosa Vine" and specifies it is produced in Barletta, Corato, Andria and Trani. Even if Foggia was its origin area, after a huge increasing in olive growing, the vine "moved" to the Apulian littoral zone of Barletta - Andria - Trani, in the northern part of Bari area, where it represents the foundation of red wines of Castel del Monte denomination.

Nero di Troia



The most important variety with black grapes in the area is **Bombino Nero**, whose peculiarity is not being employed in the production of red wines, but only for rosé wines.

This choice depends on the fact that the grapes have a very thin and light coloured skin and rarely they completely ripen, even if they are picked late. For this reason they can keep low their alcoholic volume and acidity level.

These peculiarities and the strong bond with the territory of Castel del Monte brought Bombino Nero rosé wine to be unique in Italy and protected by a special DOCG (Denomination of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin).

< Bombino nero



The most widespread among white grapes varieties is **Bombino Bianco**, whose name could depend on the shape of the grapes, which remind of a child who raises his arms. It is also known with the name of Buonvino for the high concentration of its must. This variety is characterized by medium - large conical shape sparse bunches with round grapes and thick skin. With a late maturation (second half of September), it maintains a **good level of acidity even in hottest climate** conditions and develops a relatively small value of sugar. Other varieties, which belong to this territory are Aglianico, Montepulciano, Pampanuto and Moscato Reale.

Bombino bianco >





Nero di Troia Vine

## The DOC Castel del Monte wines

**Castel del Monte** is a territory denomination with production of white, rosé and red wines from some specific autochthon and other allochthonous varieties. The denomination identifies white, rosé and red wines of the DOC (Controlled Designation of Origin) Castel del Monte and the three DOCG (Controlled and Guaranteed Designation of Origin) Castel del Monte Nero di Troia Riserva, Castel del Monte Riserva and Castel del Monte Bombino Nero. The production area stands on the wide territory across the Rural Park of Murgia, where the administrative districts of the eleven municipalities of the DOC and DOCG meet, in the north-western province of Bari and in the province of Barletta-Andria-Trani, which are: Canosa di Puglia (just the DOC), Andria, Corato, Trani, Ruvo, Terlizzi, Bitonto, Palo del Colle, Toritto, Binetto e Minervino Murge. A very rare case, maybe unique, in the disparate/assorted overview of Italian denominations: the 27th of November 2011 the DOC Canosa agreed to give up its own denomination to merge in the DOC Castel del Monte. The grapevine cultivated area measures about 550 ha and it lies at an elevation between 180 and 450 meters with a prevailing orientation/positioning East and North-Eastern. The average annual production is allocated in the domestic market. As far as concerns the foreign market, the reference countries are the European ones together with Russia, United States, Japan and China.

DOC "Castel del Monte" wines must be made from grapes coming from vineyards with the following criteria:

The **Castel del Monte Bianco** wine, or sparkling or semi-sparkling, is obtained traditionally from grapes of varieties Bombino Bianco combined with Pampanuto and Chardonnay, as well that in the mono-varietal versions of Bombino Bianco, Sauvignon and Chardonnay. Grapes from other vineyards, with non-aromatic white berry, suitable for cultivation in the region Puglia in the homogeneous production area "Central Murgia" may be used in producing this wine up to a maximum of 35%. The maximum yield of grapes is 150 quintals per hectare.

The **Castel del Monte Rosso** wine, or Novello, is traditionally made from Nero di Troia variety, associated to Moltepulciano and Aglianico varieties grapes, apart from the mono-variety version of Nero di Troia that has been gaining a lot of success. Grapes from other vineyards, with non-aromatic black berry, suitable for cultivation in the region Puglia in the homogeneous production area "Central Murgia" may be used in producing this wine up to a maximum of 35%. The maximum yield of grapes is 140 quintals per hectare.

The **Castel del Monte Rosato** wine, or sparkling or semi-sparkling, is traditionally based on pure Bombino Nero or combined with Aglianico and Nero di Troia. Grapes from other vineyards, with non-aromatic black berry, suitable for cultivation in the region Puglia in the homogeneous production area "Central Murgia" may be used in producing this wine up to a maximum of 35%. The maximum yield of grapes is 140 quintals per hectare.



Finally, also the following mono-variety wines belong to the DOC with the following specifications:

- Bombino bianco, or sparkling or semi-sparkling
- Chardonnay, or sparkling
- Sauvignon, or sparkling
- Nero di Troia
- Cabernet (da Cabernet franc e/o Cabernet sauvignon), or Riserva
- Aglianico, or Riserva
- Aglianico Rosato, or sparkling

They are made from grapes of the corresponding vines present in the vineyards for at least 90%. Also grapes of other vines with berries with the same colour, not aromatized and indicated for the cultivation in the homogenous production area of Puglia "Murgia Centrale" may be used in this wine production up to a maximum of 10%.



Aging stage in wood barrels

## The DOCG wines

### DOCG Castel del Monte Bombino Nero

Elevated to the status of DOCG in 2011, Castel del Monte Bombino Nero is reserved to rosé wines obtained from grapes within the same area with a minimum of 90% of Bombino Nero. Grapes from other vineyards, with non-aromatic black berries, suitable for cultivation in the region Puglia in the homogeneous production area "Central Murgia" may be used in producing this wine up to a maximum of 10%. The maximum yield of grapes is 120 quintals per hectare.

### DOCG Castel del Monte Riserva

DOCG Castel del Monte Riserva Elevated to the status of DOCG in 2011, DOCG Castel del Monte Riserva should be obtained grapes within the same area with a minimum of 65% of Nero di Troia. Grapes from other vineyards, with non-aromatic black berries, suitable for cultivation in the region Puglia in the homogeneous production area "Central Murgia" may be used in producing this wine up to a maximum of 35%. The maximum yield of grapes is 100 quintals per hectare. When released for consumption, the wine should be subjected to a mandatory aging period of not less than two years, including at least one year in a wood barrel.

### DOCG Castel del Monte Nero di Troia Riserva

DOCG Castel del Monte Nero di Troia Riserva Elevated to the status of DOCG in 2011, the DOCG Castel del Monte Nero di Troia Riserva should be obtained grapes within the same area with a minimum of 90% of Nero di Troia. Grapes from other vineyards, with non-aromatic black berries, suitable for cultivation in the region Puglia in the homogeneous production area "Central Murgia" may be used in producing this wine up to a maximum of 10%. The maximum yield of grapes is 100 quintals per hectare. When released for consumption, the wine should be subjected to a mandatory aging period of not less than two years, including at least one year in a wood barrel.



Steel silos

## Sensory analysis and food pairing

The white wines from Bombino Bianco are characterised by fruity aromas, similar to apricot, tropical fruit and yellow flesh, wildflowers, almond and aniseed, a prelude to a graceful structure and good freshness. Therefore, they are used as ingredients in many seafood recipes, especially starters with fresh traditional cheese as well as with preparations based on vegetables as legume and vegetable soups, orecchiette with turnip greens or cauliflower, omelettes and fried food.



The rosé wines from Bombino Nero are characterised by fruity and fragrant aromas of small red berries (currant, raspberry) and flowers (peony) with an agile and fresh taste. Therefore, they are ingredient in simple preparation based on fish, meat or vegetables such as mussels, potatoes, mussels and rice, with seafood pasta, seafood sauce or with eel sauce, as well as second courses with fish of the coast baked or stewed, stuffed squid and the whole Apulian rotisserie.

The red wines from Nero di Troia are always elegant, long-lived, marked by complex scents of black cherry, red currant, black pepper, cinnamon, tobacco and underbrush, accompanied by balsamic hints; on the palate is full-bodied, structured, with a never excessive alcohol dowry and well-balanced freshness. For this reason they perfectly complement the most flavorful and elaborate preparations made with lamb, goat, horse and offal, such as baked pasta, orecchiette al sugo di braciolo (horse meat rolls), roasted mushrooms, tucinelli, bombette and horse sausages.





A phase of the grape harvest

## The Consortium for the protection of the Castel del Monte DOC wines

The Consortium for the protection of the Castel del Monte DOC wines was founded in 1998 with its headquarter in Corato, and, nowadays, gathers together **806 winegrowers** and **15 winemaking** and bottling firms. Born thanks to the will of a small but motivated group of viticulturists, the Consortium for the protection of the Castel del Monte DOC wines, recognized by MIPAAF through the decree of the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2000, represents a good model of team game, which has allowed to achieve significant results in the short run. Thanks to clear and shared rules which are established in a strong sense of belonging and will of promotion of the territory and its peculiarities, a territory, amazing for history and beauty, has become, not by chance, the first Protection Consortium in the South to join a strict control plan, matching other already well-known and successful Protection Consortium. Thanks as well to the agreement stipulated with Chamber of Commerce of Bari, the system implemented by the Consortium records all the data related to the firms producing, transforming and bottling wine DOC Castel del Monte (production, stock, etc.).

Destemming



In the near future, thanks to this system, from every single bottle it would be possible to trace back the producer of the grape employed for the wine contained through a code and a website. With the recognition of the DOC Castel del Monte, from January 2009 the Consortium for the protection of the Castel del Monte DOC wines was allowed to control functions provided by the ministerial decree of the 29th March 2007, and in November 2012 the recognition and the task of performing the functions of safeguard, promotion, valorization, consumer information and general care of the interests related to the denomination was assigned. Nowadays, the new mission is to bestow a renewed jump to Nero di Troia, which has shown great performance since 2015, catching the attention and the appreciation of consumers and critics.

## Organizational Chart

### Councilors

Francesco Liantonio - President  
 Carlo de Corato  
 Francesco Addario Chieco  
 Pasquale D'Introno  
 Pierluigi Spagnoletti Zeuli  
 Pasquale Cinone  
 Riccardo Ravasio  
 Sebastiano Marinelli  
 Donato Di Gaetano

### Board of Auditors

Michele Zingaro - President  
 Salvatore Berardi  
 Rocco Positano

### Board of Auditors

Salvatore Casamassima  
 Biagio Figliolia

## DENOMINATION NUMBERS DOC AND DOCG CASTEL DEL MONTE

**DOC Castel del Monte**  
 Surface: 310 ha  
 Bottles produced: 3,8 millions

**DOCG Castel del Monte Bombino Nero**  
 Surface: 18 ha  
 Bottles produced: 199,000

**DOCG Castel del Monte Riserva**  
 Surface: 43 ha  
 Bottles produced: 396,000

**DOCG Castel del Monte Nero di Troia Riserva**  
 Surface: 28 ha  
 Bottles produced: 258,000

CONSORTIUM FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CASTEL DEL MONTE DOC WINES

Corso Cavour, 27 Corato (Bari), Italy | tel. +39 080/8983010

email: [vinicasteldelmontedoc@pugliasveva.it](mailto:vinicasteldelmontedoc@pugliasveva.it) | website: [pugliasveva.it](http://pugliasveva.it)

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